

Naked Truth, or Truth Nakedly Manifesting Itself

by Isaac Penington

The sermon emphasizes the importance of the inward light of God's Spirit for true understanding and spiritual growth.

Scripture: Psalm 16:11, Psalm 51:10, Isaiah 55:3, John 10:3, John 16:22, John 16:26, Ephesians 6:16

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Faith And Trust"

Description

Isaac Penington preaches about the deep spiritual experiences and truths he has encountered, emphasizing the importance of the seed of the kingdom, the nourishment of the soul through God's Word, the power of God working within believers, overcoming temptations by focusing on God's strength, and prayer as the breathing of the spiritual birth within. He highlights the need to look to God for salvation, trust in His power to overcome trials, and maintain a steadfast faith in the face of temptations.

Transcript

NAKED TRUTH

OR

TRUTH NAKEDLY MANIFESTING ITSELF IN SEVERAL PARTICULARS

FOR THE REMOVING OF HINDRANCES OUT OF THE WAY OF THE SIMPLE-HEARTED

THAT THEY MAY COME TO TRUE KNOWLEDGE, LIFE, LIBERTY, PEACE, AND JOY IN THE LORD, THROUGH THE VIRTUE AND POWER OF HIS PRECIOUS TRUTH REVEALED AND WORKING IN THEM

GIVEN FORTH

BY WAY OF QUESTION AND ANSWER

Whereunto are added, Some Experiences, with some Scriptures, very sweet, and necessary to be experienced in the gospel-state

As also, A few words concerning the true Christ;

And a few words in the Bowels of tender Love and Good-will to my Native Country

By a long Mourner and Traveller after, but at length a happy Experiencer of, the Truth, as it is in Jesus,

ISAAC PENINGTON

"Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see." Luke 10:23

[1674]

PREFACE

TRUE knowledge and true experience, especially concerning things of necessity, and great concern to the soul, is very precious. As; to know the true foundation, the cornerstone, which God lays in his spiritual Zion; and the heavenly Jerusalem, which is the mother of all that are born of God; and the gathering out of the spirit of this world (with the vanity and falsehood thereof) into God's Spirit, which is truth and no lie; and the building up of the holy temple, in which God appears, and is worshipped; and the heavenly communion with the Father and Son, in the one pure light which shines from them into the heart; and the one faith, the one circumcision, the one baptism, the one holy mountain, the one feast of fat things made thereon; the one water of life, the one bread, the one cup of salvation, &c.

Now the things of the kingdom are all at the disposal of the king thereof. To him all power is given, in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; he hath life in himself, and he hath life to dispose of, and dispense to his. He gives the true knowledge, which is life eternal; he gives repentance, and remission of sins. He teacheth to believe in the Father, and he giveth faith also. He is the Shepherd of the sheep, who by his voice quickeneth and maketh alive and leadeth and preserveth and nourisheth up to life eternal. Therefore, whoever will understand aright, must receive understanding from him; and whoever will repent aright, must receive repentance from him; and whoever will believe aright, must receive faith from him; and whoever will hear and see aright, must receive an ear and eye from him; and whoever will come unto him, and receive him, must witness that new heart forming or formed in him, wherewith and whereby he is received. Men greatly mistake and err about the gospel knowledge and religion, by beginning therein without the gospel spirit and power.

Therefore that man that would not be deceived, and lose his soul for ever, let him take heed how he begins, how he stands, and how he proceeds in his religion. The Jews stood in the revelation of God's Spirit and power outwardly; and the state of the Christians, the new covenant state, stands in the revelation of God's Spirit and power inwardly; for none can beget a new birth to God inwardly, but his own Spirit and power working inwardly in the heart.

Therefore, thou that wouldst live with God for ever, and not perish from the presence and glory of his power, mind these three things:

First, God's inward visiting thee, and making a real change in thee. I do not mean a change in thy mind from one notion to another; but a change in thy heart from one nature and spirit to another. This is the great work, which nothing but the mighty power of God, which raised Jesus from the dead, can effect in the hearts of the children of men. Now, that this may be wrought out in thee, wait for the appearing and working of that power, which (by its appearing and working) doth effect it daily more and more in those

that unite to it, and give up to its operations. Oh! wait to feel the power begetting somewhat of its own nature in thee, leavening thee into its nature by the pure, heavenly leaven wherewith God waits to leaven thy heart. Thus feel thy beginning from the true root, from the holy principle, from the seed of the kingdom; and then wait to feel that grow up in thee, and to grow up therefrom, that as the beginning is pure, so the growth may be pure also. For after God hath visited thee, and begotten somewhat in thee, and leavened thee in some measure, so that there is true life, true sense, true hungerings, true breathings, after the Lord and his righteousness, after the fountain of living waters, then (in the next place) mind and wait to learn of the true teacher how to come to the true waters, that thou mayest drink thereof, and of no dirty puddle, of thy own or any other's forming. Where are these waters dispensed and where are they to be found? Why, in the new covenant, which God makes with the hungry and thirsty souls, as they come to the Shepherd, and hear his voice, and learn of him, and follow him. Therefore thou must wait to distinguish spirits, and the knocks of spirits in thy own heart. Thou must know when the Shepherd knocks, and when the stranger knocks; and let in the Shepherd when he knocks, and not let in the stranger when he knocks. Thus, by knowing him, inclining thine ear to him, and hearing his voice, thou comest to have the everlasting covenant made with thy soul, even the sure mercies of David, wherein the union with God is sure, the teacher sure, never more to be removed from thee; the fear which God puts into the heart sure; the law of the new life sure, being so written in thy heart by the finger of God's Spirit, as none can blot out; the love of God sure, his preservation sure, the inheritance of life sure. O sweet covenant! O holy covenant! O blessed covenant! and blessed are all those souls with whom God makes this covenant, and who are kept by him in the sense and enjoyment of it!

Now, lastly, after God hath made this covenant with thee, and spoken peace to thee, and given thee of the power, righteousness, and joy of the kingdom, and set the holy hedge of his power and wall of salvation about thee, thou must take heed of going forth after any lust, after any desire of the flesh, after any temptation of the enemy; thou must keep within the holy limits, and not touch any dead or unclean thing, lest thou be defiled, and so in degree separated from him who is pure.

The occasion of what follows was briefly thus:

There was a controversy between me and another about many of these things, towards whom my love was in a travail; and having a sense on my heart that the enemy makes use of the wrong apprehensions and mistakes he begets in men's minds about these things, contrary to the true knowledge and experience which God giveth to the children which are born of the heavenly womb, who indeed alone can rightly plead for and justify their mother, in this day of great strife and contention about the kingdom, and the right heir thereof, -- I say, having this sense on my heart, and these things naturally springing up and opening in me upon this occasion, I was drawn in love, and in the motion of life, thus to give them forth to others, hoping that the Lord may thereby open the minds of some towards, and confirm the minds of others in, the sense and belief of the truth, and the inward manifestation of his Spirit, which discovers and strives against the darkness, lusts, and corruptions in them. The Lord give people the sense of the strivings and reproofs of his Holy Spirit inwardly in their hearts, and join their spirits thereto, that they may receive light, life, virtue, and strength from his Holy Spirit, and thereby witness the overcoming and keeping under the enemy of their souls, that they may know what it is to have the seed of the woman bruise the serpent's head in their own particulars, that so the holy child Jesus may be exalted (his horn exalted in them). and he may reign, and exercise his government in them, and they may become kings and priests to God, and reign in him over all that his power is ordained to break and keep under, yea, utterly consume and destroy, in the hearts of those that submit themselves willingly to him, and walk in the light and leadings of his Holy Spirit.

Amen.

NAKED TRUTH

I. Concerning understanding the Holy Scriptures truly and aright

Quest. WHETHER the Scriptures can be understood aright, without the light of God's Holy Spirit shining inwardly in the heart, and giving the true understanding of them?

Ans. No; not possibly. For as the outward eye cannot possibly see without the shining of some outward light, no more can the inward eye see without the shining of the inward light. God, who commanded light to shine out of darkness, causeth the light of his Spirit to shine in the hearts of people according to his holy pleasure, and thereby they come to see. God seeth all things in his own light, in the light of his pure, eternal Spirit; and in his light do the children of light see light. The things of God's kingdom are holy mysteries, and the words which he speaks concerning those holy mysteries none can understand, but as he pleaseth to open and reveal them. He hath given us an understanding to know him that is true. 1 John 5:20. "The inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding," (Job 32:8) without which, man is dead, and can neither hear, nor see, nor understand any of the things of God's kingdom.

II. Concerning the illuminating Spirit, and sanctifying Spirit

Quest. Whether the illuminating and sanctifying Spirit be one and the same Spirit or no? because it is affirmed by some (and written by one to me as a sound distinction of divines, which distinction he saith he hath a mind I should learn) that there is a Spirit of sanctification, and that is peculiar to the godly; and there is a Spirit illuminating, and that is oft vouchsafed to the wicked, as it was to Balaam.

Ans. The Spirit which illuminateth, and the Spirit which sanctifieth, is one and the same Spirit; and the illumination of the Spirit is in order unto sanctification. The same light which discovereth the darkness, also chaseth away the darkness, as it is received and subjected to, and purifieth the mind; for the light hath not only a property of enlightening, but also of cleansing and sanctifying. And the reason why men are not changed, justified, and sanctified, in and by the light, is because they love it not, and bring not their hearts and deeds to it; and so it is their reprover and condemner, and not their justifier and sanctifier. But the same Spirit, light and life which enlighteneth, also sanctifieth, and there is not another.

III. Concerning the Holy Spirit of God, and the Holy Scriptures

Quest. Whether they be always joined; or some may have the Spirit, who have not the Scriptures; and some may have the Scriptures, who have not the Spirit?

Ans. The Holy Spirit of God, and the holy Scriptures, are not always joined together; for some in the dark corners of the earth may be visited by the Spirit, become sensible of the Spirit, and receive the Spirit, who never heard of the Scriptures; and many may have the Scriptures, and yet be very ignorant of, and strangers to, God's Holy Spirit; as the Jews were, who had them read in their synagogues every sabbath day, and yet Christ told them, "Ye neither know the Scriptures, nor the power of God."

IV. Concerning the Law of the Lord, which is perfect, and which converts the soul

Quest. What is the law of the Lord, which is perfect, and converts the soul? Is it the outward law or writing in the letter, or the inward law and writing in the Spirit?

Ans. No man is, or ever was, or ever can be, converted to God from the inward law of sin and death, but by the inward law of life and righteousness written in the heart; and I am sure that law is perfect, the new covenant is perfect, and the law thereof perfect; the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus perfect, which converts the mind to Christ, the righteousness of God, and sets it free from the law of sin and death. And David was a spiritual man, and knew the inward covenant, and the inward creating of the heart anew, and God's holy and free Spirit, and the law and testimony thereof. I will grant a great deal to the letter and ministration outward; but I must attribute more to the inward; or else God's light, and the holy experience which he hath given me, will condemn me. And as the Jew outward had the law, and testimony, and statutes outward; so I am sure the true Jew, the Jew inward, hath the law, and testimony, and statutes inward, written in his heart by the finger of God's Spirit; yea, and the same Spirit put within him, to cause him to keep this law, and the holy testimony, statutes, and judgments of the Lord; and the spiritual Jacob, and Israel of God, in this the day of their redemption and salvation from on high, do follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes, and walk in the light of the Lord.

V. Concerning David's longings, expressed in Psa. 42. 43. 119. and other places

Quest. Were David's longings more after the law outward, or after the law and light of God's Spirit inward?

Ans. David was a man after God's own heart; a man that knew an inward and clean heart of God's creating, and knew the free Spirit of the Lord, and the fresh springing life thereof, and the leadings of the pure, living truth inwardly in his heart, and this was it he most especially prized and longed after. "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me," &c., saith he, Psa. 51:10-11. after his fall, showing what he had been acquainted with before, and what he now (God having touched his spirit afresh) began to long after again. And saith he, in another place, "Oh! send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me, let them bring me unto thy hill, and to thy tabernacles." Psa. 43:3. Oh, the sweetness of light within, truth within! Oh, the precious leadings and drawings thereof, which were once felt, upon a fresh and tender remembrance thereof, cannot but be longed after again!

VI. Concerning the Sun, or Fountain of spiritual Light

Quest. Whether the holy Scriptures, or written testimonies, be the sun or fountain, and the light within but a ray or stream from them? (as is affirmed by my antagonist.)

Ans. It is just quite contrary: for the holy men spake the holy words from the inward light and quickening life of God's Spirit within them; so that that was the fountain in them, and is so still. "With thee is the fountain of life; and he that believeth, as the Scriptures have said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. This spake he of the Spirit," (John 7:39) that is the fountain. "The water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." John 4:14. Who esteems and honors the Scriptures aright? He that believes their testimony, comes to Christ, and makes his Spirit, light, and life all; or he that sets the Scriptures in the stead of that Word of life which they came from, testify of, and point men to, as the fountain and foundation of life and salvation to all mankind?

VII. Concerning the Word's being a fire and a hammer to burn up the chaff, and break the rocks in pieces

Quest. Is the Word, which is a fire and hammer, the testimonies and declarations of the holy Scriptures without, or the Word nigh in the mouth and heart?

Ans. That which I have felt hammering inwardly, that which I have felt burning inwardly (unquenchably, as the mind has been kept to it), has been the Word of life itself, from which the good words and holy testimonies proceed. That which does the work in the inward Jew is the inward ministration of the inward covenant, the appearance of God there. He is the consuming fire; he is the Spirit of judgment and burning, who, by his holy flamings inwardly, burns up the filth of the daughter of Zion. A man may be exercised in the letter all his days, and yet witness nothing of this inwardly in truth and righteousness; but he whom the Spirit of judgment and burning inwardly comes nigh, and whose flesh is kept in that holy furnace, it will be consumed there day by day, until it be quite wasted and destroyed, and so he come to be judged according to the flesh, and to live to God in the Spirit.

VIII. Concerning God's writing his law in the heart

Quest. How doth God write his law in the heart?

Ans. By his Spirit and power working there, whereby he both creates a new heart, and writes the new law, even the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, in the new heart. "The isles shall wait for his law." Whose law? The law of the Messiah, the law of grace, which gives dominion; the law of the anointing, the law of the new birth, the law of the holy seed. "His seed remaineth in him." 1 John 3:9. In that seed is the new nature, and the new law both. What is the law of sin? What is the law of death? How is it written in the heart? How doth the enemy write it there, but by his corrupt spirit and nature? And doth not God, by his holy Spirit and nature, write the new law, the law of life, in the hearts of those that are renewed and made tender to the impressions of his holy, quickening power? Every motion and drawing whereof is a law to them who are born of the Spirit, and taught of God to eye and walk after the quickening Spirit.

IX. Concerning the inward light of God's Spirit

Quest. What is it which the mind is to be turned to, to enlighten it, and to work the darkness and corruption out of it?

Ans. It is no less than the light of God's Spirit; nothing else can do it. The day-spring must arise from on high in the heart, or there will be night for ever there. All notions or apprehensions concerning the light will not do it; it is the shining of the light alone inwardly which is able to expel the darkness there. It was not for nothing that Christ came a light to enlighten men, and directed men to follow him, the light, that they might not abide in darkness, and that he sent his apostles with this message, that "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all;" and so gave his apostles wisdom, authority, and power to turn men from the darkness to the light. And if the darkness was within, which they were to be turned from, surely the light must shine within, to discover the darkness, and to that light must they be turned. And in this light the Holy Spirit is received, and dwells there; but out of this light, and the limits thereof, in every heart, dwells the unclean and dark spirit, and hath power and rule there; for nothing but the light and strength of God's Spirit is able to break his kingdom and dominion inwardly in the heart.

X. Concerning the ministers and ministry of the gospel

Quest. Who are the ministers, and what is the ministry of the gospel?

Ans. They are the ministers of the gospel who have received the Spirit and power wherein the ministry of the gospel stands. For Christ came in the Spirit and power of the Father, and he sends his apostles and ministers in the same Spirit and power, that they might be able to beget, and reach to that birth which is to

be begotten and ministered to. It is one thing to be a minister of the law, and to minister letter; and another thing to be a minister of the gospel, and to minister Spirit. The apostles were able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit; and so are all in a degree, who succeed them in any measure or proportion of their ministry. For the ministry of the gospel is in the light, Spirit, and power of the Most High, to turn people's minds to a proportion of the same light, Spirit, and power in themselves, and so to come to the manifestation and quickening of the same life in themselves, that so they may walk in the same light. For the life is the light; and he can never have light, or see light, who comes not first to feel some virtue from the quickening power. Oh! how precious is this ministry! Blessed be the Lord for his renewing of it in these our days! And this ministry is not to be confined to an outward order of men, as the ministry of the law was; but whoever hath received the gift, so he is to minister, as the Lord guides, leads, and orders him in the use of that gift which he hath bestowed upon him for that end. And what if he be an herdsman, a fisherman, a tentmaker, or the like? Yet if God hath poured out his Spirit upon him, and openeth his mouth, he hath not only liberty, but more, even authority, from the Lord God Almighty to speak in his name, either for turning men unto Christ, the light and life of men, or for building men up in their holy faith in him, whose Spirit and power was and is the resurrection in the life for evermore.

XI. Concerning trying of spirits, and searching the heart

Quest. What is it which searcheth the heart, and infallibly tries spirits?

Ans. God's Spirit, God's word nigh in the heart and mouth, separateth and giveth true discerning and judgment there, to all whose ears are circumcised and inclined to it. God's Spirit is the spirit of judgment; and where he is given, the Spirit of judgment is given, and he judgeth in his children by the quickening life and sense he bestoweth on them, which distinguisheth between life and death, between truth and deceit; yea, between the same words, when they come from the dead spirit, and when they are spoken in his living power: Christ gives his Spirit to his sheep, which gives them to know his voice, to know when life speaks, and when words are living, and food for the living; and in what mouth they are dead, and cannot yield living nourishment.

XII. Concerning things necessary to Salvation

Quest. Whether all things necessary to salvation be contained in the Scriptures?

Ans. The Scriptures give testimony concerning the one thing necessary to salvation; but the thing itself, Christ himself, the seed itself, is not contained in the Scriptures, but revealed in the shinings of the true light, and so received or rejected inwardly in the heart. "Behold I stand at the door and knock." Blessed are they that hear his voice, and believe him knocking, and open to him, and receive him, who gives eternal life and power to become sons of God to as many as receive him, and believe in, and give up to, the inward revealings of his redeeming arm and power therein. "To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" To them in whom, and to whom, this arm is revealed, Christ is revealed; and they in whom, and to whom, Christ is revealed, know the one thing necessary, even him who is life eternal, in whom all other necessary things are wrapped up, and by whom they are conveyed to the soul, according to its need, by him who is faithful in all his house, and takes care of every sheep which the Father committeth to him.

XIII. Concerning the true Gospel Church, or Society

Quest. What is the true gospel church, or society?

Ans. A company of true believers in the Spirit and power of the Lord Jesus Christ. A company of true Jews, inward Jews, Jews in Spirit, of the true circumcision, whom the Father had sought out, and made true inward worshippers; such as are gathered to the name, and gathered together in the name of the Lord Jesus, to offer up spiritual sacrifices to God through him. A company of living stones, who have received life from him, the foundation stone; and meet together to wait upon and worship the Father, in the light and Spirit which they have received from him. This is the holy church, or living assembly of the New Testament; blessed are they that are of it! For about this church is the wall of salvation; and they that are added by God's Spirit and power to this church, and abide in it, shall certainly be saved.

XIV. Concerning the Way to Salvation

Quest. Which is the certain and infallible way to salvation?

Ans. It is a new and living way; it is such a way as none but the living can walk in. It is a holy way, which none but the cleansed, the ransomed, the redeemed of the Lord, can set one step in. The way, the life, and the truth are all one; blessed are they that find it, and walk in it! In plain and express terms, it is the Lord Jesus, the light of the Lord Jesus, the life of the Lord Jesus, the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, the truth as it is in him, his wisdom, his power, he himself, the covenant or holy limit between God and the soul. He that comes into him, comes into the way; he that abides in him, abides in the way; he that walks in him, walks in the way. He that comes to his light, his life, his Spirit, his truth in the inward parts, comes to him; he that abides therein, abides in him; he that walks therein, walks in him: and he that walks out of the light and leading of his Spirit, let him walk in what form he will, yet he walks not in him, the way.

XV. Concerning Christ's saving the Soul.

Quest. How doth Christ save the soul?

Ans. By visiting inwardly, knocking inwardly, appearing inwardly, causing the light of life to shine inwardly, and so enlightening and quickening inwardly, breaking the strength of the enemy inwardly, and bringing out of the region and shadow of darkness inwardly, into the region and path of light. By the light and power of his Spirit he begets a child of light; which child of light he brings out of Egypt, the dark land; out of Sodom, the filthy, unclean land; out of Babylon, the land and city of confusion (where the Spirit of the living God, and the holy order of life, and his precious government in the heart, is not so much as known), and brings him into the light, where he and his Father dwells. And this child of light is not of the nature of darkness, but light in the Lord, and walks in the light, as he is in the light; and by the further shining and working of the light and life in him, he preserves and saves him daily more and more.

XVI. Concerning Regeneration, or the New Birth

Quest. What is regeneration, or the new birth?

Ans. It is an inward change, by the Spirit and power of the living God, into his own nature. It is a being begotten of his Spirit, born of his Spirit; begotten into and born of the very nature of his Spirit. ("That which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit, "John 3.) It is not every change of mind which is the right change; but only that which God, by the very same power wherewith he raised our Lord Jesus Christ from the grave, makes in the hearts of those whom he visits; who are sensible of, receive, and are subject to his inward life, light, and power.

XVII. Concerning true Holiness

Quest. What is true holiness?

Ans. That holy nature, and those holy actions, which arise from the holy root; all else are but imitations of holiness, not the true holiness. The tree must be made good first, and then the fruit will be good also. There are many likenesses of the true holiness up and down in several professions; but there is no real holiness to be found, nor righteousness either, but in the trees of God's planting, in the branches which are by him ingrafted into the true vine and olive-tree, whose strength of virtue and holiness lies in the sap, which they daily receive from him.

XVIII. Concerning Christ's Works outwardly in the days of his flesh, and inwardly in the day and inward shining of the light of his Spirit in the heart

Quest. Which are greater, the works which Christ did outwardly on the bodies of men in the days of his flesh, or which he doth inwardly in men's minds and spirits by the powerful appearance and operation of his Spirit? Because Christ said, the works that he did, those that believed on him should do, and greater also, because he went to the Father. John 14:12.

Ans. Doubtless to reach to the soul, and quicken the soul, and raise the soul out of the grave of death, and cure the blindness, deafness, hardness, and diseases of the soul, is greater than the outward, and was signified by the outward.

XIX. Concerning the yoke, or cross of Christ

Quest. What is the yoke or cross of Christ?

Ans. It is inward, as that which is to be crucified is chiefly inward. It is that gift of God, that light of his Spirit which is contrary to the darkness, contrary to all that is corrupt; which wills and wars against it; and being received, subjected to, and borne patiently, takes away the life of the flesh, the will and wisdom of the flesh, and all the subtle reasonings and devices of the fleshly part; and so that languishes and dies, and God's plant is eased of it; and the soul abiding under this cross, comes into the true, pure, and perfect liberty, where it hath scope unto holiness, freedom unto righteousness, and is in strait bonds and holy chains from all liberty to the flesh, and from all unholiness and unrighteousness of every kind.

XX. Concerning making our calling and election sure

Quest. How may a man make his calling and election sure?

Ans. By making the gift of God sure to him; by making that sure to him wherein his calling and election is. For the choice is of the seed, the holy seed, the inward seed, the seed of God's Spirit, and of the creature as joined to the seed. God would have none to perish; but would have all come to the knowledge of Christ, the truth, who is the seed, in whom the election stands; and his holy advice to men is, whom he begins to call and to lead towards the election, "to make their calling and election sure." So that the way of making the calling and election sure is, to make the gift sure, the seed sure, the leaven sure, the pearl sure, which God will never reject, nor any that are found in true union with it, and in the love and obedience of it. Oh! therefore, as God visits with power (with his powerful gift), and as thou receivest power, dominion, and authority over sin (for in this gift is God's dominion and authority revealed), be faithful to the gift, be faithful to the power, give up to the truth in the inward parts, come into it, dwell in it, that thou mayest feel its virtue and delivering nature from every enslaving and embondaging thing, and then stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ the Lord (by the life, virtue, and power of his truth) sets thee free. And so here thou wilt

read thy calling, and read thy election day by day; and find them sealed, and sure to thee, in that truth, in that gift, in that heavenly light, in that holy seed, which came from God, and is of him, and which he delights to own, and will never reject.

XXI. Concerning Prayer

Quest. What is the true prayer?

Ans. The breathings which arise from the true birth, from the living sense which God gives to the true birth; these are the true prayer. There is a Spirit of prayer and supplication given by God to his children to wrestle and prevail with him by. All prayer that arises from, and is given by, that Spirit, is true prayer; all other prayer is not right and true, but at best an imitation of the true. "We know not what to pray for as we ought; but the Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Mark: the very groanings that come from God's Spirit, from his breathing and work upon the heart, are right prayers in God's sight; but other sighs and groans are not so.

XXII. Concerning Repentance

Quest. Which is the true repentance?

Ans. That which Christ gives, whom God hath exalted to be the prince and Saviour, to give repentance and forgiveness of sins. Acts 5:31. It is not in man's power to repent; his heart is hard and impenitent. It is God's power which melteth, tendereth, and changeth the heart. So that there is a great difference between the sense and sorrow of man's nature, and the sense and sorrow which God gives to the heart which he renews and changes. The one is of an earthly, the other of a heavenly, nature. The one is like the early dew, or morning cloud, it soon passeth away; the other is written in the new heart, and abideth. So that in it there is a real sorrow and mourning over the corrupt nature, and all the dead works of the flesh, and a turning from them, and meddling no more with them. This is the repentance of the renewed ones, which is the gift of the Lord Jesus Christ unto them, and is a godly sorrow for sin not to be repented of.

XXIII. Concerning Faith

Quest. What is the true faith?

Ans. It is a belief in the power which saves, from a true sense and experience of it in the heart. For the power which saves must first manifest itself, before it can be believed in; and how doth it manifest itself, but by shining in the heart, which hath been darkened by transgression, to open the eye of the understanding, which the god of the world hath blinded, and to unstop the deaf ear, and so it begets and creates somewhat capable to receive its further manifestation. The Scripture speaks of a new creation in Christ. Indeed all true believers are so: and they have the ability, the faculty, the power of believing from him who creates them anew. There is that which is called faith in unregenerate men; but that is not the faith I am now speaking of, but that which is the gift of God to his own birth, to his own begotten. "To you it is given not only to believe," &c. Phil. 1:29. Mark: It is given to believe. Oh, this holy gift! this faith of the new birth is the faith which pleaseth God, prevaieth with him, purifieth the heart to which it is given, giveth access to God, interest in his power and promises, and victory over the worldly nature, and over all the soul's enemies. Blessed be the Lord for bestowing and increasing it in the hearts of his children.

XXIV. Concerning Obedience

Quest. What is obedience?

Ans. The obedience which flows from the true understanding of God's will, and from the holy nature which he begets in the heart. It is the obedience which flows from true sense, true understanding, and true faith. There is no birth can believe aright but one; nor is there any birth can obey aright, but that birth which believes aright. The true believing is from the quickening virtue of God's Spirit (all other faith is but dead faith); and the true obedience is in the newness of the Spirit. Rom. 6:4 and 7:6. Man may strive to understand and obey all his days; but he can do neither, but as he is quickened, taught, and enabled of the Lord. "Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes." Psal. 119:33. There is a mystical path of life. The way of wisdom, the way of holiness, the holy skill of obeying the truth, is hid from all living, from all mankind, but such as are begotten and brought up by him in the holy skill and mystery of subjection to the Lord. "Thy people shall be a willing people in the day of thy power." It is the power of God that works the will in the heart, and the same power works to do also; and none can learn either to will or to do aright, but as they come to be acquainted with that power, joined to that power, and feel that power working in them. And here, in this power, to this new birth, faith and the holy obedience are as natural, as unbelief and disobedience are to the birth of the flesh. It is frequently and abundantly experienced by his holy birth, by the child of his begetting. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

XXV. Concerning Justification

Quest. What is justification, or how is a man justified in the sight of God?

Ans. By a true sense of, and faith in, that which justifies; which is the Spirit, the life, the water, the blood, the virtue, the power of the Lord Jesus. All these are one in nature, and they go together. Man is sinful naturally, fallen from God, found a transgressor against him. Now he needs justification from his sins, and he needs justification in respect of what God hath entrusted him with, and requires of him; and in the new birth, and joining to the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, he meets with both. Being quickened by his Holy Spirit, turned from the darkness, coming into the light, and walking in the light; there his sins are done away, blotted out, as if they had never been, for his name's sake; and there he receiveth a new ability, a new heart, a new Spirit, yea, the Spirit of the living God, to quicken him, and work in him; and whatever he doth in this Spirit (or rather what God doth by him, in and through this Spirit) is justified, owned, and accepted. God finds no fault in any of the fruits of his own Spirit (in any of the children of men), but only in the fruits of the flesh. And if, for want of watchfulness, the enemy should prevail, and draw into a snare; yet upon turning to the light of God's Holy Spirit, which discovers and reproves for it, in the holy light the water flows, the blood is sprinkled, the conscience is cleansed, and so becomes clean even in God's sight. Oh! blessed is he who is not deceived with dead notions of justification, but feels the justification which comes from God, and is accompanied with a living sense, and with the testimony of his Holy Spirit.

XXVI. Concerning good Works

Quest. What are good works?

Ans. The works that flow from God's good Spirit, the works that are wrought in God, they are good works. The works of the new birth, of the new creature, are good works; whereas all the works of the flesh are bad, though never so finely painted. All its thoughts, imaginations, reasonings, willings, runnings, hunting to find out God and heavenly things, with all its sacrifices, are corrupt and evil, having of the bad leaven, of the bad nature in them. Make the tree good, or its fruit can never be good: so that they are only the good works that flow from the good tree, from the good root. And here all the works of the flesh, though never so

glorious and taking in man's eye, are shut out by God's measure, by God's line and plummet of righteousness and true judgment; and every work of God's Spirit, the meanest work of faith, the least labor of true love, the least shining of life in the heart, and the giving up thereto, is owned by God as coming from him, and wrought in him, who worketh both to will and to do, of his own good pleasure. He that is gathered to the light which God hath enlightened him with, hath received the light, dwelleth in the light, and walketh in the light; the Spirit of the living God is near him, and dwelleth with him, and worketh in him; and he bringeth his deeds to the light, where it is manifest that they are wrought in God. But he that is out of the inward light of God's Holy Spirit, his works are not wrought in God, and so can but make a fair show in the flesh (to the fleshly eye) but are not good in God's sight. The erring man's way and works are often right in his own eyes; ah! but blessed is he whose way and works are good and right in the eye of the Lord, in the judgment of his searching, unerring light and Spirit.

XXVII. Concerning Love

Quest. Which is the true love?

Ans. The love which ariseth from the nature which God begets, and from this circumcising the heart from the other nature. Love is the beautiful thing. What can be higher expressed concerning God himself, than to say he is love? Love is greatly commended and admired, and there are many pretenders to it; but none have the true love, but only those that are born of God, and circumcised by him. "The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." Deut. 30:6. Mark: the true love ariseth from the true circumcision; and the more a man comes to have his heart circumcised from the fleshly nature, and to grow up in the pure and heavenly nature, the more he loves. God is love; and the nigher any one comes to him, and the more he partakes of him, the more he becomes love in the Lord, and the more he is taught of God to love the Lord his God, and his brethren in the Spirit, and all mankind, who are of his blood (for of one blood God made all mankind) according to the flesh, or according to a natural consideration.

XXVIII. Concerning Meekness and Patience

Quest. What is the true meekness and patience?

Ans. The meekness and patience which ariseth from the Lamb's nature. Deceit will put on an appearance of love, and deceit will put on also an appearance of meekness and patience; but it cannot put on the true love, the true meekness and patience: that is only learned of the Lamb, and received of him by receiving of his Spirit and nature from him. And oh, how precious is this! how sweet is it felt in the heart! To feel a meek, a quiet, a patient spirit in the midst of all trials, all troubles, all fears, all doubts, all temptations of every kind. Indeed this is of much price in the sight of the Lord, and also in the eye of him who hath received it from the Lord, and enjoyeth it in him, and possesseth his soul in him.

XXIX. Concerning the knowledge of the new covenant

Quest. What is the knowledge of the new covenant?

Ans. The knowledge which is given by God to the new birth: for to it the new covenant belongs, and the knowledge thereof. The truly begotten of God, the true disciples of Christ, to them it is given to know the kingdom of God; but to others it is not given. The Jew outward, the first birth, the birth after the flesh, for them the priest's lips were to preserve knowledge, and they were to seek the law at his mouth; and to

them God sent prophets to speak to them, and taught them by his prophets: but concerning the inward Jews, the children of the new covenant, the children of the Jerusalem which is above, concerning her seed it was prophesied, that they all should be taught of the Lord; they all should hear and know the voice of the Shepherd himself; they should all be gathered to the Shepherd and Bishop of the soul, and taught by him. So that in this new, holy, living covenant, God himself is the Shepherd, God himself is the Teacher, not only of the greatest, but of the very least. Heb. 8. For he teacheth them all to know the Lord, and to know his Son, and to come to his Son, and to love him their Father, and one another. So that he that is taught of God, he hath the true knowledge, the living knowledge, the substantial knowledge, the knowledge of the thing itself, of the life eternal itself. All that are not thus taught (but learn only from a literal description and relation of things) have not the knowledge of the new covenant, the knowledge of the thing itself; but only an outward knowledge, such as the first birth may catch at, lay hold on, and comprehend.

XXX. Concerning the fear of the new covenant

Quest. What is the fear of the new covenant?

Ans. It is the fear which God puts in the hearts of his children; which fear cleanseth their hearts, and keepeth them from departing from their God. There is a great deal of difference between the fear which may be learned from precepts from without, and the fear which God puts in the hearts of his children from a root of life within; which fear is of a heavenly nature, and is the free gift of God to his own heavenly birth, and none else; which no man can possibly attain by any thoughts or reasonings of his own, but only by the springings of life from God. And he that would have this fear, must know the place of wisdom, and wait there for it; and when he hath it, this fear will soon begin to make him wise towards salvation, and teach him to depart from evil, which is the cause of destruction. Job 28:28.

XXXI. Concerning Hope

Quest. What is the true hope?

Ans. The stay of the mind upon the Lord, the stay of the heavenly birth upon its Father: for we must distinguish between hope and hope. There is the hope of the hypocrite, or false birth, which shall perish; and the hope of the true birth, which will never fail it, nor make it ashamed; because that birth is taught of God to hope aright. Now, in hope, there is both the ground of it, and the hope itself. The ground of the hope is God's love, God's truth, God's faithfulness, God's grace, his seed, his Christ felt within; being of him, united to him, in him, he in me: here is the ground of my assurance of the everlasting glory and inheritance, which is sure to the seed, and to all that are of and in the seed. So knowing Christ within me, feeling Christ within me, living in him, and he in me, I have an anchor sure and steadfast within the veil, which no storms, no tempests, no trials, no temptations, present or to come, have power over. And then there is the hope, or hoping itself; that is, the staying of the mind upon the Lord, the leaning upon the Lord, the retiring beyond all thoughts or reasonings or lookings out, to the inward life; to feel somewhat spring from it, for the soul to hope or trust in, beyond all outward appearance. And this hope never deceives nor makes ashamed those who are taught of God thus to stay their minds upon him. Nay, though the state be darkness, and no light seen; yet beneath the darkness there is somewhat to stay the mind of the child and servant of the Lord till he appear, and cause light to break out of obscurity; for light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright, even in their darkest, saddest, and most distressed conditions; in all which the Lord is near them, and there is still ground for them to hope in him.

XXXII. Concerning Peace

Quest. Which is the true peace?

Ans. The peace which God speaks to the soul; the peace which Christ gives to his own disciples. The way of truth, the way of life leads to peace; and the peace which is found therein is of God's giving, and is the true peace. First, God breathes upon the heart, begets a right birth, a true child; then he leads him into the holy way, the righteous way; from that which loads and burdens, to that wherein is the ease and rest. Thus in the believing and following him there is joy and peace. This is experienced by all the true travellers, and by none else. No man, with all his wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, can so much as guess at what this peace is. The peace of God, the peace which he speaks to his children, the nature of it, the sweetness of it, the heavenliness of it, passeth man's understanding; but he who is born from above, who hath a new and heavenly understanding, he knoweth the nature, excellency, and preciousness of it; and would not for all this world, for any fear, or danger, or expectation of any thing from without, hazard the breaking off this precious peace and rest of his soul in his God.

XXXIII. Concerning Joy

Quest. Which is the true joy?

Ans. The joy which flows from God's presence, and the work of his power in the heart, and the assured expectation which he gives of the full inheritance and glory of life everlasting. When the bridegroom is present, when the soul is gathered home to him, married to him, in union with him, in the holy, living fellowship; when he appears against the enemies of the soul, rising up against them, breaking, scattering them, and giving of his good things, filling with life, filling with love, filling with virtue, feasting the soul in the presence of the Father; oh, what sweet joy! oh, what fulness of joy is there then in the heart! "In thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore," said the psalmist. Ps. 16:11. Surely he had had a taste of the thing, he had been in God's presence, and that made him cry out, "Cast me not away from thy presence," Psal. 51:11; and he had drunk of the river of God's pleasure, which is at his right hand, which made him speak so sensibly of it. Psal. 36:8. and 46:4. Christ said to his disciples, that because of his going away they should have sorrow; but he would see them again, and their heart should rejoice, and their joy no man should take from them. John 16:22. How or when was this fulfilled? What were they sorry for? Was it not the loss of his outward presence, which had been so sweet and comfortable to them? How would he come to them again? Was it not by the Comforter? Was it not by his inward and spiritual presence? So that he that was with them should be in them? Before they knew Christ with them; now they should know Christ in them; the Father in them, and they in him; Immanuel, the gospel state, God with us, dwelling with us, tabernacling in us, living in us, walking in us, and we living and walking in him. When the apostles came to this state, then they came to witness the joy in the Holy Ghost, even the joy unspeakable, and full of glory. And hence it is that the gospel state is a state of joy and rejoicing in the Lord, even in his glorious, living presence, and in the glory of his power. For in the gospel state the true light shines inwardly in the heart, the life is manifested; and being manifested, they that come into the manifestation of it, come into the holy union, and into the holy fellowship with the Father and Son, where the joy is, and where the joy is full; where the power is revealed which does away that which is contrary to the holy fellowship, and hinders the holy joy and rejoicing in the Lord. See 1 John 1:3-4.

XXXIV. Concerning poverty of spirit and humility

Quest. Which is the right poverty of spirit, and the true humility?

Ans. That poverty and humility of spirit which springeth from the same root from which the faith, the love, the peace, the joy, and the other heavenly things arise; and is of the same nature. There is a voluntary humility, and a voluntary poverty, even of spirit, which man casts himself into, and forms in himself, by his own workings and reasonings. This is not the true, but the false image, or counterfeit of the true; but then there is a poverty which ariseth from God's emptying the creature, from God's stripping the creature; and a humility which ariseth from a new heart and nature. This is of the right kind, and is lasting, and abides in the midst of the riches and glory of the kingdom. For as Christ was poor in spirit before his Father, and lowly in heart in the midst of all the fulness which he received from him; so it is with those who are of the same birth and nature with Christ. They are filled with humility, and clothed with humility, in the midst of all the graces and heavenly riches which God fills them and adorns them with. Keep in the faith, keep in the truth, keep in the light, keep in the power; it excludes boasting in or after the flesh, and keeps the mind in that humility and poverty of spirit which God hath brought, and daily further and further brings it into; and so the humility and poverty remain (poor in spirit for ever, humble in spirit for ever, nothing before the Lord for ever) even as that remains which brought into that frame, and keeps in that frame for ever. And so the Lord of life is only exalted, and the creature kept abased before him, and low for ever; and is nothing but as the Lord pleaseth to fill, and make it to be what it is. So what I am, I am by God's love, by his grace, by his mercy, by his goodness, by his power, by his wisdom, by his righteousness, by his holiness, which he of his own good pleasure communicateth and causeth to spring in me, and filleth and clotheth me with, as seemeth good in his sight.

THE CONCLUSION

THERE is mention made in the book of the Revelations, in the epistles from Christ to the seven churches of Asia, of a tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God (the fruit whereof is good for food, and the leaves thereof for the healing of the nations); and of hidden manna, and a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which none knoweth but he that receiveth it; and of a morning star to be given, and power over the nations, to rule their spirit, even as Christ hath received of his Father; and of being clothed in white, and his name confessed before the Father (this is the sheep of my fold, the child of my Father's begetting, who is named by me among the living, I know him by his name, John 10:3); as also of his being a pillar in the temple of God, and of going no more out, but bearing the name of God, and the name of the city of God, the new Jerusalem which cometh down from God out of heaven; and of Christ's new name (oh! what is that!) and of sitting with Christ in his throne.

This is the generation of spiritual kings, who have a spiritual kingdom, and a spiritual throne, even Christ's kingdom, and Christ's throne, the royal priesthood of God. Oh, precious things! Oh, rich glory! Surely eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of men to conceive what these things are.

Now he that would witness these things; he that would know, experience, and enjoy these things, must mind that seed in which they are wrapped up, as in a seed, and out of which they spring and shoot forth. The kingdom is in the seed, the throne in the seed, the power in the seed. He that is united to the seed, and abideth in the seed, receiveth power from the seed, and overcometh, he shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. Rev. 21:7. But he that will be so, must not be fearful or unbelieving of overcoming sin, or his soul's enemies; but must depend upon the almighty and all-sufficient power of God, which will give him victory over sin, and keep him that he touch no unclean thing; that he may be holy, as the Lord his God is holy; and righteous, even as the Lord his God is righteous. Indeed it becometh the heavenly children to partake of the divine life, of the heavenly nature of their Father, and be like him. And he that partaketh of his nature, of his holiness, Heb. 12:10, is holy, as he is holy; and he that

from the holy root of purity and righteousness, doth righteousness, is righteous, even as he is righteous. 1 John 3:7. So it is written without, and so it is testified within, by him that is born of God in whom the seed remaineth, which overcometh the wicked one, bruise him and keepeth him under: and the just live by the faith which giveth victory over him.

A PREFACE TO THE EXPERIENCES It hath pleased the Lord, to unseal and open the Fountain of life, in the midst of his heritage; so that in his light do they see light, and in his life do they reap and enjoy life. And the precious promises are fulfilled in the midst of them, of sending the Comforter, and pouring out of the Holy Spirit; so that he that believeth, out of his belly do flow rivers of living water. Yea, the Lord hath a vineyard of his own planting, which he keepeth night and day (lest any hurt it), and watereth every moment.

Oh, the streams of life, the streams of love, the streams of grace, the streams of mercy, the streams of peace, the streams of joy and consolation, which flow from him into the bosoms of his children! Indeed grace and mercy and peace are multiplied from God our Father, in and through the Lord Jesus Christ, daily; insomuch as that saying of Christ to his disciples (John 16:26-27) is now fulfilled: "I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father himself loveth you," &c.

The Father in his love hath brought us to the Son, and the Son in the same love hath brought us back to the Father; and now the love flows from the Father, in and through the Son, most naturally and abundantly. And where the heart is circumcised, and much forgiven, there also love returns back most truly and naturally; so that the Lord our God, in the Lord Jesus Christ, is loved with all the heart, and with all the soul, and nothing is thought too good to sacrifice to him, nor any thing too much to suffer for him.

Oh, the pure love that springs and flows between the heavenly Father and the spiritual child! The best love that is to be found in this world (in the men of this world) is not worthy to be a shadow of it. God is love: and his children are of him, and partake of and dwell in the same love, though the enmity and highest wisdom of this world know them not, nor can know them; even as it never could know the children of the true wisdom formerly. Now, from this Fountain, do not only issue springs and streams of life to refresh our own hearts; but testimonies concerning the life which we feel and partake of, and concerning our travels from the dark land, through the valley of tears (where he who gave us life was our well), towards our resting-place.

These, many times, spring up in us for the sakes of others: of which nature are the things which follow. For not for my own sake did they spring up in me at this time; but to signify to others the mercy the Lord hath shown me, and the way wherein he hath led me, and what he hath given me to taste of and experience in the way; which will answer every true palate, every palate that is seasoned with life, and with the true experience. And having received them from the Lord for this very end, to hold them forth to others in love and tenderness of spirit, my heart is freely given up to him therein; not aiming at any thing thereby, but his glory singly, and the good of such souls to whom he shall please to extend favor and show mercy, in opening the heavenly mystery of life and salvation to them.

I have often said in my heart, Who hath begotten me these? Who would have said that Sarah should have given children suck! My wound was deep, and seemed incurable. But blessed be the Lord, who hath made known to me the physician of value, for whom no disease is too hard; but he is able to cure every sickness, and to relieve and rescue all that are captived and oppressed by the devil, that come unto him and wait upon him, in the way of his righteous judgments and most tender mercies. For after all my

religion and deep exercises, and inward experiences and knowledge, I came to such a loss of what I once had, that I sensibly felt I knew not the Lord, and lay continually groaning and mourning after him, and deeply afflicted for want of him. Oh, the pure light, and precious life, and sweet presence of my God, that my soul wanted, insomuch that my moisture was turned into the drought of summer, and my bones grown dry and withered! But at length, the Lord, in his goodness (Oh, blessed for ever be his name!), breathed upon the dry bones, and I felt life enter from him into me, and the days of deep sorrow and distress were at length forgotten, because a man-child was at length conceived and brought forth. And now where is the sackcloth? Where is the ashes? Oh, there is beauty in life, instead of the ashes in the state without life; and the garment of praise, instead of the spirit of heaviness! Oh glory, glory to the binder up of the bruised and broken-hearted, to the Redeemer of the captives, to the repairer of the breaches, to the builder up of the wasted and desolate ones! Glory to his tender mercy, glory to his grace, glory to his love, glory to his wisdom, glory to his power, for ever and ever, amen!

SOME EXPERIENCES ADDED

I. Concerning the seed of the kingdom

CONCERNING the seed of the kingdom, this I have experienced; that it consists not in words or notions of the mind, but is an inward thing, an inward, spiritual substance in the heart, as real inwardly in its kind, as other seeds are outwardly in their kind: and that being received by faith, and taking root in man (his heart, his earth, being plowed up and prepared for it), it groweth up inwardly, and bringeth forth fruit inwardly, as truly and really as any outward seed doth outwardly. This seed is known by its contrariety and enmity against the seed of the serpent; against all the seeds of evil in the hearts of men; it discovering them, turning the mind from them, and warring against them, and bruising and overcoming them in all that receive it, and let in its holy nature; which, as a holy leaven or salt, worketh out that which is unholy and unrighteous, dark and dead, and seasoneth with light, with life, with grace, with the holiness and righteousness of truth.

II. Concerning the soul's food

The soul's food is that which nourisheth it, which is the same with that which giveth it life. Every word proceeding out of the mouth of God, every motion, every quickening, every operation of his Spirit, is living, and nourisheth the soul with life, which receiveth it and feedeth on it. The spiritual manna, the spiritual water, from the holy well or fountain, the milk of the word, the flesh and blood of the Son of the living God, his words, which are spirit and life, nourish up the living birth unto life everlasting. How comes man to live at first, but by hearing the voice of him that giveth life? And how comes man to live afterwards, and to increase in life, but by hearing the same voice still? "Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live," &c. Isa. 55:3. This I have also experienced to give me life, to nourish up and strengthen me in life; even fresh life communicated from the living Fountain; and so my life is not in myself, not in any thing I can comprehend concerning Christ; but in being joined to him, in being ingrafted into him the holy root, into him the true olive-tree, into his Spirit; and so by the sap that springs up into me from him, my life is maintained and increased in me daily. Glory to his name for ever.

III. Concerning God's power

Concerning God's power, this I have experienced; that that is it which doth the work in the soul. It begets to God, it brings out of the land of darkness, it leads through all entanglements, and preserves in the midst of them all. It breaks down the old building of sin and iniquity (both inwardly and outwardly, both in heart,

and also in life and conversation), and raiseth the new and holy building. It makes willing, it makes obedient, it gives to believe, it gives to suffer. Oh, blessed be the Lord for the day of his power, which is inwardly broken forth! Oh, what would the poor child do (the poor lambs in the midst of the wolves inwardly and outwardly), were it not for the Father's hand, the Father's arm, the Father's power, which is still with them, and compasseth them about! Oh, blessed are they that know the ministration of the life inwardly, the power of life inwardly! For in life, in the seed of life, is the holy power; which is manifest, appears, and works, as it gains ground on the creature, to put forth and exercise in it the virtue and strength which it daily receiveth from its Father.

IV. Concerning Temptations

Concerning temptations, this I have experienced; that the strength and hurt of them, as to the soul, lies in the soul's looking at them. For the strength of God is revealed in his children against the tempter; which being patiently waited for, and trusted in, will never fail them. The least babe, the Lord would not have let in temptation and sin; but watch to that, and keep joined to that, which will preserve out of temptation and out of sin. God is faithful, who hath care of all his, and whose promise is to all his; and as he would have none sin, so none that diligently wait shall want his power to stand by them, to preserve out of sin. "Look unto me, and be saved, all ye ends of the earth." It is universally true. Look unto me, trust in me; look not at yourselves, trust not in yourselves; look not at the enemy, fear not the enemy; I will save you from every snare, every temptation, as your eye is steadfast upon me. What if the enemy come in like a flood? If the Spirit of the Lord lift up a standard against him, can he prevail? What though he cast fiery darts? What though he beset round about? Will not the shield of faith quench them all? Will not the whole armor of God defend and keep safe from them all? If the enemy be resisted lawfully (that is, in true faith in that power which is engaged for the soul against him), doth not the power of the Lord arise and scatter him, and strengthen and establish the soul in the grace, and in the truth? Oh! the holy mystery of the heavenly warfare, and of the working of the pure power against the enemy; which overcomes all his impurities, and keeps clean from them! Look not at the enemy; let not in the reasonings of the mind; keep in the patience, keep in the pure fear, in the holy, living sense: be only what thou art in the seed, in the new birth, in the life which God hath begotten in thee; then art thou safe, then art thou in the name of the Lord, which is the strong tower. The enemy indeed may make a noise about thee with his lusts, with his temptations, with his floods, with his storms, with his fiery darts; but he cannot enter thy habitation. The Spirit of darkness, the prince of darkness, is shut out of the land of the living. Abide thou there: dwell in the light, and walk in the light, as God is in the light, and he shall never have power over thee.

V. Concerning Prayer

I have experienced prayer to be the breathing of that birth which God begets, to the Father of life which begat it; who by his Spirit makes known to it its condition and wants, and gives a suitable sense of heart, and cries to it. For as it is not in man to beget himself to God; no more can he pray to God in his own will or time, but as God pours out the Spirit of prayer and supplication upon him, and by his Spirit t

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