

Pilgrim Portions - Part 3

by John Nelson Darby

John Nelson Darby's sermon emphasizes the eternal value of serving Christ amidst earthly trials and the importance of faith in understanding God's love and provision.

Scripture: Proverbs 3:26, Isaiah 63:9, Matthew 28:18, John 14:3, John 14:23, Philippians 1:11, Hebrews 4:16, 1 Peter 2:11, 1 John 1:5, Revelation 1:5-6

Topics: "Eternal Perspective", "Laboring for Christ"

Description

John Nelson Darby emphasizes the transient nature of earthly pursuits compared to the eternal significance of serving Christ. He reflects on the futility of worldly achievements and the joy that comes from laboring for the Lord, urging believers to focus on the unseen and eternal. Darby encourages Christians to find comfort in their trials, knowing that their work for God is never in vain and that true fulfillment comes from a relationship with Christ. He highlights the importance of faith, obedience, and the assurance of God's love and provision in times of need. Ultimately, he calls for a life devoted to Christ, with the hope of eternal glory in His presence.

Transcript

Thirty-Eighth Week

I feel . . . more than ever that all is vanity, but what is for ever. We all know it, but how foolish all else will seem when we meet the blessed Lord.

I know I am a poor workman, but I know the hour will come when the only thing worth remembering -- save eternal grace and Him who is the source . . . of it -- if memory it can then be called, will be service and labour for Him who has loved us.

The time will soon come when we shall say of all that has not been Christ in our lives and ways, "That was all lost."

Faith should pierce through and see the things that are not seen: things get their true value in another world, and faith when vivid sees them there.

We shall sorrow at no sacrifice when we meet Him.

May the Lord graciously raise up labourers in His harvest. My heart is only there when not with Christ in heaven -- there where through grace it will ever be. I find all that is not seen ever more, and alone, real. . . . I cannot conceive of having the heart anywhere else.

If we live to serve Christ, the sorrow of this world is worth while; but it is not the less sorrow in itself, whatever blessing may cheer us through it.

Do not faint . . . for if we really labour we must be more or less in conflict, trial and sorrow; for it is a work of faith, if a labour of love and of patience of hope; because though blessed fruits be by the way, and we may see them ripening, it is the great ingathering is the time of joy. And it is a distinct view and reference to that which gives our work a real, deep, holy character, such as His was, and will prove real in that day. You must labour in sorrow, for it is in the midst of evil, if you would reap in joy; and if we get our corn up into shocks, still it is unprotected out in the field, and we have the watchful care and anxiety till it is housed.

The new creation's stainless joy

Gleams through the present gloom;

That world of bliss without alloy --

The saint's eternal home.

Lot saw a well-watered plain and a city, and then dwelt in it on the earth, and consequently was in the midst of judgment; while Abraham sought a city out of sight, and he enjoyed the blessing and comfort of God being with him, go where he might.

Oh, the blessedness! when after all troubles and conflicts are over we shall "awake in his likeness." Believers, is there nothing in this to quicken your joy in meeting Jesus. Is there nothing in this to throw contempt upon the world and its unmeaning joys?

May the Lord's love and approbation be the things that govern us, and not the things that fade away.

Our Needs and His Fulness

"Grace to help in time of need."

Heb. 4:16

On to Canaan's rest still wending,

E'en thy wants and woes shall bring

Suited grace from high descending; --

Thou shalt taste of mercy's spring.

Thirty-Ninth Week

Wisdom and philosophy never found out God; He makes Himself known to us through our needs; necessity finds Him out. . . . The sinner's heart -- yes, and the saint's heart too -- is put in its right place in this way. I doubt much if we have ever learned anything solidly except we have learnt it thus.

We never ought to be discouraged, because the Lord we trust in never fails, nor can. It is just in 2 Timothy, when all was in ruin and declension, that Paul looks for his dear son to be strong in the faith: there never is so good a time for it, because it is needed, and the Lord always meets need.

I have learnt at the cross what God was to me as a sinner; and now I have to learn how He meets my wants as a saint, by feeling my need and bringing it to Him. To be hungry is not enough, I must be really starving to know what is in His heart towards me. When the prodigal was hungry he went to feed upon husks; but when he was starving, he turned to his father's house, and then learnt the love of the father's heart.

If we did but know a little more of the comfort and joy of drinking into the fulness of God's love, we should feel present circumstances to be as nothing.

Whenever there is real need in the wilderness, it is a sin to doubt whether God will help us or not. . . . Tempting the Lord is doubting the supply of His goodness in giving all that we need.

"Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." The leper was sure of the power, but did not know the love that was there. He carries the love right up to the leper, "and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean." If man touched a leper he was unclean and put out of the camp. But He cannot be defiled. . . . Holiness undefiled and undefilable carries to sinners the love they need.

"How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! ". . . This is a blessed theme, the theme of God's thoughts -- higher, as the heavens are higher than the earth, than our thoughts, the theme of God's fathomless and illimitable grace. Here is real liberty. Do we know what it is to have our own thoughts, so narrow, so beggared, so mean, beaten down by God's high, generous, liberal thoughts -- His thoughts of us as to what we are in Christ? . . . Jesus is the great thought of God -- God's thoughts are expressed to us in Him. It is not an unfallen angel but a sinner quickened by the Spirit of God who can thus get into the deep thoughts of God.

Power

"All power is given unto me."

Matt. 28.18

"Behold, I give unto you power . . . over all the power of the enemy."

Luke 10:19

God has been glorified in Man;

Man sits at God's right hand:

Obedient in the race He ran,

Can now all power command.

Fortieth Week

When there are great arrangements for carrying on work, there is not the recognition of this inherent blessing, which "tarrieth not for the sons of men." I do not tarry for men if I have faith in God, and act upon

the strength of that. Let a man act as the Lord leads him. The Spirit of God is not to be fettered by man. All power arises from the direct authoritative energy of the Holy Ghost in the individual.

Uncompromising firmness becomes us, yet calmness, and nothing keeps the soul so calm as a sense of grace. This is a sign of power, and moreover connected with humbleness. . . . A sense of nothingness, with the spirit of peace gives a power to surmount all things.

It is not the quantity but the quality of my labour which ever troubles me. I do nothing else, and labour . . . without stint, but it is inward power, abstraction of heart to Christ, so as to come from the fulness of power in Him, and have nothing there which hinders absolute association of mind with His thoughts and purposes -- Himself. . . . It is a different thing coming in the consciousness that we come from Him, as in His confidence, and having His message.

It is Christ Himself that becomes your power -- the power of Christ resting upon you. His power you get in your weakness as your power to walk through this world.

In prayer God is ours, power is put in motion.

It is all important for us to get to the end of ourselves. . . . All our work feels the effect of our state, and a heart full of Christ and the seriousness of dealing with souls for eternity, which we feel when full of Him, and speaking from Him, gives weight and unction to it.

We cannot be the full epistle of Christ unless we exhibit power over all obstacles -- even over death. Death is given us. The believer living in the power of Christ's life has entire power over death.

We are not to be occupied with evil, or be in any way terrified with the adversary, as if the Lord had not the upper hand. He has overcome and is leading on to a full blessing, when the enemy will be bound. We must go on in the confidence that power belongs to Him and is in His hands

In every case it is where God would have us to be that we find His precious blessing. Without Him we can do nothing. When He works in His grace, how happy one is to be the instrument of His power and goodness! The exercises of our hearts even, in the difficulties of the work, lead us to Him, and everything that does this is in blessing for us.

There is power in Christ, there is sufficiency in Christ for all He would have you to do or be.

The Divine Heart

"He was moved with compassion."

Matt. 9:36

"The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."

James 5:11

But who, Thy path of service,

Thy steps removed from ill,

Thy patient love to serve us,

With human tongue can tell?

O'er all, Thy perfect goodness

Rose blessedly divine;

Poor hearts oppressed with sadness,

Found ever rest in Thine!

Forty-First Week

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." I get the knowledge of what was in God's heart as proved by His acts. He has thought of my state when I was a mere sinner and needed His love -- God commendeth His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. I have thus the heart of God as the spring and source of all.

He can pity with the utmost tenderness for He came into the very centre of our misery.

If man had no heart for Christ, Christ had a heart for man.

There is heart enough in Jesus to open the heart of the vilest sinner. The sinner finds he has a title in God's heart when he can find none in his own. The woman that was a sinner loved much because much was forgiven her. It was a broken heart that met the heart of God, and the heart of God met a broken heart. It is wonderful when the heart of man really meets the heart of God.

The hand of God never deals but in concert with His heart of infinite love towards us. . . . And even if He sees good to allow a sorrow to arise -- yea, to send it -- it is from a hand which never mistakes, nor fails in answering to a heart whose love is perfect.

Jesus . . . could say, "I have glorified thee." The more evil there was done here, the more the Father was glorified. Never did irritation enter into Him; no contradiction ever prevented His having the same heart for man and for God.

Ah! when we study Christ's life down here, and what His heart and motives were, how shallow we are, . . . and how deep and far beyond our view the sufferings of His soul down here!

A broken heart is suited to a heart-healing God.

Whatever produces a care in us produces God's care for us.

There is much more reality in a living loving care of us than we are aware of. The Lord takes pains to assure us of His love, to persuade us of His love. "Ye are of more value than many sparrows."

"Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are." He puts them under the shelter of the name "holy Father." He looked for them to be kept with all the Father's tenderness.

Let us trust Him more; let us seek to get more from Him; we cannot look for too much of His favour who has not spared His Son for us.

Christ will be a sure friend, and even if we begin to sink in the water, will stretch out His hand and lift us up. It is sweet to have His hand in any case, even if our failing foot has led Him to stretch it out.

Practical Sanctification

"Fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God."

Phil. 1:11

A holy Father's constant care

Keeps watch with an unwearying eye,

To see what fruits His children bear,

Fruits that may suit their calling high.

Forty-Second Week

You say you are in Christ . . . if you are in Christ, Christ is in you: then let me see Christ and nothing else.

The apostle prays for . . . the Philippians . . . "that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ" without a single stumble all the way along until the coming of the Lord.

The abiding in the sense of grace, in the presence of God, is the secret of all holiness, peace, and quietness of spirit.

If I wanted to describe a holy man, I should describe one who was always thinking of the Father's love and the Son's grace, and never of self.

Are you careful to avoid everything that dishonours Christ? Whatever destroys Christ's character before men is really a fall, though it may not be positively gross sin.

The characters that Christ takes in connection with these last days are these, "the holy, the true." Yes, that is the character He takes; that which He desires in His own, in their walk, when He is about to come. We have to watch over ourselves and over our brethren that it may be so.

I do not believe that when people have really got out of Romans 7 they get back into it. One may have truly received forgiveness of sins and had joy; but self is not known; and it is necessary to know oneself to be delivered. . . . Until we are delivered, sin has dominion; when we are, Christ is our strength.

If you are tempted, tried, look straight to Him; little by little you will become accustomed to believe in His goodness, though it be necessary to recur to it constantly: but the eye directed to Him makes Him known to the heart. Looking to Him who delivers us from ourselves is what excludes the thought of self, and sanctifies us . . . in a practical way.

In general those who say much about . . . being dead to nature do so because they are not. . . . In the epistle of Romans . . . we get "dead to sin" . . . "dead to the law" . . . it is also said, "if Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin." But dead to nature is, in all that we are said to be dead to, quite unknown to scripture in word or thought.

Let us beware, in ordinary things, of the first step that would separate us from inward holiness, and that separation of heart to Him which gives us His secret, light from above on all that is around; for the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him.

We never have any excuse for any sin of act or thought, because Christ's grace is sufficient for us, and God is faithful not to suffer us to be tempted above that which we are able to bear.

Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. . . . Is this our simple purpose? . . . In any common act of life, our question should be, is this acceptable to the Lord? In purchasing an article of dress, it should not be simply, will this suit me? but is it acceptable to the Lord, does it suit Him?

Praise

"Unto him that loved us . . . be glory and dominion for ever and ever."

Rev. 1:5, 6

We'll praise Thee, glorious Lord!

Who died to set us free:

No earthly songs can joy afford

Like heavenly melody.

Forty-Third Week

There is no other subject of praise for heaven than for earth; the blood of Christ has the same efficacy on earth as in heaven: that for which they praise God there is equally true for us. Their harps are better tuned than ours, but their song is the same.

Let us be persuaded to praise the Lord alone. He only is worthy of being praised, revered and adored. The song of the blessed (Rev. 5) praises none but Him who redeemed them with His blood. It contains not one word of praise for any of their own number. . . . Let us strive to bring our hearts into unison with that song. . . . This will be our happiness even here below, and contribute to God's glory, which is wronged by the praise that Christians too often bestow on each other.

"Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee." Nothing but praise becomes those who shall dwell in God's house; it will be their unwearied, untiring employ -- continual praise.

The Lord says, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise to thee." . . . May we be in tune with our heavenly Guide! He shall well conduct our praises, and agreeably to the Father. His ear shall be attentive when He hears this voice lead us.

In spirit, we are in heaven. We are in Christ who fills it with His glory and His perfections. . . . Holiness and love and joy characterize the land. They are the fruits which grow there spontaneously, as are the thanksgivings that arise in the hearts of those who are there through redeeming power.

Any one can rejoice in the Lord when the Lord gives him what he likes. "Bless the Lord at all times: " that is the testing point. "In everything give thanks."

Are your voices tuned to praise with Christ? He is gone from the wrath and darkness of the cross into the light and love of His Father's, presence, and is praising. Can you praise with Him? There all trembling disappears. . . . Oh, how those who seek Him lag behind His heart. . . . If you seek Him, His word warrants that you shall praise Him.

The Christian may sometimes say, I am not in a state to praise; he may, it is true, be more or less capable of doing it well, but he is always in a state to do it . . . because Christ is always suitable to a sinful soul. His praises will be modified, but he will always praise.

"Oh Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me . . . Thou winnowest my path [marg.] and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways." . . . God is not forming a people for their own, but "for His praise." He is shewing them what they are in themselves, in order to shew them by His Spirit the blessed suitability of Christ to all their need.

Cheer for Pilgrims

"Strangers and pilgrims."

1 Peter 2:11

"Be of good cheer."

John 16:33

This world is a wilderness wide:

I have nothing to seek or to choose --

I've no thought in the waste to abide --

I've nought to regret nor to lose.

Forty-Fourth Week

We are on a pilgrimage, and God makes us feel it in our circumstances. He detaches us from what is dearest down here; He weans us, and then without being aware of it, we ripen for heaven.

I was always a solitary soul, thinking more for, than with people: but it is good to be more alone -- most good, if it be more alone with Christ. What a place that is!

"God who comforteth them that are cast down." Ah, I say, it is worth while being cast down for such comfort as that! . . . and think what it is to have God occupying Himself with us in our sorrows when we remember who He is.

I feel increasingly, what we all know, that the work for God is the work of God.

When the soul is down, like a ship when the tide is low, it is in danger of shoals and sandbanks; but when the tide is up there are no sandbanks, because the ship is lifted up above them all. Thus when the soul is happy in Christ it will go on peacefully, independently of all the trials we may be called to meet with in our fellow saints. . . . And thus going on in the tide of divine goodness, forgetting everything else, we can walk happily together, being occupied with Christ, and not with each other.

If Christ be between our hearts and the suffering, instead of the suffering getting between our hearts and Christ, we shall find the place of suffering to be the best place on the face of the earth for us, as all suffering will then bring us nearer Christ.

Be assured that God does more in us than we do for Him; and that what we do is only for Him in proportion as it is He Himself who works it in us.

The truth needs not man: man needs the truth.

Sweeping away snow is long work; if the sun is well up, it is gone. A night covers the earth afoot deep -- what millions of men could not do, a day takes it all away if God's warmth comes in.

Do not be afraid of . . . consequences. If we do right God will take care of them.

I cannot do the work I did, but I have His work to do as long as He gives it to me.

We should like to go always with a full, favourable wind, but this does not make a good sailor.

Not a single thing in which we have served Christ shall be forgotten . . . all shall come out that is real, and what is real is Christ in us, and this only.

I have often seen isolated souls, if they kept close to the Lord, making more progress than those who enjoyed greater spiritual advantages. The latter thought that all that they enjoyed was of their faith, when it was not, whilst what one possesses alone, at least one possesses with God.

The Will of God

My meat is to do the will of him that sent me."

John 4:34

Yet I will wait, in labour still,

In Thy blest service here;

What Thou hast given me to fulfil --

Thy will -- to me is dear!

Forty-Fifth Week

If I have no motive but my Father's will, how astonishingly it simplifies everything. If you never thought of doing a thing, except because it was God's positive will that you should do it, how many things of your life would at once disappear; not in a constant struggle against one thing and another, but in the quiet consciousness that the grace of God has provided for everything, that you do not take a step, but what His love has provided for.

All the wheels of God's providence go in the way of His will which I am carrying out.

I have no home -- though countless mercies; on earth my home, for the home belongs to the heart, is the place of His will; for the rest it will really be in heaven.

We have only to find His will, and we shall find Him in it.

Whenever God has made His will known to us, we are not to allow any after-influence whatever to call it in question, even although the latter may take the form of the word of God. If we were morally nearer to the Lord we should feel that the only true and right position is to follow that which He told us at first.

We may lose God's purpose of blessing to our own souls, by not seeing His mind in that which grieves us.

The law of God's mouth is precious above all, the expression of His own perfect mind and will, and of His will about us. We live by it, but we live on it too, and with delight as from Him and perfect for us.

"If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." . . . We are risen, and have nothing more to do with the world, as to our affections and object, than a man who has died out of it. It does not say, "You must die," but "You are dead," for that is the christian state. . . . If an angel were here, he would do that which was God's will for him; but he would have nothing to do with the earth as to the object for which he lived.

We get the rule for his (the Christian's) conduct. It is very simple, very sweeping, and uncommonly satisfactory to the heart that really desires to do the will of God. "Whatsoever ye do, whether in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Be assured that, if we are near enough to God, we shall not be at a loss to know His will.

The Father's will was His (Christ's) motive for everything. There are thousands of things we do from habit, and we say we must do them; there is no "must" for me, but Christ's will.

Where there is spiritual discernment, things get simple and clear as daylight. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." . . . Where there is the fear of the Lord, there will be the understanding of His word and mind. But the word of God will not be simple without subjection to Him.

Sympathy

"In all their affliction he was afflicted."

Isa. 63:9

Ps. 107:9.

There is rest in the tender love

That has trodden our path below;

That has given us a place

in the realms above,

but can all our sorrows know.

Forty-Sixth Week

The nearer a man walks with God through grace, the more tender he becomes as to the faults of others; the longer he lives as a saint, the more conscious of the faithfulness and tenderness of God, and of what it

has been applied to in himself.

Even as the Lord Jesus so perfectly entered into the sorrow . . . around Him when here, and was therefore a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;" so in his measure ought the saint to take up the sense of the weight of evil that is in the world, and thus become a man of sorrows also.

The soul rejoices in . . . the immutable blessedness of God's presence. Then whatever the circumstances in which we are placed, if they be only of those of sorrow and trial, what is the consequence? God ministers of the fulness of the sympathy of His love to our souls; and thus they become, so to speak, as a door, or a chink to let in God.

Christ's heart was moved when He saw sorrow. He would not have us cold and indifferent to it, nor yet, on the other hand, selfishly affected by it, but full of tenderness and compassion towards those who are suffering. "He has set us an example that we should follow his steps."

I have always felt that the first break in the family is more than all others . . . but Christ has come in where death was and given a life beyond it all. He calls us in gracious and tender love to live in that. He knows how to comfort -- knows what death is far better than we do, because He is the resurrection and the life -- has wept over it and suffered it. He will comfort you . . . with a comfort which, if it feels for death, death cannot touch.

Christ was ever the perfect sociable man, perfectly accessible to sinners because He was thoroughly separated from them, and set apart for God inwardly, and had denied Himself, to live only by the words of God. . . . Such is the life of God below. . . . If we are truly free within, we can sympathise with that which is outside.

The blessed Lord never fails in sympathy and kindness for the inevitable sorrows of the way. If He takes away what was long an object, and for our hearts at least a prop, He always comes in to cheer and comfort the spirit. He alone we can never lose, who is really nearer to us than any human tie.

You cannot be in any condition that Christ did not come into. He plunged into the very sea of men's misery to help you out. It is a comfort to get man's sympathy, but he often cannot help us. What is it to get God's sympathy, which has power in it.

The Courts Above

"With Christ; which is far better."

Phil. 1:23

When to Canaan's long-loved dwelling

Love divine thy foot shall bring,

There, with shouts of triumph swelling,

Zion's songs, in rest, to sing.

There no stranger God shall meet thee!

Stranger thou in courts above;

He who to His rest shall greet thee,

Greets thee with a well known love.

Forty-Seventh Week

I have been very low -- so low that I did not know whether I should get up again. I had no sense of death, for God . . . is specially engaged at such a moment. . . . I found myself within sight of my end, and I was surprised at the little difference which it made to me: Christ, the precious Saviour, with me for the journey; then, I through grace, with Him for ever -- there was no change as to this . . . Christ is all . . . everything else will pass out of sight: but He, blessed be His name, never.

The Christian has no future but glory. All he has to do is to do God's will at the moment, and the rest is all in God's hands; only we know that glory awaits us.

It is a simple thing to go to heaven when one is going here. . . . I have long growingly felt -- and every storm leads to that port -- that that was where one was going, and that when the time was come, it was a kind of natural thing to go there.

As regards the sleep of the soul, it is a miserable doctrine that comes simply from Satan acting on man's reason. . . . The Lord tells the thief he shall not wait till the kingdom, but that he should that day be with Him in paradise. Was he to be fast asleep, knowing nothing of Him, or anything else? It is monstrous! We are "absent from the body, and present with the Lord;" but if that means being fast asleep, we might as well be at the other end of the universe! "To depart and be with Christ is far better;" that is, being fast asleep and unconscious is better than serving Christ and ministering to His glory! The apostle did not know which to choose, to live, which was Christ, or -- be fast asleep! It was gain, that is to be unconscious, compared with serving Christ faithfully here! But not only do these passages shew the moral absurdity of this notion to every spiritually-intelligent Christian, but there is no such thought in scripture of the soul's sleeping.

He tells us the place he is going to take us to -- it is the Father's house. And what makes the Father's house of importance to the child -- if he has right affections? It is, that the Father is there. . . . However feebly we may enjoy it now, when we talk of "going to heaven," it is going to the Father.

Death is not terrible now. Why? "Thou art with me." It is terrible without this. . . . Death is the very thing by which Christ has saved me, and it is that by which He will take me into His presence -- "Absent from the body, present with the Lord."

Death belongs to me now; it is not (as it is called) a "king of terrors; "all things are ours; life is ours; death is ours; for we are Christ's and Christ is God's. (1 Cor. 3:22-23.)

Christ is All

"Jesus only."

Mark 9:8

The heart is satisfied; can ask no more;

All thought of self is now for ever o'er:

Christ, its unmingled object, fills the heart

In blest adoring love -- its endless part.

Forty-Eighth Week

Christ is the key to the puzzle of this world.

May God give us to be anything or nothing, so that the Lord Jesus may be everything.

The magnet always turns towards the pole; the needle always trembles a little when the storm and tempest roar, but its direction changes not; the needle of the christian heart always points towards Christ.

The only thing which can be truly blessing to our brethren, so precious because they belong to Him, is that which we reproduce of Him.

It is in Christ that all our thoughts are adjusted, set right, judged, and purified; for the infiniteness of God Himself staggers the littleness of the heart of man when Christ does not give him a sure support; without depriving him of anything of the fulness which is in God, but quite the contrary, it is in Him that we appreciate what He is.

If He is the life, all which that life does has Him for its end and object. . . . Everything relates to Him: we do not eat without Him (how can we when He is our very life?), we do not drink without Him; what we say, what we do, is said and done in the name of the Lord Jesus.

The most eminent Christian is one of whom no one has ever heard speak, some poor labourer or servant, whose all is Christ, and who does all for HIS eye, and His alone.

Jesus is the fountain of all blessedness, sent to poor, weak, wretched sinners, that they may have abundance of comfort, of peace and of enjoyment.

We must find everything but Christ nothing.

No trial can touch a person who has Christ for his all. He may have lost this or lost that; but if he has Christ he has that which he cannot lose.

It is not the quantity we do that makes spirituality, but the measure of presenting Christ: that is the value of our service, in a world where there is nothing of God.

It is not always in the correction of the failures which come before us that sources of unhappiness are healed; they disappear when souls are nourished upon the riches which are in Christ. We must think of this; we must, while ourselves feeding upon Christ -- and He gives us to feed on Him without stint -- cause others to breathe a new atmosphere, where Christ is.

He has purchased a "peculiar people, to be zealous of good works." He has brought you to Himself, to have your whole heart wrapped up in His interests, your thoughts, actions, everything for Him. . . . Are we living enough out of the world (not merely out of its pleasures but its cares) and enough with Christ for Him to have a large place in the daily thoughts of our hearts? . . . Have we the consciousness from the time we get up in the morning till we go to bed at night, that our hearts are with Christ, . . . a consciousness that He is in us, and we identified with Him?

Walking with God

"Enoch walked with God, and he was not."

Gen. 5:24

O Holy Father, keep us here

In that blest name of love;

Walking before Thee without fear,

Till all be joy above.

Forty-Ninth Week

Have you ever had a visit from God? I do not mean by dreams or visions; but has God so spoken to your conscience as for you to have known Him and yourself together?

There is nothing in this world like the dignity of a man always walking with God.

Simplicity is a great trait of walking in the presence of God.

It is essential for a soul to be brought into perfect confidence in God Himself, in order to walk with God.

What a difference there is between a man walking before God and one walking before men! What a trouble there is to keep things straight for a man walking before men! While one who is walking before God, though in the presence of men, can leave things quietly to God. The real difference between a mere professor of Christ and a Christian is just this.

Oh! cultivate intimacy with Him; it keeps the conscience alive and the heart happy.

"Blessed are they that dwell in thy house." . . . He whose heart is in the house, will prefer the rugged way which leads to it, to the easy way that leads away from it.

Talk with Him. Never be content without being able to walk and talk with Christ as with a dear friend. Be not satisfied with anything short of near intercourse with Him who has loved you with such manner of love!

The characteristic of those who love Him will be obedience. When we get to this close relationship, the sign of love is knowing the wishes of the person you love. Where Christ is precious, there is attentiveness. . . . Many Christians have not His commandments. . . . If we had an open ear -- wakened morning by morning -- we should have His commandments, we should know His mind, and what He wishes. I can find out the wishes of my father if I am thoughtful and attentive. . . . He that loves Him gets the "secret of the Lord."

My business is to walk as a Christian, and shew the character of Christ, not to set the world right; . . . If I could only set myself and other Christians right, that would be the thing.

It is not dangerous, as people often say, to be on the mount; but to have been there. When Paul got out of the third heaven, he wanted the thorn in the flesh. Then there was a danger of his saying, no one but you, Paul, has been there.

We are made epistles of Christ, and the path we are to walk in is to manifest the life of Jesus in our bodies. Everything I do should be the expression of the allegiance of my heart to Christ; and the manifestation of Him to others. The standard of walk is, what is "worthy of the Lord," not of man.

Confidence

"The Lord shall be thy confidence."

Prov. 3:26

Father! Thy name our souls would bless

As children taught by grace;

Lift up our hearts in righteousness,

And joy before Thy face.

Sweet is the confidence Thou giv'st,

Though high above our praise,

Our hearts resort to where Thou liv'st

In heaven's unclouded rays.

Fiftieth Week

Communion with God always gives confidence in His power.

Do we know God's presence as the practical home of our hearts? Oh what joy is there in this! Of one thing be sure: coming to Him in the name of Jesus, you will find it to be the real, blessed, secure home of your hearts.

We are not to be weary in well doing; in due time we shall reap "if we faint not." . . . The principle of Matthew 20 is "Whatsoever is right I will give you," so he went and worked and trusted; trusting Christ is a great matter. I should have very little to shew for my work: I feel it sometimes. . . . But . . . if I only have His approval, oh how content I should be!

What the devil did was to undo our confidence in God: what Jesus did is to shew us that we may trust Him. And when the believer sees not this, he is looking to the devil and his temptations more than to the love and power of Christ, who has conquered all his enemies for him; but when our eyes are off all other objects, and on Christ, then, and then only, we can have peace.

"Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young." How beautifully this . . . shews us the tender care God has over all His creatures! He fails not to find a house for the most worthless of birds, and a nest for the most restless. What confidence this should give us! How we should rest! What repose the soul gets that casts itself upon the watchful tender care of Him who provides so fully for the need of all His creatures.

David exhibits that never-failing token of a heart that knows the Lord -- confidence in God above all, and at whatever cost. "Let me fall into the hand of Jehovah." Sweet and precious thought of what the Lord is unto His people! and well He knows how to fill the heart with the certainty that He deserves its confidence. Even while chastening, God is more loving, more faithful, more worthy of confidence than any other.

The simple refuge of the saint is in God. "God is my defence." It is not counterplotting, nor using human means to meet the power of the enemy. We may partially perhaps and for a time so succeed, but in using carnal weapons we have lost the dependence which calls God in, and the perfection of walk and testimony which waiting on Him gives.

There are moments when God makes us feel that we cannot rely on man but only on Him. Often we have comfort from men. "God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus." But we must not rely on man. Hence there are moments when we have to say "all men are liars," and we are cast on the Lord.

The Heavenly Light

"God is light."

1 John 1:5

"In Thy light shall we see light."

Ps. 36:9

Come, fill my soul! Thy light is ever pure

And brings from heaven what Thou alone canst give,

Yea, brings Thyself, the revelation sure

Of heaven's eternal bliss: in Thee we live.

Fifty-First Week

It is only the presence of God as light which can cause us to condemn ourselves, and gives us power to purify ourselves from our deepest and well-known though hidden idols.

It is a time to be entirely heavenly, for the earth is far from God, and daily its darkness closes in, but we belong to the light, and await another day.

How happy one is to belong to Him, and in His light to see light! How brilliant and glorious is this light to those who are from home, awaiting . . . the coming of this precious Saviour, who will set them in heaven as the rays of His glory and jewels of His crown . . . as the bride of His heart.

Too often a healing of a humbling state of things is sought more than the state of soul which has given occasion to it . . . and if we do not wait God's doing . . . we have to await the effect of not doing it. There is but One that can bring the light that judges conscience into the soul: on Him we can count. . . . We cannot hasten God; He, when He is working, will have all things real.

I have never seen a soul living in its experiences and occupied with itself, with whom the "I" had not a place, without the person's being aware of it. . . . We do not become acquainted with ourselves by thinking about ourselves: for while we think of Him the "I" disappears: one is in the light, where one is not occupied with oneself.

Does my path in everyday life come from the light, and is it guided by it? . . . All will be bright where it is with God. There will be trials, and trials with God are perhaps the brightest spots in any man's life.

Mere integrity will not suffice without God to find out evil. An honest natural man may use his conscience, but as the natural eye must have light to search with, so we the presence of Him who is light.

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him." . . . The path in which He enjoyed His Father's love was a path of unclouded joy, and it was a path of undivided obedience. He here shews His disciples if they are to walk in the light and favour of His countenance, they must walk in the same path as He did Himself.

O! dwell with me; let no distracting thought

Intrude to hide from me that heavenly light ;

Be Thou my strength! Let not what Thou hast brought

Be chased by idle nature's poor delight.

Our Hope

"I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

John 14:3

And can I call my home.

My Father's house on high?

The rest of God, my rest to come

My place of liberty?

Yes! in that light unstained.

My stainless soul shall live;

My heart's deep longings more than gained,

When God His rest shall give!

Fifty-Second Week

Heart devotedness to Christ and obedience will only be thought of value in the past when we come to meet Him.

"I will come again, and receive you unto myself." This is the language of affection. He does not say, I will send for you. No, that would not satisfy the heart -- "I will come." He would not be content without having them where He is, and without coming to fetch them.

"The glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." But if I see the Lamb in the midst of the throne, Ah! I say, now I am indeed at home, that is the sight that dazzles every other, and that is the sight which is for me.

The shape (the Lord's coming) has taken in my mind is, how it connects itself with every thought and relationship of the Christian in scripture. I never treat of it now as a point of knowledge.

That way is upward still --

Where life and glory are;

My rest's above:

In perfect love

The glory I shall share.

Is the thought of the Lord's coming your daily delight? Does it influence you in the ten thousand details of your everyday life? Or are you so walking hand in hand with the world that the very thought of His coming fills you with shame?

He is gone to prepare a place for us. . . . We shall be there . . . ever with Him: no interruption, no decay of joy, but rather ever increasing delight, as there always is when the object is worthy of the heart, and here it is infinite.

John 14:23. The Father and the Son come and make their abode with us. How little we have this manifestation! The Lord's heart is on them, they cannot be happy here; but they are to look for the blessedness of being with the Father, and "we will come and abide in you, till you can come and abide with us."

He will take the place of a servant even in the glory. "He shall gird himself . . . and will come forth and serve them." His love is His glory; the nearer we are to Him, the more we shall adore Him.

There is nothing more practically important for everyday work and service than our waiting for God's Son from heaven. . . . The moment I am waiting for God's Son from heaven, my life is but the dealings of God with me with an object, and the object is that it should be to praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

The saints were converted to wait for God's Son from heaven, and when they lost that, all the mischief came in. . . . If you were constantly waiting for Him, would it not change you? . . . Would people be heaping up money or treasures when they know He is coming?

You cannot float down the stream of the world that is going to the ocean of judgment. You are to be looking for Him.

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