

# Pilgrim Portions - Part 1

by John Nelson Darby

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*The sermon explores the Christian pilgrimage, focusing on sin, grace, and the transformative power of Christ in the believer's life.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 16:11, Psalm 32:8, Matthew 11:29, John 14:16, Romans 3:23, Galatians 2:20, Philippians 4:7, Hebrews 12:6, 1 Peter 5:10, 2 Peter 3:18

**Topics:** "Dependence On God", "Pilgrimage of Faith"

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## Description

John Nelson Darby emphasizes the journey of believers as pilgrims, exploring themes such as sin, grace, faith, and the importance of communion with God. He highlights the necessity of recognizing our dependence on Christ and the transformative power of His love and grace in overcoming trials and conflicts. Darby encourages believers to grow in their relationship with God, to bear their crosses, and to look unto Jesus as the ultimate source of strength and guidance in their spiritual walk.

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## Transcript

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Pilgrim Portions

J. N. Darby.

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#### Pilgrim Portions

#### Meditations for the Day of Rest

Selected from the Writings, Hymns, Letters, etc., of J. N. D.

"Those He calls His own -- pilgrims in scenes where He has been."

Selected by H. G.

Published by G. Morrish, 20, Paternoster Square E.C. London.

Preface to the original edition.

The extracts of which this volume is composed are taken from a ministry of the rarest possible kind. The subject of them all is Christ--Christ in many aspects as suited to the needs of souls. Such a ministry could only be given by the Holy Spirit, even as the Lord Himself said, speaking of the Comforter, "He shall testify of me." One further word may be permitted. These detached sentences are really nuggets of gold, but

they must be well examined and proved if their full value is to be discovered. Like all the author's writings, they form a mine of wealth, only it is he who digs the deepest who obtains most of its riches.

With this explanatory foreword this little book is earnestly commended to the blessing of God, with the prayer that the devout reader may become as redolent of Christ as the book itself is. E. Dennett.

## Preface

We have before us fifty-two weekly meditations for the day of rest, that is to say, for the eve of the Lord's Day, corresponding to each of the fifty-two weeks of the year, and leading the reader to consider a theme at a time. May the Lord bless them and bring believers in the Lord Jesus Christ to a deeper appreciation of His Person, His work for us and in us, and of the Hope He has left us, till He come; may we also undertake, with a renewed desire, "to serve the living and true God; And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come" (1 Thessalonians 1:9-10).

J. N. Darby published many works of Bible exposition, a number of poems and hymns, and wrote an impressive amount of letters with themes of the Christian faith. Regarding this, it is important to let him give his own thoughts about his own efforts to teach the Word of God, in his own words as penned in the Introduction to his Synopsis on the Books of the Bible:

"Though a commentary may doubtless aid the reader in many passages in which God has given to the commentator to understand in the main the intention of the Spirit of God, or to furnish philological principles and information, which facilitate to another the discovery of that intention; yet if it pretend to give the contents of scripture, or if he who uses it seeks these in its remarks, such commentary can only mislead and impoverish the soul. A commentary, even if always right, can at most give what the commentator has himself learned from the passage. The fullest and wisest must be very far indeed from the living fulness of the divine word. The Synopsis now presented has no pretension of the kind. Deeply convinced of the divine inspiration of the scriptures, given to us of God, and confirmed in this conviction by daily and growing discoveries of their fulness, depth, and perfectness; even more sensible, through grace, of the admirable perfection of the parts, and the wonderful connection of the whole, the writer only hopes to help the reader in the study of them. . . . "

And it is with this thought of directing the reader to the meditation of the Scriptures and thus to come closer to our Lord Jesus Christ that we publish this selection of thoughts, meditations, poems and letters of a believer who loved the Lord and who wanted to help his brethren in their common walk of following Christ. Santiago Escuin

## Sin

"All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

Rom. 3:23.

Father! Thy sovereign love has sought

Captives to sin, gone far from Thee;

The work that Thine Own Son hath wrought,

Has brought us back -- in peace and free!

First Week

A single sin is more horrible to God than a thousand sins -- nay, than all the sins in the world -- are to us.

It is the action of an independent will which is the principle of sin.

God can let nothing pass; He can forgive all and cleanse from all, but let nothing pass.

Christ is love; the greater sinner I am, the more need I have of Him.

If all the sins that ever were committed in the world were congregated in your persons and were your own act, this need not prevent your believing in Christ and coming unto God through Him.

Look at the state man is really in as regards the trust he puts in man rather than God. If his neighbour should ask him to do anything, though his conscience may tell him God hates what his neighbour wants him to do, still, rather than disoblige his companion, he will sin against God.

Sinning and religiousness go on together. . . . Where the power of godliness is not, nearness to godly things is only the more dangerous.

If our hearts . . . feel not sin, Christ felt it when He drank the cup and bore sin for us. If the heart does not feel the gravity of sin, not to the same point as Jesus knew it, but at least in some degree -- if, feeble as it may be, the feeling of sin is a stranger to us -- we have not at all entered into the mind of Jesus.

Adam sinned and left God, because he thought more of what Satan offered him; he thought the devil a better friend to him than God: but he has since found out to his cost that the devil was a liar; that he never had the power of giving him what he promised, and that by catching at the devil's bait; he has received his hook, and that "the wages of sin is death."

On the cross hung the one spotless, blessed Man, yet forsaken of God. What a fact before the world! No wonder the sun was darkened -- the central and splendid witness to God's glory in nature, when the Faithful and True Witness cried to His God and was not heard. Forsaken of God! What does this mean? What part have I in the cross? One single part -- my sins. . . . It baffles thought, that most solemn lonely hour which stands aloof from all before or after.

Christ . . . died rather than allow sin to subsist before God.

Directly grace acts in the heart, it gives the consciousness of sin; but, at the same time, the love of Christ reaches the conscience, deepening the consciousness of sin; but if this is deep, it is because the consciousness of the love of Christ is also deep.

Grace

"The God of all grace."

1 Peter 5:10.

There is rest in the calming grace

That flows from those realms above

What rest in the thought I we shall see His face,

Who has given us to know His love!

Second Week

Oh! when will the heart of man, even in thought, rise to the height of God's grace and patience?

It is the love that is in God, not any loveliness in the sinner, that accounts for the extravagant liberality of his reception in Christ.

What the natural man understands by mercy is not . . . God's blotting out sin by the bloodshedding of Jesus, but His passing by sin with indifference. This is not grace.

There is no giving in the "far country," not even of husks. Satan sells all, and dearly -- our souls are the price. You must buy everything. The world's principle is "nothing for nothing."

Would you find a giver? You must come to God.

Grace has no limits, no bounds. Be we what we may (and we cannot be worse than we are), in spite of that, God towards us is Love.

His grace . . . is ever more astonishing . . . and it so connects itself with every fibre and want, too, of our hearts in Christ's becoming man, that it brings us into a place which none can know who are not in it. And yet one is nothing in it, though united to Him who is everything -- and to be nothing is to be in a blessed place.

The law may torture the conscience, but grace humbles.

"While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." We see just two things in this -- that the sinner is without strength, without riches. Like the poor prodigal, he has spent all he had, and now he comes to himself, and is about to return, he has nothing to bring with him. Like a shipwrecked mariner, all is thrown overboard, everything going adrift, and he himself struggling with the dark billows is just cast ashore, wearied and poor, having nothing! But blessed be God, if we have got to shore, God is there, and He is for us . . . and we know we shall not be cast out again, and that we may lay claim now to all things that God can give. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

The way I come at the sense of the immensity of sin is by the immensity of the grace that has met it.

"That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of grace in his kindness toward us by Christ Jesus."

This is the way the angels will learn, and principalities and powers in the heavenly places, the meaning of "the exceeding riches of his grace." They will see the poor thief, and the woman of the city that was a sinner; ourselves, too, in the same place and glory as God's Son!

In the desert God will teach thee

What the God that thou hast found;

Patient, gracious, powerful, holy,

All His grace shall there abound!

The word, "Well done, good and faithful servant," sounds sweet in the ears, and most so in his who knows that by His grace alone can we be one or the other.

The Word of God

"The word of God endureth for ever."

1 Peter 1:25

Where'er we ope the pages,

In which -- Thy wondrous word!

Man's path through varied ages

Is given us to record --

Of failure, ruin, sorrow,

The story still we find;

God's love but brings the morrow

Of evil in mankind.

Third Week

In these days when the word of God is so called in question, it is blessed to think how a single verse of scripture was sufficient for Christ for authority, and sufficient for the devil, who had not a word to say.

I do not care for novel interpretations of scripture, cream lies on the surface.

But, oh, how is the word its own proof, and how has it its own power, though surely nothing but the Spirit of God can give it that power in us. But in walking with God alone can we draw out its sweetness and feed upon it. I believe that the Spirit of God is a positive teacher in this respect, and may give, if He sees good, developed thoughts of its contents, but if rivers are to flow out we must drink for ourselves as thirsty for it.

Let us now stop and ask ourselves, What has my mind been occupied with to-day? What has it been running after? Could you say, "The word of Christ has dwelt in me richly"? Now, perhaps, we have been occupied with politics, perhaps with the town talk, or with something of our own, Has the word of our own heart, the work of our own mind, filled up the greater part of our day? That is not Christ.

There is nothing more dangerous than the handling of the word apart from the Spirit . . . I know of nothing that more separates from God than truth spoken out of communion with God; there is uncommon danger in it.

God reveals not His things "to the wise and prudent," but unto "babes." It is not the strength of man's mind judging about "the things of God" that gets the blessing from Him; it is the spirit of the babe desiring "the sincere milk of the word." . . . The strongest mind must come to the word of God as the new-born babe.

There is not a single word in the book of God which cannot feed our souls.

Study the Bible . . . with prayer. Seek the Lord there, and not knowledge -- that will come too; but the heart is well directed in seeking the Lord.

I think . . . you have studied too much, and read the Bible too little. I always find that I have to be on my guard on this point. It is the teaching of God, and not the labour of man, that makes us enter into the thoughts and the purposes of God in the Bible . . . I do not think that any one will believe that I do not wish it should be much read, but I do wish it should be read with God.

There is one Man who knows the truth, because He is the truth, who is satisfied with the written word, and that is the Lord. There is no craft of Satan that the word of God is not sufficient to meet.

When this fleeting life shall be over that only shall abide which has been produced by the word.

The Holy Spirit

"Another Comforter."

John 14:16

But God, in love, has freely given

His Spirit, who reveals

All He's prepared for those, in heaven,

Whom here on earth He seals.

Fourth Week

Let me ask you how you treat this divine Guest. I am now speaking reverently of God's presence. How often do you think of it in the day, that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost? If the queen were to come, and for a time take up her abode with any of us, we should think of nothing else. . . . But what of the Holy Ghost who dwells in us? We think not of it half the day, we think of it if we do all things so as to please the Lord.

The effectual presence of the Spirit crucifies egotism, and gives freedom of thought about ourselves while on the way; it occupies us with one object -- Jesus.

Where the life of the flesh ends, the life of the Spirit begins, and practically we have power in the life of the Spirit in proportion as the flesh is dead.

To have the Spirit is one thing; to be filled with the Holy Ghost is another. When He is the one source of my thought, I am filled with Him. When He has possession of my heart, there is power to silence what is not of God, to keep my soul from evil, and to guide in every act of my life and walk.

Sometime there may be need to rebuke . . . but the flesh cannot rebuke the flesh, nor will the flesh submit to it; but if you indeed walk in the Spirit, you will have God's authority according to your measure, and Satan will yield to the Spirit.

Habitual unprofitable speaking I think ought to be stopped. . . . I never could understand why the church of God is to be the only place where the flesh is to have its way unrestrained. It is folly to suppose this. I desire the fullest liberty for the Spirit, but not the least for the flesh.

The Spirit is overflowing like "rivers of living water" from the soul of him in whom He has entered, flowing on all around; it may be on the good soil, or on the barren sand, but still His nature and power is ever to flow forth.

We ought to be able to confound every enemy, not with man's wisdom, intellect and understanding, but in the power of the Spirit. Do others not believe in it (the word of God)? I am not going to give up the sword of the Spirit because you do not think it will cut. I know it will cut, and therefore use it.

When a man is not filled with the Spirit of God, who gives force to the truth in his heart and clearness to his moral vision, the seductive power of the enemy dazzles his imagination. He loves the marvellous, unbelieving as he may be with regard to the truth. He lacks holy discernment, because he is ignorant of the holiness and character of God, and has not the stability of a soul that possesses the knowledge of God . . . as his treasure -- of a soul which knows that it has all in Him and needs no other marvels.

The Perfections of Christ

"He is altogether lovely."

Song of Sol. 5:16

Yet sure, if in Thy presence

My soul still constant were,

Mine eye would more familiar

Its brighter glories bear:

And thus Thy deep perfections

Much better should I know,

And with adoring fervour

In this Thy nature grow.

Fifth Week

The Lord Jesus . . . is the summing up of all possible beauty and perfection in Himself.

What was then the life of this Jesus, the Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief? A life of activity in obscurity, causing the love of God to penetrate the most hidden corners of society, wherever needs were greatest . . . this life did not shelter itself from the misery of the world . . . but it brought into it -- precious

grace! -- the love of God.

As Adam's first act . . . was to seek his own will . . . Christ was in this world of misery, devoting Himself in love, devoting Himself to do His Father's will. He came here emptying Himself. He came here by an act of devotedness to His Father, at all cost to Himself, that God might be glorified.

The only act of disobedience which Adam could commit he did commit; but He, who could have done all things as to power, only used His power to display more perfect service, more perfect subjection. How blessed is the picture of the Lord's ways!

The more faithful He was, the more despised and opposed; the more meek, the less esteemed: but all this altered nothing, because He did all to God alone: with the multitude, with His disciples, or before His unjust judges, nothing altered the perfectness of His ways, because in all circumstances all was done to God.

The Man Christ Jesus grew in favour with God and man. He was always the servant of everyone. The first thing that struck me some years ago in reading the gospels was, Here is a man that never did anything for Himself. What a miracle to see a man not living to himself, for He had got God for Himself.

The gospels display the One in whom was no selfishness. They tell out the heart that was ready for everybody. No matter how deep His own sorrow, He always cared for others. He could warn Peter in Gethsemane, and comfort the dying thief on the cross. His heart was above circumstances, never acting under them, but ever according to God in them.

Self-pleasing, self-exalting, self-advancing are ever the principles of men's actions . . . In the blessed Lord . . . there was true devotedness of heart and affection, and service, without the smallest particle of self-seeking. . . . The very thing man so much covets, there was the perfect absence of in Him. "I receive not honour from man."

We find admirable affections in the apostles . . . we find works, as Jesus said, greater than His own; we find exercises of heart and astonishing heights by grace . . . but we do not find the evenness that was in Christ. He was the Son of man who was in heaven. Such as Paul are chords on which God strikes, and on which He produces a wondrous music; but Christ is all the music itself.

May God grant unto us to value the perfect beauty of that Jesus who came to us.

Faith

"The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God."

Gal. 2:20

Then would'st Thou that I should rejoice,

And walk by faith below --

Enough, that I had heard Thy Voice,

And learnt Thy love's deep woe.

Sixth Week

Faith makes me see that God is greater than my sin, and not that my sin is greater than God.

Connect your service with nothing but God, not with any particular persons. You may be comforted by fellowship, and your heart refreshed; but you must work by your own individual faith and energy, without leaning on any one whatever; for if you do, you cannot be a faithful servant. Service must ever be measured by faith, and one's own communion with God. . . . In every age the blessing has been by individual agency, and the moment it has ceased to be this it has declined into the world.

The tendency of association is to make us lean upon one another.

The simplicity of a life of faith has charms that they do not know who never tried it.

One does not get rid of the difficulties of the path of faith by trying to avoid them, one must surmount them by the power of God.

A difficulty may be a real one, but it is only for the unbelief of hearts that it is an obstacle, if on the path of God's will; for faith reckons upon God . . . and difficulties are as nothing before Him.

Experience ought to strengthen faith; but there must be a present faith to use experience.

It is by faith that God is honoured.

It is enough for Satan if he succeeds in frightening us away from the pure and simple path of faith.

Faith acts on God's behalf, and reveals Him in the midst of circumstances, instead of being governed by them. Its superiority over that which surrounds it is evident. What repose to witness this amid the mire of this poor world.

It is characteristic of faith to reckon on God, not simply spite of difficulty, but spite of impossibility.

I have not seen the Lord leave those who have given themselves up to work, trusting Him; and I have seen distress of spirit and greatly hindered usefulness in those who, through their wives or own hearts, have turned to other things to help wife or family here.

Faith tested is faith strengthened; it is to have learnt your weakness, but to have learnt the faithfulness of God, His tender care even in sending the difficulties, that we may be there with Him.

My resources are somewhat diminished . . . but it is all right: everything is right for faith. . . . "In everything give thanks," and if all come from God it must be right.

There is One above . . . all able to bring about His thoughts, and he who has faith will find the sureness of His hand if He be really waited on.

We are quick at seizing the reins when we see danger ahead; but the Lord knows better than we do what has to be done: in due season He will deliver all who look to Him.

Peace

"Peace . . . which passeth all understanding."

Phil. 4:7

And stayed by joy divine,  
As hireling fills his day,  
Through scenes of strife,  
And desert life,  
I tread in peace my way.

#### Seventh Week

It is a serious thing, whatever be the goodness of God, to find peace with a God of holiness. Christ has made peace; but He would have us feel what it is to have need of it, in order that we may know it.

You look to getting the victory in order to get peace; we must get peace to get the victory -- peace already made by Christ's work -- then you will get strength. We do not find it till we see we have none.

The gospel of peace is ours in Christ; but I must have the spirit of peace in my heart. Peace has been made for us that we may dwell in peace.

It is Christ's work which gives peace to the conscience; but it is subdued will, having none of our own, which in great and in little things makes us peaceful in heart in going through a world of . . . trial.

In all things . . . instead of disquieting ourselves . . . we ought to present our request to God with prayer, with supplication . . . so that, even while making our petition to Him, we can already give thanks, because we are sure of the answer of His grace, be it what it may. . . . It does not say, you will have what you ask; but God's peace will keep your hearts. . . . Oh, what grace! that even our anxieties are a means of our being filled with this marvellous peace.

One great evidence of my abiding in Christ is quietness. I have my portion elsewhere, and I go on. . . . No matter what it may be, we bring quietness of spirit into all circumstances whilst dwelling in God. The soul is not only happy in God for itself, but it will bring the tone of that place out with it.

Does all trouble find your heart so resting on God as your Father, that when it is multiplied, it leaves your spirit at rest, your sleep sweet, lying down sleeping, and rising as if all was peace around you, because you know God is, and disposes of all things? Is He thus between you and your troubles and troublers? And if He is, what can reach you?

The soul in communion with God will live in the spirit of peace. There is nothing more important, to meet the turmoil of the world, than getting into this spirit of peace.

Nothing keeps the soul in such peace as a settled confidence in God. Without this a man will be continually excited, in haste, and full of anxiety. If the peace of God keep your hearts, you will have the triumph of it; nothing can be heard that is distinctive from it and that does not perfectly harmonise with it.

The love and grace of God which set us in close connection with heaven fill our hearts, and we know how to carry to distracted souls that calm and peace which nothing in this world can destroy.

A little leisure enables us often to see all things quietly with Christ's eye.

## Guidance

"I will guide thee with mine eye."

Ps. 32:8

Rise my soul! Thy God directs thee;

Stranger hands no more impede:

Pass thou on, His hands protect thee --

Strength that has the captive freed.

Light divine surrounds thy going;

God Himself shall mark thy way:

Secret blessings, richly flowing,

Lead to everlasting day.

## Eighth Week

The steps of a good man are ordered by Jehovah. This is a vast and precious blessing. . . . A young Christian may, in confiding zeal, not see so much the value of this . . . but when one has seen the world, what a pathless wilderness it is; it is beyond all price that the Lord directs our steps.

If we look to Him all is simple; we see our way clearly, and we have motives that do not leave the soul a prey to uncertainty. It is the double-minded man who is unstable in all his ways.

It is an amazing comfort for my soul to think that there is not a single thing all through my life in which God as my Father has not a positive will about to direct me . . . that I do not take a step but what His love has provided for.

The Lord guide you . . . it is ever good to wait on Him, and not be in a hurry, or let our own will work. "I waited patiently for the Lord" is a word of Christ's Himself, and He cares for us and directs in everything.

I have no doubt that if we kept close to Christ, His Spirit would guide us in our intercourse with others. We are not always conscious of divine guidance even when it is there; but the word comes from Christ to the souls we have to say to, even if rejected. . . . But our part is to keep close to Christ, so that it should be "not I, but Christ liveth in me," and thus He acts in our thoughts and ways without our, at the moment, thinking of Him directly; but we always have the consciousness of speaking for Him, and of His presence.

The Spirit and the word cannot be separated without falling into fanaticism on the one hand, or into rationalism on the other -- without putting oneself outside the place of dependence upon God and of His guidance.

The sheep know the voice of Christ, and if they have not got His voice they stop until they have. There is one voice they know. There are plenty of other voices, but they do not know them. Sheep are silly, stupid creatures; but they know the shepherd's voice -- that one voice. The moment Christ's voice has reached

me, it is enough; and this gives a peace and quietness in one's path that nothing else does. It is not great wisdom or great strength that gives this, but it is hearing the Shepherd's voice and knowing it. If not the shepherd's voice, it is dreaded. "A stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him." The Shepherd does not frighten. He gives strength and confidence; and His voice having once reached the heart, nothing else is needed.

And, Saviour! 'tis Thee from on high

I await, till the time Thou shalt come

To take him Thou hast led by Thine eye

To Thyself, in Thy heavenly home.

Humility

"Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart."

Matt. 11:29

O lowliness, how feebly known,

That meets the grace that gave the Son!

That waits, to serve Him as His own,

Till grace what grace began shall crown!

Ninth Week

Pride is the greatest of all evils that beset us, and of all our enemies it is that which dies the slowest and hardest.

God hates pride above all things, because it gives to man the place that belongs to Him who is above, exalted over all. Pride intercepts communion with God, and draws down His chastisement, for "God resists the proud."

"Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well." The valley of Baca is a place of sorrow and humiliation, but one of blessing also. . . . With some of us this valley may be the loss of that nearest our hearts, or the thwarting of the will -- something that will humble us; but it is a place of blessing. We get more refreshing from the painful than the pleasant things. . . . The refreshment and the blessing come from that which has pained us, humbled us, emptied us of self.

He who is lowest and lowliest will be most blessed.

Often the soul, by seeking joy, cannot get it; this would not purify and bless it and to bless God must purify. When emptied of self and seeking God we find joy.

Shall I ever forget the humiliation of Christ? . . . Never! never! through all eternity. I shall never forget His humiliation on earth. While seeing Him in glory animates the soul to run after Him, what feeds the soul is the bread come down. That produces a spirit that thinks of everything but itself. . . . Go and study Him, and

live by Him, and you will come out in His likeness, in all His grace and gentleness and loveliness. . . . The Lord give us to be so occupied with Him who was so full of love . . . so full of lowliness, that we shall manifest the same.

True humility does not so much consist in thinking badly of ourselves as in not thinking of ourselves at all. I am too bad to be worth thinking about. What I want is, to forget myself and to look to God, who is worth all my thoughts.

The only real humbleness and strength and blessing is to forget self in the presence and blessedness of God.

May you be in yourself so broken down that you may find One who never breaks down.

We do not know how to be weak, that is our weakness.

The humble spirit does not think so much -- it receives God's thoughts.

"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." What was the mind that was in Jesus? It was always coming down. . . . The more He humbled Himself, the more He was trampled on. . . . He goes down . . . till He can go no lower, down to the dust of death. . . . Are you content to do this? Are you content to have the mind that was in Christ Jesus, content to be always trampled on?

The Lord be with you, and keep you near Himself, humble and serving, but having more of Him than you spend in service.

Trial

"Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth."

Heb. 12:6

There is rest in the midst of grief,  
For grief's been the proof of love;  
'Tis sweet in that love to find relief,  
When the sorrows of earth we prove.

Tenth Week

Christ never makes a breach except to come in and connect the soul and heart more with Himself; and it is worth all the sorrow that ever was, and more, to learn the least atom more of His love and of Himself, and there is nothing like that, nothing like Him: and it lasts.

Everybody is not passing smoothly through this life, though some may be more so than others. . . . But, after all, it is only "for a season" and if "need be." Do not make yourself uneasy: the one who holds the reins of the need-be is God. He does not take pleasure in afflicting. If there is the need for it we go through the trial, but it is only for a moment.

We find the greatest difficulty often in bringing our sorrow to God. How can I do so, the soul of some may be saying, as my sorrow is the fruit of my sin? . . . Can I, in the integrity of my heart towards God, take my sorrows to Him, knowing I deserve them? Yes; Christ has been to God about them. This, then, is the ground upon which I can go . . . God can afford to meet me in all my sorrow, because Christ's work has been so perfectly done. In the main all sorrow is from sin, and all help is grounded upon the atonement.

There is no position a saint can be in but that he may go to God for help.

I have been very happy during my illness; it has made me feel much more than ever that heaven and the bosom of God is my home, seeing that I shall be with Him for ever.

Pride and stoical resistance to sorrow will not do. That does not draw the soul to God, but effectually . . . keeps it from Him. . . . Sorrow, when it is complete and helpless, gives intimacy with Him who is willing and able to help, and this is now with God.

If we . . . carried all our . . . troubles to God, to go fully through all with Him, our hearts would be all free and happy to turn round and care for others.

When the believing soul is under trial the recurrence to God as its source and hope is the natural movement of faith. . . . Nor is there a sweeter time for the soul that trusts Him than the time of trial.

When we look back to a past life we have more to be thankful for our trials than for anything else.

He comes down into all our circumstances, and for a poor trifle of affliction I get to find (not the thing set aside, but) God Himself taking the place of our sorrow.

The time will come when all our sorrow will be over, but our Friend will remain. He is our tried and true Friend. He has entered into the deepest woes of our heart, and will make us the sharers of His joy for ever.

Communion

"I sat down under his shadow with great delight."

Song of Sol. 2:3

We wait to see Thee, Lord,

Yet now within our hearts

Thou dwell'st in love that doth afford

The joy that love imparts.

Eleventh Week

Moses "sees Him who is invisible." This makes him decided. When we realise the presence of God Pharaoh is nothing. . . . Where there is lack of communion there is weakness and indecision.

There is no strength but in Christ. I have none at any time except as my soul is in secret communion with Him. . . . Now the direct power of Satan is towards this point, to keep our souls from living on Christ.

One great thing we have to seek is that communion with Christ be as strong as all the doctrines we hold or teach. Without that the doctrine itself will have no force: besides, we ourselves shall not be with God in it, and, after all, that is all.

God may make men as active as possible, like Paul or Boanerges, when He wants them; but communion is the most precious thing to Him. There is a difference between Peter and John. His heart rested with satisfaction on him who leaned on His bosom.

There should be a going of the soul to God in a far more intimate way than to any one else. Communion with saints is precious, but I must have intimacy of communion with God above all; and communion of saints will flow from communion with God.

Joy in God is communion . . . presenting a want to God is not communion. "God talked with Abraham," "his friend" -- that is communion.

Communion with God is the retiring place of the heart.

If living in communion with God we are not thinking of ourselves. Moses did not know his face shone when every one else did. He had been looking up out of himself and turned towards the earth, bearing upon him the light of heaven.

None can be so intimately near us as God, for He is in us. Yet what an intimacy it is!

The cross and the crown go together; and, more than this, the cross and communion go together. The cross touches my natural will, and therefore it breaks down and takes away that which hinders communion.

If I am not in communion it is for the Holy Spirit to speak to my conscience, instead of using me.

May our work be a work of faith, drawing its strength, its existence even, from our communion with God our Father.

In speaking of God's truth, whenever we cannot "speak as the oracles of God," through communion, it is our business to be silent.

I may study the word again and again, but unless I get into communion with Him by it, it will profit me nothing -- at least at the time.

What is the joy of a Redeemer but the joy and communion, the happiness of His redeemed?

Conflict

"We are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

Rom. 8:37

The strong man in his armour

Thou mettest in Thy grace,

Did'st spoil the mighty charmer

Of our unhappy race.

The chains of man, his victim,

Were loosened by Thy hand,

No evils that afflict him

Before Thy power could stand.

Twelfth Week

Many have not the courage to go on in God's warfare, because they hold on to something which is inconsistent with the light they have received. Perhaps, alas! they lose the light which they have not acted up to, and Satan is able to bring their mind under the darkness of his good reasons for staying where they are without conquering more territory from him.

The armour should be put on before the battle, not just at the battle.

It is exceedingly serious to fight God's battle against Satan. . . . It is a most solemn thing that my business is to overcome Satan.

The greater the energy of the Spirit the more is the individual in whom it is manifested exposed to the fury of Satan.

We ought not merely not to be beaten by Satan, but ever to be gaining ground upon him.

A new place brings new temptations . . . but if temptations are new, grace is as new, as various, as infinite to meet them when we are where He would have us.

It was by the power of death that the Lord destroyed all his strength who had the power of death. Death is the best weapon in the arsenal of God, when it is wielded by the power of life.

There is nowhere that conflict is so much felt as in prayer: that is where Satan desires to come in.

If a Christian gets out of dependence on the Lord, he will be beaten by Satan in conflict.

Moses, Aaron and Hur go up to the top of the hill, and Israel under Joshua fights in the plain below with Amalek . . . Israel might have reasoned on the manner of their fighting, on the strength of the enemy, and on ten thousand things; but, after all, their success depended on Moses' hands being stretched out. It is very hard for us to see ourselves and Satan to be as nothing and God to be everything.

I daresay many of us have thought . . . that one good battle with Satan and all will be over; but no such thing, we have security and the certainty of victory, but no promise of cessation from conflict.

(Heb. 2:18.) He suffered -- never yielded. We do not suffer when we yield to temptation; the flesh takes pleasure in the things by which it is tempted. Jesus suffered being tempted, and He is able to succour them that are tempted. It is important to observe that the flesh, when acted upon by its desires, does not suffer -- being tempted, it, alas! enjoys. But when, according to the light of the Holy Ghost and the fidelity of obedience, the Spirit resists the attacks of the enemy, whether subtle or persecuting, then one suffers. This is what the Lord did, and this we have to do.

My happiness, O Lord, with Thee

Is long laid up in store

For that bless'd day when Thee I'd see,

And conflict all be o'er.

Devotedness

"I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus."

Phil. 3:8

'Tis the treasure I've found in His love

That has made me a pilgrim below;

And 'tis there, when I reach Him above

As I'm known, all His fulness I'll know.

Thirteenth Week

Absolute consecration to Jesus is the strongest bond between human hearts. It strips them of self, and they have but one soul in thought, intent and settled purpose, because they have but one object.

Can we honestly say, with glory before us, with Christ before us: "This one thing I do"? Which way does your eye turn? Which way are you going? God has only one way -- Christ.

Paul saw Christ on the way to Damascus, and he gives up his importance, his Pharisaism, his teaching, his everything else, and he counts all but loss that he may win Christ. . . . People talk of sacrifices; but there is no great sacrifice in giving up dung. If the eye were so fixed on Christ that these things got that character it would not be a trouble to give them up. The thing gets its character from what the heart is set on.

I hope that God will keep you from every bond save the bonds of Christ, and that He will rivet these bonds of security and joy more and more.

In all true devotedness Christ is the first and governing object; next, "His own which are in the world"; and then our fellow-men -- first their souls, then their bodies, and every want they are in.

The love of Christ constrains us in the cross to give ourselves wholly up to Him who has so loved us, given Himself wholly up for us. . . . It makes us of little esteem to ourselves in the presence of such love. We see we are not our own, but bought with a price.

The sense that we are not our own deepens the claim in our hearts, yet takes away all merit in the devotedness.

It is by looking to Jesus that we can give up anything.

Following Christ wholly the world or the human heart will never stand.

We have to live in natural ties as those who are not in them, to act from Christ in them.

You may be blessed to your husband . . . as strengthening and comforting and encouraging him . . . in the weariness and trials which accompany the service. But do not seek to relax his energy. A wife sometimes likes to have her husband for herself, and when her husband is the Lord's labourer it is a great evil. I have known a wife spoil a labourer . . . in this way. A husband is bound to care for his wife, consider her, and do anything but neglect her . . . but the wife of a labourer for the Lord must put his work and labour before herself. . . . A wise wife who seeks first the Lord herself, puts Him first for her husband, and does not love him the less; it is a bond, and her husband will honour and value her, and so will the Lord.

Oh, how surely we shall feel it that day, that all that was not a heart given to Him was loss and wretchedness.

#### Unbelieving Fears

"I will trust, and not be afraid."

Isa. 12:2

The Lord is Himself gone before,

He has marked out the path that I tread;

It's as sure as the love I adore,

I have nothing to fear nor to dread.

#### Fourteenth Week

You must not attach too much importance to your joy . . . nor to your distress. . . . You can add nothing by joy or sorrow to the perfect work of Christ. . . . If some one has paid my debts, my sorrow at the folly that contracted them or my joy at their being discharged adds nothing whatever to the payment of the debt, though both be natural and just.

Abraham found in the mountain a place where he could intercede with God, while Lot was saying, "I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me and I die." Unbelief always looks at the place of faith as the most awful thing possible -- all darkness.

He is not ashamed to call you brethren; and will you be ashamed to confess Him as your Lord and Master in the face of all the world? Be not debating within yourselves when you shall avow yourselves; do it at once, decidedly. Make the plunge, and trust God for the consequence. I know it by experience that an open, bold confession of being Christ's is more than half the struggle over. . . . I say, as one who knows, that if a man, in the strength of the Lord, is just brought to say to his companions and friends, I am Christ's, and I must act for Him -- that he will not suffer what others must feel who are creeping on fearful and afraid to avow Him whom they desire to serve.

I know no word more settling to the soul than "Be careful for nothing." How often have I found it so . . . "for nothing."

How little we gain by the prudence of unbelief; it gives occasion to the power and attacks of the enemy.

Never can unbelief -- however good its intentions in joining the work of faith -- do anything except spoil it.

How far the child of God may go astray when he puts himself under the protection of unbelievers, instead of relying on the help of God in all the difficulties which beset the path of faith!

Satan gets entrance for his full power in the soul the moment there is a shade of distrust in God.

When unbelief is in action it only produces troubles and sorrows.

When there remains in the heart any groan which is not uttered to God as to a God of grace, any distrust of Him, it is the flesh and work of the enemy. . . . We may be cast down at times (although scarcely ever without some want of faith) and yet everything goes on well if we bring it all to God.

Anxiety which anticipates evil is not the faith which faces the difficulties through which God sees well to make us pass.

When the soul is distressed or cast down, that is not sin in itself. But sin comes in when there is distrust of God.

I am not afraid while He lives and is Jesus.

Separation from the World

"For whom I have suffered the loss of all things."

Phil. 3:8

Art thou wean'd from Egypt's pleasures?

God in secret thee shall keep;

There unfold His hidden treasures,

There His love's exhaustless deep.

Fifteenth Week

Every mark of the world is a reproach to him who is heavenly.

It is only the heavenly man who has died with Christ that disentangles himself from all that is of Egypt . . . the principle of worldliness is uprooted in him who is dead and risen with Christ and living a heavenly life.

Alliance with the world prevents our overcoming the world.

Called to glory, faith of necessity quits Egypt; God has not placed the glory there. To be well off in the world is not to be well off in heaven.

I dread the saints getting tired of unworldliness.

It is with a rejected Saviour we have to walk. The whole system of the world is a stumbling-block to turn the heart from God -- dress, vain show, flattery . . . All that puts us into the rich man's place is a stumbling-block. Heaven is open to a rejected Christ. Remember this.

Samson . . . was one separated to God, sanctified for Jehovah . . . his hair was not to be cut. While the commandment and precept were observed, his strength was with him. There might have seemed little connection between long or uncut hair and all-overcoming strength; but God was in it: and an obeyed, honoured God, is a God of strength to us.

God's design is to link us with heaven. You must have heaven without the world, or the world without heaven. He who prepares the city cannot wish for us anything between the two.

I remember saying . . . that our giving up the world and the world giving up us were two very different things. It is the latter which tries all the elements of self-importance, which lie much deeper than we are aware.

Where activity is distinctly wanting is in bringing up Christ to souls and devotedness to Him, unworldliness, a life where we do one thing, a home, dress, manners, which say that Christ is all.

(2 Cor. 6:17-18.) We come out from among the worldly . . . in order to enter into the relationship of sons and daughters to the Almighty God: otherwise we cannot possibly realise this relationship. God will not have worldlings in relation with Himself as sons and daughters; they have not entered into this position with regard to Him.

Wise was God indeed to choose not many mighty, not many noble, not many rich; they find it hard to submit their comforts and comeliness to God's. A rich body of Christians will become practically poor and simple or practically worldly.

A distracted heart is the bane of a Christian. When my heart is filled with Christ I have no heart or eye for the trash of the world. If Christ is dwelling in your heart by faith it will not be the question, What harm is there in this, or that? Rather, Am I doing this for Christ? Can Christ go along with me in this? If you are in communion with Him you will readily detect what is not of Him. Do not let the world come in and distract your thoughts.

Joy

"Joy unspeakable."

1 Peter 1:8

Sing without ceasing, sing,

The Saviour's present grace,

How all things shine

In light divine,

For those who've seen His face.

Sixteenth Week

The thing that hinders our rejoicing is not trouble, but being half and half. If in the world his conscience reproaches the Christian, if he meets spiritual Christians he is unhappy there; in fact, he is happy nowhere.

Ours ought not to be a religion of regrets, but a rejoicing of heart continually.

"Rejoice evermore: pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks." Closer connection between these three than our souls are wont to acknowledge. Joy will ever rise in proportion to prayer and thanksgiving.

Where His will is there is happiness. . . . Christ is my happiness . . . but it is in the path of His will that we find the enjoyment of His love. . . . Thus I find in Him a source of profound and ineffable joy . . . our treasure is Himself.

I have been unspeakably happy lately, yet as making me nothing in the thought of being the object of God's love; I had been seeking right affections towards Him -- all right -- but the thought that He loved me flowed in on me in joy and peace; and peace is a very deep thing, like a river.

I attach more importance to peace than to joy. I should wish to see you habitually in a joy more deep than demonstrative, but if Jesus is at the bottom of your heart . . . then your joy will be deep.

Sorrow is a good thing, and makes God a more abundant source of joy.

The true effect of real joy in the things of God is to empty us of ourselves and to make us think little of ourselves.

(Phil. iv. 4.) The apostle . . . exhorts Christians to rejoice: it is a testimony to the worth of Christ.

"Would to God, that not only thou, but all that hear me, were . . . altogether such as I am, except these bonds! "What happiness and what love (and in God these two things go together) are expressed in these words! A poor prisoner, aged and rejected, at the end of his career he is rich in God. Blessed years that he had spent in prison! He could give himself as a model of happiness, for it filled his heart.

(Phil. 3:18; 4:4.) If he even weeps over many who call themselves Christians he always rejoices in the Lord; in Him is that which nothing can alter. This is not an indifference to sorrow which hinders weeping, but it is a spring of joy which enlarges when there is distress, because of its immutability, and which even becomes more pure in the heart the more it becomes the only one, and it is in itself the only spring that is infinitely pure. When it is our only spring we thereby love others. If we love them besides Him we lose something of Him. When . . . we are weaned from all other springs His joy remains in all its purity, and our concern for others partakes of this same purity.

Our woe is Thine, Lord Jesus!

Our joy is in Thy love;

But woe and joy all lead us

To Thee, in heaven above.

Dependence

"Without me ye can do nothing."

John 15:5

Oh, keep us, love divine, near Thee,

That we our nothingness may know

And ever to Thy glory be

Walking in faith while here below.

Seventeenth Week

When we are really weak God never leaves us; but when unconscious of our infirmities we have to learn them by experience.

The whole thing for us is to get to absolute dependence on infallible faithfulness, on unwearied love to carry us through.

Conscious weakness causes a saint not to dare to move without God.

The place of strength is always that of being forced to lean on God.

The very essence of the condition of a soul in a right state is conscious dependence.

Let us delight in dependence -- that a Person above us should minister to us and care for us.

There is an easy way of going on in worldliness, and there is nothing more sad than the quiet comfortable Christian going on day by day apart from dependence on the Lord.

We must always be in dependence or fall.

In every detail of our lives there is no blessing but in dependence on God. . . . If in speaking to you now I were to cease from depending on the Lord in doing it, all blessing to my own soul would cease. "Without me ye can do nothing." Neither can I speak, nor you hear, to profit without dependence on the Lord.

The point for us is to rest in the arm of the Lord, whatever may be, and not run to get help elsewhere.

We may be saying true things in prayer or in testimony, but if we are not realising our dependence on the Lord we shall not have His strength in the battle.

When victory does not tend to worship we and God part company as soon as the victory is achieved. How sad to see victory often leading to mere joy instead of still greater dependence on and delight in God.

We cannot make a visit right without His hand.

Remember, if we are in entire dependence, the temptation does not meet us at all. . . . Trial comes; but, like Jesus, we can say of it, "the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" Every trial becomes a blessed occasion for perfecting obedience, if near God; if otherwise, a temptation.

One cannot do an instant without Him; and oh, how blessed it is to trust Him! I feel all our work ought to be directly the immediate expression of God's mind, and it is a very solemn thing to work (and wait) directly from Him.

No one can pluck us out of Christ's hand; but why say this if there was not real danger and keeping of us in it? The wolf "catcheth" (same word as "pluck") the sheep and scattereth them, but cannot catch them out of Christ's hand: but here our responsibility comes in, our dependence on Him, our leaving ourselves

to His infallible care; and one is as precious as the other is necessary.

Cross-Bearing.

"Let him . . . take up his cross daily."

Luke 9:23

We cling to Thee in weakness --

The manger and the cross;

We gaze upon Thy meekness,

Through suffering, pain and loss.

Eighteenth Week

Before we take up the cross for ourselves there is the cross for us. He suffered and gave His life a ransom.

All must be forsaken in this world: every link with this world must be broken. The nearer anything is to the heart the more dangerous, the more it must be abhorred. Not that the affections are evil things: but Christ being rejected by this world everything that binds us to earth must be sacrificed for Him. Cost what it may, He must be followed; and one must know how to hate one's own life, and even to lose it, rather than grow lax in following the Lord.

The cross we shall have: and what of that? It is a good thing for us; it draws us away from the world; it breaks the will; it delivers from self by cutting, it may be, the next link to the heart. The cross has a delicious power, though not a pleasant thing; it would be no cross if it were.

Jesus is the good Shepherd; He leads forth His own sheep, He walks before them and the sheep follow Him. The disciples were afraid as they followed Jesus; Jesus led them to the cross. The cross is on the road which leads to glory. . . . It is the cross which takes from us all that which hinders our realising Christ in glory.

The more faithfulness there is in us the more sorrows doubtless, but then there will be consolations abounding; only let us take up the cross, and if it be really the cross we shall find Jesus with it and the earnest and spring of glory in our hearts.

The Lord says, You must take up the cross and follow Me. If you follow Me I can give you the cross; that is all I have to give you now. . . . You shall be like Me, and close to Me, too; but what you must reckon on is the cross if you are going to glory. . . . Are you ready to take up your cross or have you a question if the cross is right or if there is any other road ? The Lord knows none, and I know none.

All that leads us to be agreeable to the world and to the customs of men takes away the offence of the cross, and . . . puts us at a distance from Christ.

When my heart thoroughly trusts Christ it is His cross and His reproach, and it has the sweetness of Christ and all is sweet.

It is needful for us that we should pass through the sorrows as well as the joys of the work of the Lord, happy if our sorrows are His sorrows and His joys ours. The nearer we are to Him, and the more we thus reproduce the faithful image of what He is, the more we shall encounter the opposition of the world . . . and still more shall we experience the want of sympathy from Christians who will not walk to His footsteps. . . . But if we suffer with Jesus we shall reign with Him.

To whatever degree we enjoy the position of Jesus in heaven we must also share His position here below, to be hated.

Looking unto Jesus

"We see Jesus . . . crowned with glory and honour"

Heb. 2:9

But though the world can see no more

Him it cast out with scorn,

The eye of fresh-born faith can soar

Above -- where He is gone.

Nineteenth Week

Are we . . . looking steadfastly into heaven? Alas! what inconstant hearts we have; how fickle and changing! The Holy Ghost ever leads the eye to, and would keep it fixed on, Jesus. . . . To reveal and glorify Him is the habitual aim of the Spirit.

It is well to be done with ourselves and to be taken up with Jesus. We are entitled to forget ourselves, we are entitled to forget our sins, we are entitled to forget all but Jesus.

(Heb. 12:1, 2.) The way in which the apostle engages them to disentangle themselves from every hindrance, whether sin or difficulty, is remarkable; as though they had nothing to do but cast them off as useless weights. And, in fact, when we look at Jesus nothing is easier; when we are not looking at Him, nothing more impossible.

What I would press upon you is to study Christ, so that we may be like Him here. There is nothing that so fills the soul with blessing and encouragement, or that so sanctifies: nothing which so gives the living sense of divine love, that gives courage.

The Lord give us while resting in His precious blood to go and contemplate Him, feed upon Him and live by Him. . . . See Him the lowly blessed patient One at God's right hand now, the One that God has given to keep our hearts right in the world of folly and pride.

When we are occupied with Jesus the littleness of all that one is, or of all that one has done, remains in the shade, and Jesus Himself alone stands out in relief.

There is a danger of being too much occupied with evil; it does not refresh, does not help the soul on. "Abstain from every form of evil," but be occupied ourselves and occupy others with Christ. The evil itself becomes not less evil, but less in comparison with the power of good where the soul dwells.

Looking to God one is above the heaving and breakers, and walking on a rough sea is the same as walking on a smooth sea.

If Christ is my life . . . Christ and heavenly things become the object of my life. Every creature must have an object. It is God's supreme prerogative not to want an object. He may love an object; but I cannot live without an object any more than without food. . . . "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." There is the life; and this life has got a perfect blessed object which it delights in and contemplates: and this the Lord Jesus is . . . in His glory.

How the heart knows that, how sweet soever the common joy of saints . . . yet that in joys and sorrows there is a looking to Jesus, a communion with Jesus, a dependence of heart on His approbation, in which none can participate. . . . The heart that knows Him could not do without this.

Growth

"Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

2 Peter 3:18

'Tis His. Yes, yes; no other sound

Could move my heart like this;

The Voice of Him that earlier bound

Through grace that heart to His.

In other accents now, 'tis true,

Than once my spirit woke

To life and peace, through which it grew

Under His gracious yoke.

Yes! then 'twas faith -- Thy Word; but now

Thyself my soul draw'st nigh;

My soul with nearer thoughts to bow

Of brighter worlds on high.

Twentieth Week

The great secret of growth is looking up to the Lord as gracious.

It is astonishing what progress a soul sometimes makes in a time of sorrow. It has been much more with God; for, indeed, that alone makes us make progress. There is much more confidence, quietness, absence of the moving of the will -- much more . . . dependence on Him, more intimacy with Him and independence of circumstances -- a great deal less between us and Him -- and then all the blessedness

that is in Him comes to act upon the soul and reflect in it; and, oh, how sweet that is! What a difference it does make in the Christian, who, perhaps, was blameless in his walk in general previously.

If we are "to grow by the sincere milk of the word" . . . we need the teaching of the Holy Spirit, and in order to this there must be the exercising of ourselves unto godliness -- the "laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings," so that the Holy Spirit be not grieved. Has the Christian envy, guile, hypocrisies, allowed to work in his heart? There can be no growth in the true knowledge of the things of God.

What is called the higher christian life is only the getting out of Roman 7 into 6 and 8 -- a very real thing, and that which the great body of teachers would have you content without.

In the measure in which our spiritual position is raised, so, of course, do the difficulties and exercises of heart assume a character which requires greater experience and greater power. Our spiritual advance introduces us necessarily into them; but God is faithful not to suffer us to be tempted above that we are able.

Those who dwell in spirit in the heavenly country take the tone of it, and grow in the things wherein they find themselves.

As you grow in . . . knowledge of Him a joy grows deeper than that of first conversion. I have known Christ, more or less, between thirty and forty years, and I can say that I have ten thousand times more joy now than I had at first. It is a deeper, calmer joy. The water rushing down from a hill is beautiful to look at, and makes most noise; but you will find that the water that runs in the plain is deeper, calmer, more fructifying.

(1 John 2:12-15.) We . . . find three classes of Christians: fathers, young men, and babes. He (John) addresses them each twice. . . . That which characterises fathers in Christ is that they have known Him who is from the beginning, that is Christ. This is all that he has to say about them. All had resulted in that. He only repeats the same thing again when, changing his form of expression, he begins anew with these three classes. The fathers have known Christ. . . . They are not occupied with experience -- that would be being occupied with self, with one's own heart. All that has passed away and Christ alone remains as our portion, unmingled with aught besides.

The Presence of God

"In Thy presence is fulness of joy."

Ps. 16:11

Such here on earth I am,

Though I in weakness roam;

My place on high,

God's self so nigh;

His presence is my home.

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