

In Green Pastures - April, May, June

by J.R. Miller

The sermon emphasizes the importance of asking for God's presence in our lives, living a beautiful life that fulfills its mission, and cultivating a strong character through consecration and faith.

Scripture: Psalm 23:1

Topics: "Faith and Service", "The Nature of God"

Description

J.R. Miller's sermon 'In Green Pastures' emphasizes the profound relationship between God and His followers, encouraging believers to seek God Himself as the ultimate gift rather than merely His blessings. He highlights the beauty of a life lived in service to others, the importance of character over worldly success, and the necessity of love and kindness in all interactions. Miller also discusses the significance of faith, obedience, and the transformative power of Christ's friendship in shaping our lives. The sermon serves as a reminder that true fulfillment comes from living a life dedicated to God and serving others with love.

Transcript

In Green Pastures

by J. R. Miller, 1890

"Handfuls of Grass for the Lord's Hungry Sheep"

Daily readings for every day in the year

"The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I lack.

He makes me lie down in green pastures;

He leads me beside quiet waters." Psalm 23:1-2

APRIL

April 1

God Himself His Own Best Gift

Enlarge your desires and your prayers. Do not ask merely for mercies and favors and common gifts. Do not ask God merely to give you bread, and health, and home, and friends, and prosperity; or, rising yet a step higher, do not content yourself with asking for grace to help in temptation, or for strength to fill up your weakness, or for wisdom to guide you in perplexity, or for holiness and purity and power. Ask for God himself, and then open your heart to receive him. If you have God, you have all other gifts and blessings in him. And it is himself--that God is willing to give for the asking, not merely the favors and benefits that his hand dispenses. Ask most largely!

April 2

A Beautiful Life

A life need not be great to be beautiful. There may be as much beauty in a tiny flower--as in a majestic tree; in a little gem--as in a great mountain; in the smallest creature--as in a mammoth one. A life may be very lovely--and yet be insignificant in the world's eyes. A beautiful life is one which fulfills its mission in this world--that which fills its place well, is far lovelier in God's sight, than the largest and most splendidly gifted life--which fails of its divine mission.

April 3

Following Our White Banners

We talk about consecration. What is consecration? It is nothing less than doing the will of Christ, not our own--always, whatever the cost, the sacrifice, or the danger. There is too much mere sentiment in our religion. We say we believe in Christ; if we do, we must follow him wherever he leads, though not knowing where. We say we love Christ, and quickly from his lips comes the testing word--"If you love me--keep my commandments." To be a Christian is to be devoted utterly, resistlessly, irrevocably, to Christ. Joan of Arc said the secret of her victoriousness was that she bade her white standard go forth boldly; then she followed it herself. Good intentions, and vows, and pledges of consecration are well enough as white banners--but when we have sent them forth--we must be sure to follow them ourselves.

April 4

As Your Days

There is in the Bible, no promise of grace, in advance of the need. God does not say he will put strength into our arm for the battle--while we are in quiet peace and the battle is yet far off. When the conflict is at hand--the strength will be given. He does not open the gates for us, nor roll away the stones--until we have come up to them. He did not divide the Jordan's waters while the people were yet in their camps, nor even as they began to march toward the river. The wild stream continued to flow as the multitude moved down the banks, even until the feet of the priests had been dipped in the water. This is the constant law of divine help. It is not given in advance. As we come up to the need, the supply is ready--but not before. Yet many Christians worry because they cannot see the way opened and the needs supplied far in advance of their steps. Shall we not let God provide--and have faith in him?

April 5

True Christian Womanhood

That is not Christ's religion, which is moved to ecstasies of love and compassion for the Zulus and Chinese across the seas--but is selfish, irritable, greedy, impatient, and harsh at home. The true Christian woman is the very soul of self-forgetfulness in her own home-circle. Wherever she goes, she is the same. She carries the sweet, patient spirit of Christ everywhere. Her hands are gentle as an angel's, and are ever scattering blessings. Her words are thrilled with a strange power of sympathy and tenderness, which carry comfort into the sad heart, courage into the fainting heart, and life into the sluggish heart. A selfish woman is a contradiction. Wherever selfishness appears in a woman, it is a blemish which disfigures the divine beauty.

April 6

Turning Visions into Life

God gives us visions of spiritual beauty--that we may turn them into realities in common life. All our heavenward aspirations, we should bring down and work into acts. All our longings and desires--we should make true in experiences. Every day's Bible text taken into the heart--should shine forth in some new touch of spiritual beauty. As the look of the face is caught in the camera and held there, so every time Christ looks in upon our souls, even for an instant, some impression of his features should become fixed there, and remain as part of our own spiritual beauty. So in all our life the words of Christ which we hear, the lessons which we are taught, and the holy influences which touch our souls--should enter into our very being--and reappear in disposition, character, deeds.

April 7

Other People's Faults

No doubt it is easier to discover other people's faults--than our own. Many of us are troubled more about the way our neighbors live, than we are with our own shortcomings. We manifest a greater feeling of responsibility for the acts and neglects of others--than for our own. Now, the truth is, every man must bear his own burden. We shall not be called to answer at God's bar--for the idle words, the sinful acts, and the neglects of duty--of our neighbor. But there is one person for whose every act, word, disposition, and feeling we shall have to give an account--and that is ourself. We had better train ourselves, therefore, to keep close, minute, incessant, and conscientious watch over our own life. We had better give less attention to our neighbor's mistakes, foibles, and failures--and more to our own. Most of us would find little time for looking after other people's faults--if we gave strict attention to our own. Besides, seeing and knowing our own defects--would make us more charitable to those of others.

April 8

The Fatherhood of God

How it would brighten and bless our lives, if we were to carry always in our hearts, the conception of God as our Father! When we can look up into God's face and say out of warm and responding hearts, "Our Father!" all the world and all life take on new aspects for our eyes. Duty is no longer hard and a drudgery--but becomes a joy. Keeping the commandments is hard if we think of God merely as a king; but if we look up to him as our Father, all is changed, and our love for him, and our desire to please him, make obedience a gladness. We can say then, "I delight to do your will, O my God."

April 9

In the Discouraged Days

We all have our discouraged days, when things do not go well. The young people fail in their lessons at school, although they have studied hard and really have done their best. The mothers are tried in their household work. The children are hard to control. It has seemed impossible to keep good temper, to maintain that sweetness and that lovingness which are so essential to a happy day. Try as they will to be gentle, kindly, and patient--their minds are ruffled. They come to the close of the long, unhappy hours--disturbed, defeated, and discouraged. They have done their best--but they feel that they have really failed. They fall upon their knees with only tears for a prayer. But if they will lift up their eyes, they will see on the shore of the troubled sea of their little day's life--the form of one whose presence will give them strength and confidence, and who will help them to victoriousness. Before his sweet smile, the shadows flee away; at his word new strength is given, and after that, work is easy and all goes well again.

April 10

Blessing in Mistakes

Our very mistakes and our sins, if we repent of them, will be used of God to help in the growth and upbuilding of our Christian character. Our very falls, through the grace and tender love of Christ, become means of growth to our souls.

In the hot fires of penitence--we leave the dross and come out as pure gold. But we must remember that it is only Christ who can make our sins yield blessing. If we are Christ's true followers, even our defeats shall become blessings to us, stepping-stones on which we may climb higher. This is one of the marvels of divine grace--that it can make all things--even our sins--work together for good.

April 11

Speak Out the Loving Words

How much better would it be, if we were more generous and lavish of our good words--so that our friends can be cheered and blessed by them! Sometimes we over-learn the lesson of keeping silence--and let hearts starve for lack of kindly words which lie meanwhile on our tongues, ready to be spoken. It is not the lack of love, for which we are to be blamed--but the stinginess which locks up the love--and will not give it out in word and act to bless needy lives. Is any other miserliness so base? We let hearts starve close beside us--when we have the bread to feed them, and then, when they lie in the dust of defeat or death--we come with our love to speak eloquent funeral eulogies. Would it not be far better to give out the kindness, when it will do good?

April 12

Christian Work

Bring every grace and gift of your life, into Christ's service. Not only use well the gifts you have now at work--but develop what you have, into greater skill and power of service. Strive ever to excel. Grow by working. Don't stand with idle hands a moment, because for each moment you must give account. Do not allow your spiritual powers to rest in dusty niches merely for adornment. Take them all down and put life into them, that they may be useful. Do not play at Christian work. The King's business requires haste!

April 13

Character Alone Abides

We must strive to realize every dream of goodness and Christ-likeness, which our hearts dream. Remember that it is godly character, which is the only test, and the only true fruit, of Christian living. It is not knowledge; for knowledge will fail. It is not money; for money cannot be carried away from earth. It is not fame; for fame's laurels fade at the grave's edge, and its voice gives no cheer in the valley of shadows. It is not culture or education or refinement it is godly character --not what we have or what we know--but what we are--that we can carry with us into the eternal world.

April 14

The Home Friendships

Friendships in the family, require most gentle care and cultivation. We must win each other's love within home-doors, just as we win the love of those outside--by the sweet ministries of love. We must prove ourselves worthy of being loved by those who are nearest; they will not truly love us unless we do, merely because we are of the same household. We must show ourselves unselfish, thoughtful, gentle, helpful. Home friendships must be formed as all friendships are formed--by the patient knitting of soul to soul, and the slow growing of life into life. Then we must retain home-friends, just as we retain other friends--by a thousand little loving expressions in all our fellowship. We cannot depend upon mere relationship to keep us loved and loving. We must live for each other. We must give as well as receive. We must be watchful of our acts and words.

April 15

The Hearts Daily Bread

We all need sympathy, human kindness, cheer, and fellowship--the thousand little things of human love, as we go along the dusty road of life. These small coins of affection are the brighteners of every life which is blessed by a rich friendship. It is this unceasing ministry which your heart hungers for as its daily bread--not great gifts and large favors--but a gentle affectionateness in your friend, which shall bring cheer, satisfaction, inspiration, comfort, uplifting, hope, and strength to your soul, every time you look into his face.

April 16

In His Name

If we have the true spirit of service, we will look upon everyone we meet, even casually, as one to whom we owe some debt of love--one sent to us to receive some blessing, some cheer, some comfort, some strength, some inspiration, some touch of beauty at our hand. We may never do one great or conspicuous thing of which men will talk, or which will be reported in the newspapers--but every word we speak, every smallest act, every influence we send out, even unconsciously, "in His name," merely our shadow falling on human need and pain and sorrow as we pass by--will prove to be a sweet and blessed ministry of love, and will impart strength and help. The name of Christ consecrates every smallest deed or influence, pouring it full of love.

April 17

I Say What I Think

There is a class of people who boast of their honesty and frankness, because they "just say what they think," flinging out the words right and left as they come, no matter where they strike--or whom they wound. Call it not honesty, this boasted frankness; call it rather miserable impudence, reckless cruelty. We have no right to say what we think--unless we think lovingly and sweetly. We certainly have no right to unlade our jealousies, envies, bad humours, and miserable spites upon our neighbor's heart. If we must be ugly-tempered, we should at least keep the ugliness locked up in our own breast, and not let it out to mar other people's happiness. Or, if we must speak out our wretched feelings, let us go into our own room and lock the door and close the windows--that no ears but our own shall hear the hateful words.

April 18

The Peacemaker's Beatitude

It is very easy, if you are talking to one who has a little distrust of another, or a little bitterness against another, to say a word which will increase the distrust or add to the bitterness. We like to approve and justify the one with whom we are speaking, and in doing so we are apt to confirm him in his bitterness or sense of wrong. Let us be on our guard, that we do not unintentionally widen little rifts into great breaches. Let us seek ever to be peacemakers. There is no other beatitude whose blessing is more radiant than that of the peacemakers --"they shall be called sons of God."

April 19

The Blessing of Struggle

The daily temptations which make every true life such a painful conflict from beginning to end, bring us constant opportunities for growth of character. Not to struggle--is not to grow strong. The soldier's art can be learned, and the soldier's honors can be won--only on the field of battle. If you would grow into the beauty of the Master, you must accept the conflicts and fight the battles. You can have life easy if you will--by declining every struggle--but you will then get little out of life which is truly noble and worthy. The best things all lie beyond some battle-plain: you must fight your way across the field to get them. Heaven is only for those who overcome. None get the crown without the conflict. "Sure I must fight, if I would reign."

April 20

The Ministry of "Shut-Ins"

A faith which neither fails nor murmurs in hours of suffering, is like a heavenly lamp burning in the home. It makes the chamber of pain a little sanctuary, a holy of holies, which none can enter but with quiet reverence. Do you think such suffering, so sustained, so radiant, performs no ministry of blessing for those who witness it? We must not think that when God lays us aside from active service, shuts us in and calls us to suffer--that he is stopping our usefulness for the time. Besides the enriching of our own lives for new ministries when we come again from the shadows, our suffering may become meanwhile a school for other lives, our faith and peace unspoken sermons on the power of God's love and grace.

April 21

Conscience in Little Things

Scrupulous people are often laughed at for their scruples. "Why be so particular?" Mirthful and giddy ones ask, "Why be so conscientious about mere trifles? Why be so exacting and punctilious in the doing of small duties?" The answer is, that in the matter of right and wrong nothing is little; certainly nothing is insignificant. Duty is duty, whether it be the smallest or the greatest matter. He is on the highway to nobleness of character who has learned to be scrupulous concerning the smallest things. He who is careful in little things rises every day a step higher. He who is faithful in little things is then entrusted with larger responsibilities. It is the units in life that are most important. Look after the little units and the greater aggregates will be right. Make the minutes beautiful and the hours and days will be radiant.

April 22

Goodness in the Shadows

Shall we trust our Father, only when he is giving us pleasant things, and shall we not trust him also when he brings the shadow over our hearts? Do you think God is good--only when he makes all things such as please you? Is he not just as good when he gives you pain or losses? It is the will of God, that our home-sorrow shall make our home-life sweeter, purer, kindlier, Christlier. If we believe in God and take the pain from his hand with the same confidence as the pleasure, then the shadows will be as rich blessings to us as the lights--and the sorrows will be steps upward on which our feet may climb toward God.

April 23

Christian History

Christian history is one of the best evidences of the deity of Christ. No mere man could touch the world's life, as Jesus Christ has touched it. It is nothing less than the energy of God working in men's hearts, that has produced the marvelous results which we see wherever the gospel has gone. Men's bodies may not now be instantaneously healed by a divine touch--but men's moral lives are transformed by the same divine touch as in the old miracles of gospel days. Nations are lifted up into purity, justice, truth, freedom, and righteousness. Are not these great moral and spiritual miracles--as wonderful attestations of the divine mission of Christ--as the physical miracles that marked the days of the incarnation?

April 24

Cost of Being a Blessing

We must live deeply ourselves--if we would be able to bless others. We must resist sin, even unto blood, if we would teach others how to be victorious in temptation. We must bear trials and endure sorrows with patience, with submission, and with faith, so as to be victorious, if we would become comforters and helpers of others in theirs. You must learn--before you can teach--and the learning costs. At no small price can we become true helpers of others in this world. That which has cost us nothing in the getting--will not be any great blessing to any other person in the giving. It is only when we lose our life, sacrificing it to God--that we become deeply and truly useful.

April 25

Making Others Happy

The world needs nothing more than it needs happiness-makers. There is a great deal of sadness everywhere. The Bible is a book meant to make people happy. Joy-bells ring all through it. The mission of the gospel is to make happiness. The angel's announcement of good tidings of great joy is going forth yet on every breeze. The story of the love of Christ is changing darkness to light, despair to hope, tears to laughter, sorrow to rejoicing, in all lands. It is the mission of every Christian to be a happiness-maker. Each one of us has power, too, to add something at least to the world's gladness. We can do this in a thousand ways--by being joyful Christians ourselves, making our lives a sweet song; by telling others the joyful things of the Word of God; by doing kindnesses to all we meet; by comforting sorrow, lifting burdens away, cheering sadness and weariness, and scattering blessings wherever we go.

April 26

Our Heart--Christ's Kingdom

Religion is not an art, nor a science--it is a life. It is not the mere learning and following of a set of rules. It is the growth of Christ-likeness in the heart, spreading thence into the whole of the being. It is the setting up of the kingdom of heaven within us. This kingdom in one's heart, is the rule and authority of Christ, owned and recognized there at the fount and spring of the life. It is the rule of love--"the love of Christ constrains me." Paul goes still further, however, and speaks of it as a new incarnation. "Christ lives in me," he says. A Christian life is therefore really the personal reign of Christ in the heart of everyone who accepts him. The conquest is slow--that is, the heavenly King finds his kingdom under alien sway, and to get full possession and to reign supreme and alone, he must subdue the whole of the old nature. It is this work of conquest and subjugation which goes on in this world, and it is not complete until the believer passes into heaven. All earthly Christian life is therefore a learning to be a Christian. We should bend all the energies of our being toward the bringing of heart, mind, and will into complete subjection to our King.

April 27

Uplifting Powers

Has Christ's friendship been to you--as close, personal, tender, constant--as the human friendships that have been dearest? The close friends of Christ have found no other influence so strong as his precious friendship in forming and transforming their lives. Continually before them in all its purity and spotlessness, in all its strength and heroism, in all its gentleness and beauty, that fair life has shone, a pattern in the mount let down from heaven, for mortals to fashion their lives upon, brought down close to them and winning them by its loveliness. No one who has had Christ for friend in any true, real sense--has failed to be blessed by him in the way of growth into nobler, richer life.

April 28

Immortal Work

Nothing done in this world is immortal, for this world is perishable. The noblest monument of earthly builder will crumble; but he who works on the unseen, the spiritual, leaves impressions that shall endure forever. The touch of beauty which you put upon a life yesterday by the earnest words you spoke, by the new impulse you started in the heart of your friend, by the vision of heavenly purity you gave in your own life to one who was with you, will be bright when suns and stars shall have burned out to blackness. What

we do on immortal lives--is immortal. He is wise, therefore, who chooses to do his life's work on materials which shall never perish. Thousands of years hence--he will find the things he has done, enduring still in immortal beauty.

April 29

Worldly Motive in Christian Life

There is a great deal of worldly policy and prudence in the Christian church. There are those who shrink from duties through timidity or fear of the consequences. There are those who are restrained from taking the right side of important questions, or boldly declaring their beliefs, through motives of practical expediency. Too many professing Christians lack courage to speak to others about their spiritual interests, fearing rebuff. The money question, it must be confessed, weighs sometimes in the balance in the shaping of the course of Christian men, the decision turning on the answer to the question, "What will be the effect of this or that course, on my business or on my social standing?" We all know well that such worldly policy ought to have no place among the motives that sway the minds of Christian people. The only desire should be to know what is right, what is duty, what is the will of God. To be swayed by any other influence, is to be unfaithful to our Lord.

April 30

Need of Reserve

Many a great battle turns at last on the reserve. The struggle is perfectly balanced, and victory is uncertain. Then one side or the other brings up its reserve, and instantly the question is settled. Life's battles and crises, are determined in like manner, oftentimes, by the reserve or the absence of reserve. No life is a dead level of experience from cradle to grave. The days are not all bright. The course is not all smooth. The experiences are not all easy. We must all be assailed by temptations and by spiritual foes, when victory can be gained only if we have reserves of resistance to call into action. We must all stand before tasks and duties which will altogether baffle our ability if we have no more strength to draw on, than we have been using in the common duties of the common days. Blessed are those who have learned to draw on the infinite resources of divine strength; with the fullness of God as reserve they can never fail.

MAY

May 1

The Law of Ministry

God sets before us work, conflict, self-denial, cross-bearing. The central law of Christian life, is ministry, serving. You quote, "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever." Yes--but there is no way of glorifying God, except by living to bless the world in Christ's name, to bless men by serving them, loving them, helping them, doing them good. We are debtors, therefore, to every man we meet. We owe him love; we owe him service. We are not to set ourselves up on little thrones--and demand homage and service from others; rather we are to do the serving. Christ came "not to be ministered unto--but to minister," and we should be as our Lord.

May 2

Unspoken Prayers

Every thought which flies through your brain--is heard in heaven. God hears wishes, heart-longings, aspirations, soul-hungerings and thirstings. Do not grieve, then, if you cannot find words in which to tell God what you want, if you cannot put into well-defined thoughts, the hopes and hungers of your heart. When words and even thoughts fail, pray in silent yearnings, in unutterable longings, and God will understand just as well, as if you spoke in common language. Much of our best praying is done--when we sit at God's feet and do not speak at all--but only let our hearts talk.

"Rather, as friends sit sometimes, hand in hand,

Nor mar with words the sweet speech of their eyes,

So in soft silence let us oftener bow,

Nor try with words to make God understand.

Longing is prayer; upon its wings we rise

To where the breath of heaven beats upon our brow."

May 3

Christian Love

The spirit of Christian love, if allowed to work deeply and thoroughly in all hearts and lives--will prevent variance and alienation among Christians. It will lead us to forget ourselves and think of others, not pushing our own interests unduly, nor demanding the first place--but in honor preferring one another. It will make us willing to serve, to minister, even to stoop down to unloose a brother's shoes. It will make us thoughtful, too--in all our acts, in our manners, in our words. It will make us gentle, kindly, patient, teaching us to be all that Christ would be--if he were in our place.

May 4

The Life That Wins

We can win others to Christ--only by being Christ to them, by showing them Christ in ourselves, by living so that they may be attracted to Christ, and may learn to admire and to love him by what they see of him in us. One of the most effective ways of winning souls--is through beautiful, gentle, Christlike living. Eloquence of persuasion in a preacher is powerful with the unsaved--only in so far as the preacher's life is consistent. Preaching without love in the life--is only empty clatter. But where deep, true love, the love of Christ, is--the plainest, humblest words become eloquent and mighty.

May 5

Recognition in Heaven

Heaven is the Father's house. A father's house is a home; and can you think for one moment of a home in which the members of the household do not know each other? The sweetest best, happiest, and most perfect earthly home--is but a dim picture of the love and gladness of the home in heaven. Heaven is like a holy home--only infinitely sweeter, truer, and better. Home has been called "heaven's fallen sister." If in

the imperfect homes of this world, we find so much gladness in the ties which bind heart to heart, and knit life to life, may we not be confident that in the perfect home of our heavenly Father, all this gladness will be infinitely deepened and enriched? Love will not be different in heaven; it will be wondrously purified and exalted--but earthly love will live on through death into eternity.

May 6

Obedience in Heaven

Obedience makes heaven. All the life of heaven, is simply perfect obedience. A little of heaven comes into our life on earth, when we learn to obey the will of God. Obedience is the mark of royalty. Wherever God finds a soul that is ready to yield always to his will, to do his commandments without question, to submit to his providences without murmuring, there is a life that he is ready to crown. We get to be like Christ--just as much as we learn to obey and do God's will. Heaven comes down into our heart--just as much as we yield our lives to God.

May 7

Why So Wary of Kindness

We let our friends go through life without many marks of appreciation. We are wary of compliments. We hide our tender interests, and our kindly feelings. We are afraid to give each other the word of praise or of encouragement, lest we should seem to flatter, lest we should puff others up. Even in many of our homes, there is a strange dearth of good, wholehearted, cheering words. Let us not be afraid to say appreciative and complimentary words--when they are deserved and are sincere. Let us lose no opportunity--to show kindnesses, to manifest sympathy, to give encouragement. Silence in the presence of needs that words would fill--is sin

May 8

Room in a Humble Sphere

When you are tempted to chafe and repine at the narrowness of your circumstances and the limitations of your sphere, remember that Jesus, with all his rich life and all his great powers, for thirty years found room in a humble peasant home for worthy living and for service, not unfitted to his exalted character. If you can do nothing but live a true Christian life--patient, gentle, kindly, pure--in your home, in society, at your daily duty--you will perform in the end a service of great value and leave many blessings in the world. Such a life is a little gospel, telling in sermons without words, the wonderful story of the cross of Christ.

May 9

Love's Supreme Moments

Love in its supreme moments, does not stop at a little. It does not weigh and measure and calculate; and restrain its impulses and check its floods. They know nothing of love--who think strange of Mary's costly deed, who try to explain why she acted so prodigally, so lavishly, so wastefully, when she put upon her Lord the highest honor she could bestow upon him. If our love for Christ were only stronger, deeper, richer--we would not need to have Mary's deed explained; we would not calculate so closely--how much we can afford to give or do.

May 10

The Peril of Failure

Myriads of lives with magnificent possibilities, have been utter failures because men and women have not gone promptly to duty at the divine call. They were intended to fill certain places. God made them for these places and qualified them for them; but when they were summoned to their work, they excused themselves on one plea or another, and buried their talents in the earth. Let us train ourselves to obey every call of God, lest in our hesitancy, distrust, or disobedience we fail of the mission for which we were made, and meet the doom of the useless in God's universe.

May 11

If We Knew

We should learn to look at the faults of others, only through love's eyes--with charity, patience, and compassion. We do not know the secret history of the lives of others around us. We do not know what piercing sorrows have produced the scars which we see in people's souls. We do not know the pains and trials which make life hard to many, with whom we are tempted to be impatient. If we knew all the secret burdens and the heart-wounds which many carry hidden beneath their smiling faces--we would be patient and gentle with all people.

May 12

The Secret of Peace

Perfect loyalty to Christ, brings perfect peace into the heart. The secret of Christ's own peace, was his absolute devotion to his Father's will. We can find peace in no other way. Any resistance to God's will, any disobedience of his law, any wrenching of our lives out of his hand--must break the peace of our hearts. No lesson that he gives ever mars our peace--if we receive it with willing, teachable spirit, and strive to learn it just as he has written it out for us. If we take the lessons just as our Master gives them to us--we shall make our life all music, and we shall find peace.

May 13

Prayer in Sorrow

"Being in an agony--he prayed," is the record of our Savior's Gethsemane experience. The lesson stands for all time. Like a bright lamp, the little sentence shines amid the olive trees of the garden. It shows us the path to comfort in our time of sorrow. Never before or since, was there such grief as the Redeemer's, that night--but in his prayer he found comfort. As we watch him the hour through, we see the agony changing as he prayed, until at last its bitterness was all gone--and sweet, blessed peace took its place. The gate of prayer is always the gate to comfort. There is no other place to go. We may learn also from our Lord's Gethsemane, how to pray in our Gethsemanes. God will never blame us for asking to have the cup removed, nor for the intensity of our supplication; but we must always pray with submission. It is when we say, in our deepest intensity, "Not my will--but may your will be done," that comfort comes, that peace comes.

May 14

God's Strange Schools

No books, no universities, can teach us the divine art of sympathy. We must be sorely tempted ourselves, before we can understand what others suffer in their temptations. We must have sorrow ourselves in some form, before we can be real and true comforters of others in their times of sorrow. We must walk through the deep valley ourselves, before we can be guides to others in the same shadowy valleys. We must feel the strain and carry the burden and endure the struggle ourselves, and only then we can be touched with the feeling of sympathy or can give help to others in life's sore stress and poignant need. So we see one compensation of suffering--it fits us for being in a larger sense, helpers of others.

May 15

The Largeness of Duty

Duty is always too great for earnest souls. No one can do all that he knows he ought to do, or that he wants to do. When we have done our duty, however, day by day, faithfully and earnestly, according to the light and the wisdom given to us at the time, it ought not to cause us regret afterward if it appear that we might have done it with more wisdom or with greater skill. We cannot get the benefits of experience, until we have had the experience. We cannot have manhood's ripe wisdom in the days of our youth. We can always see when a day is done--how we might have lived it better. We should bring to every hour's work--our finest skill, our best wisdom, our purest strength, and then feel no regret--even if it does not seem well done. Perfection is ever an unreached goal in this life. Duty is always too large, for us to do more than a fragment of it.

May 16

The Test of Amusements

Is the love of pleasure growing upon you, gaining the power and the ascendancy over you? Is it dulling the keenness of your zest for spiritual pleasures? Is it making Bible-study, prayer, communion with Christ, meditation upon holy themes--less sweet enjoyments than before? Is it making your hunger for righteousness, for God--less intense? Is it interfering with the comfort and blessing you used to find in church services, in Christian work? If so, there is only one thing to do--to hasten to return to God, cut off the pleasure which is imperiling the soul, and find in Christ the joy which the world cannot give, and which ever enhances the life. We must test all our pleasures by this rule--Are they helping us to grow into the noblest spiritual beauty?

May 17

Living to Serve

True life, wherever it is found, is ministry. Men think that they rise in life--as they get away from serving; but it is the reverse. "Not to be ministered unto--but to minister," our Lord gave as the central aim and desire of his life. These words give us also the ideal for all Christian life. The whole of Christ's wonderful biography is focused and printed here. He himself holds up the picture as the pattern on which every disciple's life is to be fashioned. No one really begins to live at all, in any worthy sense--until selfishness dies in him and he begins to serve. We should ourselves ask concerning others--not how we can use them to advance our own interests and welfare--but how we can do them good, serve them, become in some way blessings to them.

May 18

Making and Keeping Friends

It is worth while to make friends--if they are worthy. It costs to do it--we can have friends only by giving our life for them and to them. Selfishness never wins a friend. We can make others love us--only by truly loving them. The largest service, if we do not love, wins us no real friends. Then, the friends we have made--we should strive keep forever. No friendship should be formed, which is not beautiful enough for heaven. God will never be jealous of the pure human friendships which we will have in glory. Even the brightness of Christ's radiance, will not eclipse for our eyes the faces of the earthly friends we shall meet on the golden streets. Loving God supremely, will not drive out of our hearts, the love of dear ones knit to us along the years of fellowship, in joy and sorrow. The better we love Christ--the deeper, purer, tenderer, and stronger will be our love for Christly human friends.

May 19

Weaving our Soul's Garments

We are all busy weavers. Forever are we pushing the shuttle back and forth--each moment leaving one new thread in the web of our life which shall stay there forever. Every thought, every feeling, every motion, every imagination which plays but for a moment in the soul--become a thread which is instantly a permanent part of the life we are living. Our words and acts are threads which are clean and beautiful--or stained and blemished, according to their moral character. Thus we are forever weaving, and the web that we make--our souls must wear in eternity. How important it is that we put into this fabric--only threads of immortal beauty! If we do God's will always, and train ourselves to meditate on God's thoughts, and to receive into our heart the influences of God's love and grace, and to yield ever and only to God's Spirit--we shall weave for our souls a robe of righteousness, which shall appear radiant and lovely when all earth's garments have faded and crumbled to dust!

May 20

Life's Real Problem

The problem of sailing--is not to keep the boat out of the water--but to keep the water out of the boat. In like manner, the problem of true Christian living--is not to keep ourselves out of life's cares, trials, and temptations--but to keep the cares, trials, and temptations out of us. As the sea is the normal element for ship-sailing, so care is the normal element of life in this world. But we must keep the sea out of our heart. Some people make the mistake of letting their cares and worries creep into their souls. The result is that they grow discontented, fretful, unhappy. The secret of peace--is to keep the heart free from care and anxiety, even in the midst of the sorest trials. This secret we can have only by opening our hearts to Christ.

May 21

Not in Vain in the Lord

In testing the failure or success of life--we must not measure by an earthly standard. There are lives which the world crowns as successful--but which God rates as failures. Then there are others over which men drop a tear of pity--but which in God's sight are put down as noble successes. All earnest Christians do many things which they hope will prove blessings to others, which yet in the end seem to fail altogether of

good result. But we do not know what good may yet come out of our true work, which has appeared to fail. "Your labor is not in vain in the Lord." It may not show any result at once--but somewhere, sometime, there will be blessing from everything that is done truly for Christ.

The old water-wheel runs around and around outside the mill. It seems to be accomplishing nothing--but the shaft goes through the wall and turns machinery inside, making flour to feed the hunger of many; or driving spindles and weaving beautiful fabrics. Our lives may seem, with all their activities, to be leaving no result--but they reach into the unseen; and who knows what blessings they become, what impressions they leave on other lives and in eternity?

May 22

Doing God's Will

Doing God's will builds up character in us. Doing God's will builds up in us--that which shall never need to be torn down. "He who does the will of God abides forever." Every obedience of our lives adds a new touch of beauty on our soul. Every true thing we do in Christ's name, though it leaves no mark anywhere else in God's universe, leaves an imperishable mark on our own life. Every deed of kindness or unselfishness that we perform, with love in our hearts for Christ, though it blesses no other soul in all the wide world, leaves its blessing on ourselves. We are sure, therefore, of getting a blessing in our own life when we are obedient, even though we impart no good to any other.

May 23

Giving to Beggars

To the blind man begging by the wayside, to the poor wretch that comes to our door for alms, to the crippled old woman who sits muffled up on a doorstep and holds out a wrinkled hand--we owe something if we are Christians. We may not give money--usually we had better not give money--but we ought to give something. We represent Christ in this world, and we ought to treat every such case of need and misfortune, as our Master would do if he were precisely in our place. We ought to give at least a patient answer, a kindly look, and sympathetic attention.

This from Turgeneff's 'Poems in Prose': "I was walking in the street; a beggar stopped me--a frail old man. His tearful eyes, blue lips, rough rags, disgusting sores--oh, how horribly poverty had disfigured the unhappy creature! He stretched out to me his swollen, filthy hand; he groaned and whimpered for alms. I felt in all my pockets. No purse, watch, or handkerchief did I find. I had left them all at home. The beggar waited, and his outstretched hand twitched and trembled slightly. Embarrassed and confused, I seized his dirty hand and pressed it: 'Don't be vexed with me, brother! I have nothing with me, brother.' The beggar raised his bloodshot eyes to mine, his blue lips smiled, and he returned the pressure of my chilled fingers. 'Never mind, brother,' stammered he; 'I thank you for this; this too was a gift, brother.' I felt that I too had received a gift from my brother." The brotherly word--was holiest alms.

May 24

How to Know Christ

To some, Christ is a creed and a pattern of life--but not a personal friend. There are many who know well the "historic Christ," but to whom he is only a person who lived nearly two thousand years ago. They read

his biography, as they read that of Paul or John--with admiration and wonder.

They think of his sweet life as but a vanished dream; or, if they realize his resurrection, he is to them an absent friend, like a dear one journeying in another land--real, loving, true, trusted--but far away. But all such miss the sweetest blessedness of knowing Christ. He does not belong to the past--nor to the far away--but is a friend who would come into the actual daily life of each of his believing ones. No mother was ever so much to her child--as Jesus would be to us--if we would let him into our life. How can we get this blessing of personal knowledge of Christ, and conscious personal friendship with him? Trust him and obey him, and you will learn to know him and love him.

May 25

Nothing Good Comes Easy

Unselfishness, even in its smallest acts and manifestations, costs some sacrifice. Work for others which costs us nothing--is scarcely worth doing. It takes heart's blood to heal hearts. It is those who sow in tears--who shall reap in joy. Take easy work if you will--work which costs you nothing; give only what you will not miss--spare yourself from self-denial and waste and sacrifice; but do not be surprised if your hands are empty in the harvest-time. We must give--if we are to receive; we must sow--if we would reap.

May 26

God's Storehouse

Each step in the life of faith, is toward richer blessing. Are you God's child? There is nothing before you in the unopened future, but goodness. Every new experience, whether of joy or sorrow, will be a new storehouse of goodness for you. Even in the midst of disaster, you will still find goodness enfolded. Even your disappointments will disclose truer, richer blessings--than if your own hopes had been realized. Here is a lens through which every true Christian may see his own path clear to the end--from goodness to richer goodness, from glory to glory, the last step through the opening door of heaven into the presence of the King.

May 27

Bruised Reeds

Christ is building his kingdom with earth's broken things. In building their kingdoms, men want only the strong, the successful, the victorious, the unbroken. But God is the God of the unsuccessful, of those who have failed. Heaven is filling with earth's broken lives, and there is no bruised reed which Christ cannot take and restore to glorious blessedness and beauty. He can take the life crushed by pain or sorrow--and make it into a harp whose music shall be all praise. He can lift earth's saddest failure--up to heaven's glory!

May 28

Opposition a Means of Grace

Spiritual life needs opposition to bring out its best development. It flourishes most luxuriantly in adverse circumstances. The very temptations which make our life one unceasing warfare--train us into true soldiers of Christ. The hardships of our experiences, which seem to us to be more than we can possibly

endure, make the very school of life for us, in which we learn our best lessons and grow into whatever beauty and Christ-likeness of character we attain.

May 29

Life's Possibilities

Think of all the magnificent powers God has put into these lives of ours. He has given us minds to think, to reason, to imagine, to roam amid the stars, to wander into the very borders of infinity, to climb the golden stairs of faith even into the midst of heaven's brightness. He has given us hearts to feel, to suffer, to rejoice, to love. He has put into our beings the possibilities of the noblest achievements and the loftiest attainments. Oh, what a shame it is for one born to live in immortal glory, called to be a child of God, to become like the Son of God--yet to be content with a poor earthly life and to live without reaching up toward God and heaven!

May 30

Our Soldiers' Graves

We do not always remember, as we enjoy our national blessings and comforts, what they cost those who won them for us. We strew flowers on the graves of our soldiers who fell, and tell in song and speech of their heroic deeds. This is well. We should never let the gratitude die out of our hearts as we think of the blood which was shed in saving our country. But gratitude is not enough. This country is a sacred trust in our hands. We are now the conservators of its glory. We have more to do than sing the praises of its dead heroes and soldiers. There are battles yet to fight--battles for national honor, for righteousness, for truth, for purity, for religion. We must hold up the old flag in the face of all enemies. While we honor the memory of those who died in patriotic war, let us ourselves be worthy soldiers in the great moral war that never ceases, and patriots loving country more than party, and truth and righteousness more than political preferment and reward.

May 31

Mastering Misfortune

An English prisoner, suffering from persecution, was cheered for one hour each day by a little spot of sunshine on his dungeon-wall. Through a grating high up--the sun's rays streamed down into his cell for this little time. He found on his floor an old nail and a stone, and with these crude implements he cut upon the wall while the sunlight lay there--a rough image of the Christ upon his cross. Thus he mastered his misfortune, getting blessing out of it.

The incident has its lesson for us all. Whatever the calamity or the disaster which builds its dungeon-walls about you, never let despair lay its chilly hand upon you. Never yield to the gloom. Never let the darkness into your soul. There is no dungeon so deep and dark, but down into its chilling gloom, the rays of God's love stream. In the light of these, fashion some new beauty on your soul. Carve on the wall of your heart--the image of the Christ. Master your misfortune, and make it yield blessing to you. Conquered calamity becomes your helper--and leaves beauty on your soul. But if you let your trouble master you--it leaves an ineffaceable scar upon your life.

JUNE

June 1

Beauties of Nature

They miss many a tender joy--who do not always hold their hearts in sympathy with nature. They lose many a whisper of love which drops from God's lips--who have not ears open to catch the voices of nature. They fail to behold many a lovely vision of beauty--who have not learned to use their eyes in admiring the exquisite things which God has scattered everywhere in such glorious profusion. Yet most of us walk amid these inspirations, these rare pictures, these sweet voices--and neither feel, nor see, nor hear. God never meant us to get so little comfort or joy, from the lovely things with which he has filled our earth.

June 2

Failing in our Little Part

God is not so limited in his resources of power, that if one little human hand somewhere fails to do its appointed duty--his great cause will be defeated. He has large plans, in which the humblest of us have our own allotted place and part. But there is no compulsion brought to bear upon us. We can refuse to do our little piece of work if we choose. God's plan will then go on without us, and other hands will do what we refuse to do. The only effect of our failure in the duty assigned to us--will be in ourselves. Our own hearts will be hurt by our failure in duty, and we shall be set aside, missing the honor and blessing which would have been ours--had we done our part.

June 3

Leaving All to God

As we go through life, we learn more and more to doubt our own wishing and choosing, as we see how little good, really comes from our own ways and plans. We learn not to choose at all ourselves--but to let God choose for us. No doubt we miss heavenly blessings many a time, because we have not faith to take them in their disguise of pain or grief, preferring our own way, to our Father's. God sometimes lets us have what in our wilfulness we persist in choosing, just to teach us that our own way is not the best. We learn at last to plead, "Bless me, my Father!" not daring to indicate in what manner the blessing shall come--but preferring that it shall be as God wills.

June 4

"As We Forgive"

We ought to keep no count of offences and forgivenesses. The time never ought to come, when we shall say we can forgive one no more. When we are smarting under some injury done to us by another, and when our feeling of resentment is burning into a flame within us--we should remember that the wrong we have done to God, is infinitely greater, and that he in his love has freely forgiven us. Should we not, then, be willing to forgive others, their little wrongs against us? This is why our Lord put into the prayer he taught his disciples the words, "Forgive us our debts--as we forgive." He wants us always to remember that we ourselves need forgiveness, and that if we would be like him--we must forgive as he does.

June 5

The Blessing of Assurance

Every Christian's privilege is to enjoy unbroken assurance while living close to Christ. God wants us to trust him just as fully in the shadow--as in the sunshine. There is grace enough in Christ, to give light and joy in the darkest experience. Yet it is just as true that many of God's noblest saints, in all ages, have had seasons of depression, when they lost the joy of salvation, and could not speak triumphantly of their hope. It is true, also, that there have been many devoted followers of Christ who never in their life could get farther than to hope that they were Christ's disciples. Is this the best that the love of God and the grace of Christ can do for those who are saved?

June 6

I am Ready

Whatever command God gives, we should instantly and cheerfully answer, "Yes, Lord--I am ready to obey!" It is not hard to say "Yes" when God leads us only in easy paths, where the flowers are strewn, where the way is smooth and agreeable. But sometimes the path is covered with thorns, and is rough and steep, or is through fire or flood; still we are always to say, "Yes." If it is to some trial or cross-bearing or sacrifice that God calls us--our answer should ever be the same. We ought to be able to trust him, when our eyes can see no blessing or good in the way he would take us. Every path of God leads to a rich joy.

June 7

Choice of Friends

We should choose friends whom we can take into every part of our life, into every closest communion, into every holy joy of our heart, into every consecration and service, into every hope--and between whom and us, there shall never be a point at which we shall not be in sympathy. We ought to accept only the friendship which will bring blessing to our lives, which will enrich our character, which will stimulate us to better and holier things, which will weave threads of silver and gold into our web of life, whose every influence will be a lasting blessing.

June 8

Lost Opportunities

All the days come to us, filled with opportunities. There are opportunities for gathering knowledge and for growing wise. There are opportunities for growing in character, becoming stronger, truer, purer, nobler, more Christ-like. There are opportunities for doing heroic things for Christ. There are opportunities for performing gentle ministries and for rendering sweet services in Christ's name, to those who need loving sympathy and deeds of kindness. Opportunities come to all--come continually, on all the common days, and come oftentimes in the simplest common things. The trouble with too many of us, is that we do not improve them, do not seize them as they pass.

June 9

Victory by Standing

One of the first things in military training, is to learn to stand well. Old soldiers will tell you that there is nothing which so tests the courage and the obedience of men--as to be required to stand still on the field

and hold a position in the face of the enemy. Ofttimes the battle depends upon standing firm. The same principle applies in all life. Much of Christian duty is not active, bustling work--but quiet, patient waiting. There come many times in the experience of every life when victory can be gained in no other way. We must stand still--and wait for God. Immeasurable harm is wrought in personal lives and in the work of God, by the impatience which cannot wait for the divine bidding to go forward.

June 10

Power of the Tongue

The tongue's power of blessing is simply incalculable. It can impart valuable knowledge, making others wiser. It can utter kindly words, which will comfort sorrow or cheer despondency. It can breathe thoughts which will arouse, inspire, and quicken heedless souls, and even call up dead souls to life. It can sing songs which will live forever in blessed influence and ministry. Such power we should consecrate to God, and hold ever pure for him. The lips which speak God's name in prayer and Christian song, and that utter vows of fidelity to Christ, should never defile themselves with any forms of corrupt speech. They should be kept only for Christ.

June 11

Individuality of Character

Character is personal. It is not a possession which we can share with another. We can give a hungry man part of our loaf of bread; we can divide our money with one who needs; but character is something which we cannot give away or communicate. The brave soldier cannot share his courage with the pale, trembling recruit who fights by his side in the battle. The pure, gentle woman cannot give part of her purity and gentleness to the defiled and hardened woman whom she meets. Character is our own, a part of our very being. It grows in us along the years. Acts repeated become habits, and character is made up in the end--of the habits which have been repeated so often as to become a permanent part of the life.

June 12

Work for Others

We can always do our best work, when we do it not for ourselves--but that it may bless others. If the motive in all ambition, all toil, all effort is to become wiser, stronger, greater, more influential, in order that we may do more in Christ's name for our fellow-men, then whatever we do will be beautiful and noble. The motive exalts and ennobles the work. We get the largest measure of good for ourselves, from what we do when our first aim is to do good to another. If you would get the best from any good thing, receive it from God and then hasten to minister it in Christ's name to others. The richest blessing comes not in the receiving--but in the giving and doing.

June 13

Second-Hand Bible Truths

Many Christians have their heads stored full of teachings, catechisms, creeds, and Scriptures--and yet when trouble comes, they have not one truth on which they can really lean or trust their weight, or which gives them any actual support or help to walk with over the dark mountains. They have piles of

doctrines--but no rod and staff to lean on in weakness. They have lamps hung away in great clusters--but not one of them burning to throw its light upon the darkness. Let us learn to study the Scriptures for ourselves, and to know what we believe. Second-hand Bible truth, is not the kind of food our souls need.

June 14

Misreading Providences

We are all apt to interpret "providences" in accordance with our own desires. When we are wishing to be led in a certain way, we are quite sure to find "providences" which seem to favor our own preference. We must be careful in interpreting the meaning of events and occurrences. We are not to enter every door which is thrown open before us. The devil opens doors of temptation--but we are not to call opportunities to sin guiding "providences." God's voice in providence never contradicts the voice of his Word.

June 15

Keeping a Child's Heart

We ought to keep our hearts warm and full of kindness and sweetness, even through the harshest experiences. Many of us find that life is hard and full of pain. We meet misfortunes, sore trials, disappointments. We should not allow these harsh experiences to deaden our sensibilities or make us stoical or sour. Nothing but the love of God shed abroad in us by the Holy Spirit--can keep any of us in such gentleness and tenderness, amid the stern and severe experiences of life. Yet it is possible to carry the gentle heart of a little child, through all life's hardness and chill, into the fullest and ripest old age. "Be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you." Ephesians 4:32

June 16

Setting Pain to Music

The religion of Christ teaches us to put every anguish and all sorrow, into song. It would set to music our deepest, saddest experiences. It would have us sing even our heart's bitterest complaints. It gives us anthems rather than dirges, for the utterance of our sorest griefs. It helps us to do this by revealing to our faith's vision, something of beauty and blessing, in every dark hour; something which other eyes cannot see. It lets us hear in our deepest trials, the voices of divine love, encouraging, cheering, assuring us. Surely the lesson is worth the learning. It is nobler to sing a victorious song in time of trial, than to lie crushed in grief. Songs bless the world more than wails and tears. They also honor God more. It is better for our own heart, too, to put our sorrows and pains into songs.

June 17

Divine Discontent

The ideal Christian life is one of insatiable thirst, of quenchless yearning, of divine discontent, wooed ever on by visions of new life, new joy, new attainments. The trouble with too many of us--is that we are too well satisfied with ourselves as we are. We have attained a little measure of peace, of holiness, of faith, of joy, of knowledge of Christ--and we are not hungering for the larger possible attainments. O pray for discontent! With all the infinite possibilities of spiritual life before you--do not settle down on a little patch of

dusty ground at the mountain's foot in restful contentment. Be not content until you reach the mountain's summit!

June 18

The Power of Faith

God can use very weak and imperfect agents. He can do great things with poor instruments. But there is one kind of person he will not use. He will not send blessing to the world, through an unbelieving heart. If you would be a vessel fit for the Master's use, you must have faith. Believe in Christ. Believe that he is able and willing to do the "greater things" which he has promised to do through his disciples. Open your heart to receive him, and all that he brings. Expect him to do great things through you. If we have faith, there is no limit to what Christ will do for us. Faith lays our powers in Christ's hands, as the chisel lays itself in the hands of the sculptor for the carving of the marble statue

June 19

Blessed are the Peacemakers

There are causes enough to separate people and to produce frictions and alienations. Let us not add to the world's bitterness and grief by ever encouraging strife, or putting a single coal on the fire of anger. Rather let us try to heal the little rifts we find in people's friendships. The unkind thoughts of another we find in any one's mind--let us seek to change to kindly thoughts. We can do no more Christ-like service in this world, than habitually and continually to seek to promote peace between man and man, to keep people from drifting apart, and to draw friends and neighbors closer together in love. "Blessed are the peacemakers, because they will be called sons of God." Matthew 5:9

June 20

"Whatever is Lovely"

"Finally brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable--if there is any moral excellence and if there is any praise--dwell on these things." Philippians 4:8. We become truly beautiful, just in the measure that we become like God. There are some who are Christians--but who are not lovely. They have qualities which repel others. But true holiness is attractive. We ought to make our religion so beautiful--that all who look upon us shall be drawn to our Master. We do dishonor to Christ, when we profess to be His people, and yet show in our character, disposition, and life--things which are unlike Christ. How will men of the world know what true religion is--if you and I do not show them its beauty in our lives? We should seek not only whatever is just and true and honest--but also whatever is lovely.

June 21

Love for the Brethren

It is easy enough to love some people--people with tastes like ours, people who belong to our "set," people who are particularly kind to us. But that is not the way Christ wants us to live and to love. True Christian fellowship takes in all the followers of our Lord, all who bear his name. We are to be known as disciples by our love for one another. It requ

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