

# Evening Thoughts - January

by Octavius Winslow

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*God's faithfulness, love, and presence are always available to us, even in difficult times, and He delights in our broken and contrite hearts.*

**Scripture:** Deuteronomy 33:25, Job 9:11-12, Psalm 34:18, Psalm 42:8, Psalm 141:2, Isaiah 44:21-22, Matthew 17:8, Acts 16:30-31, 1 Corinthians 2:2, Revelation 8:3-4

**Topics:** "The Importance of Prayer", "Faithfulness of God"

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## Description

Octavius Winslow emphasizes the importance of recognizing God's faithfulness as we enter a new year, encouraging believers to trust in His unwavering support through life's uncertainties. He reminds us that Christ's grace and presence are sufficient for our needs, urging us to approach God with a broken and contrite heart, seeking His mercy and strength. Winslow highlights the necessity of prayer and self-examination, asserting that true faith is rooted in a personal relationship with Jesus, who is our mediator and source of life. He calls for a continual dedication to God, emphasizing that our lives should reflect our commitment to Him, living not for ourselves but for His glory.

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## Transcript

EVENING THOUGHTS, or

DAILY WALKING WITH GOD

JANUARY 1.

As your days, so shall your strength be. Deut. 33:25

CHRISTIAN, consider this new epoch of time, unfold a new page of your yet unwritten history, with the full, unwavering conviction that God is faithful; that in all the negotiations, transactions, and events of the unknown future, in all the diversified and fluctuating phases of experience through which you may pass, it will be your mercy to do with Him of whom it is said, "It is impossible for God to lie." Oh, take this precious truth into your heart, and it will shed a warm sunlight over all the landscape of your yet shadowy existence. "He abides faithful: He cannot deny Himself." Standing yet within the solemn vestibule of this new and portentous year, could our fluttering hearts find repose in a more appropriate or sweeter truth than the Divine faithfulness of Him, "with whom there is no variableness neither shadow of turning"? As a new period of time slowly rises from the depths of the unknown and mysterious future, shrink we from its stern

and solemn duties, its bosomed sorrows, its deep and impenetrable decrees? Why shrink we? Infinite resources unveil their treasures upon its threshold. Christ's atoning merits confront our vast demerit. Christ's boundless grace confronts our deep necessities. Christ's promised presence confronts our sad and gloomy loneliness. Jesus thus filled with grace so overflowing, with love so tender, with sympathy so exquisite, with power so illimitable, with resources so boundless, with a nature so changeless, stands before us and says to each trembling heart, "Fear not!" We commence a new march under his convoy. We prepare for a new conflict with his armor. We renew our pilgrimage with fresh supplies of 'angels' food,' affording nourishment for the present and pledges for the future. For that future do not be needlessly, unbelievably anxious. It is all in God's hands. He would that you should live each day upon Him as a little child--simple in your faith, unshaken in your confidence, clinging in your love. Let each morning's petition be--ever linking it with the precious name of Jesus--"My Father! give me this day my daily bread." Then shall the promise be fulfilled, and its fulfillment shall be the immediate answer to your prayer--"As your days so shall your strength be."

And let us, on this birthday of the year, renew each his personal and solemn dedication to God; supplicating forgiveness for the past, and invoking grace to help in every time of need for the future. The atoning blood of Jesus! How solemn and how precious is it at this moment! Bathed in it afresh, we will more supremely, unreservedly, and submissively yield ourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead. We will travel to the open fountain, wash, and be clean. Christ loves us to come as we are. We may approach all clothed with shame for the past, but not a reproving look will dart from His eye, nor an upbraiding word will breathe from his lips. Nor shall abused and ill-requited mercies past seal our lips from supplicating blessings for the future. "Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it," is still the Divine promise and He who gave it has added a supplementary one, if possible, yet ampler and richer, "Call unto me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things which you know not."

JANUARY 2.

Yet the Lord will command his loving-kindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life. Psalm 42:8

SONGS in the night!--who can create them? Midnight harmony!--who can inspire it? God can, and God does. The "God of all consolation," the "God who comforts those who are cast down;" the "God of hope," who causes the "bright and morning star" to rise upon the dreary landscape; the "God of peace, who Himself gives peace, always and by all means;" even He, our Maker and Redeemer, gives songs in the night. Music, at all times sweet, is the sweetest amid the sublimity of night. When in the solemn stillness that reigns--not a breath rustling the leaves, and Echo herself slumbers--when in the darkness that enshrouds, the thoughts that agitate, the gloomy phantoms that flit before the fancy like shadows dancing upon the wall, there breaks upon the wakeful ear the soft notes of skillfully touched instruments, blending with the melting tones of well-tuned voices, it is as though angels had come down to serenade and soothe the sad and jaded sons of earth. But there are songs richer, and there is music sweeter still than theirs--the songs which God gives, and the music which Jesus inspires, in the long dark night of the Christian's pilgrimage. A saint of God is, then, a happy man. He is often most so when others deem him most miserable. When they, gazing with pity upon his adversities and his burdens, and silently marking the conflict of thought and feeling passing within--compared with which external trial is but as the bubble floating upon the surface--deem him a fit object of their commiseration and sympathy, even then there is a hidden spring of joy, an under-current of peace, lying in the depths of the soul, which renders him, chastened and afflicted though he is, a happy and an enviable man. "Blessed are those who mourn now,

for they shall be comforted."

JANUARY 3.

Jesus Christ, and him crucified. 1 Co2. 2:2.

FAITH, picturing to its view the cross, the Holy Spirit engraving it on the heart in spiritual regeneration, the whole soul receiving Him whom it lifts up, as its "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption," gently and effectually transforms the spirit, that was chafed and restless, into the "meekness and gentleness of Christ." Oh what calmness steals over his ruffled soul! oh what peace flows into his troubled heart! oh what sunshine bathes in its bright beams his dark spirit, who, from the scenes of his conflict and his sorrow, flees beneath the shadow and the shelter of the cross! The storm ceases--the deluge of his grief subsides--the Spirit, dove-like, brings the message of hope and love--the soul, tempest-tossed, rests on the green mount, and one unbounded spring clothes and encircles the landscape with its verdure and its beauty. Child, chastened by the Father's love, look to the cross of your crucified Savior; and as you fix upon it your believing, ardent, adoring gaze, exclaim--

"Wearily for me you sought,

On the cross my soul you bought;

Lose not all for which you wrought."

What is your sorrow compared with Christ's? What is your grief gauged by your Lord's? Your Master has passed before you, flinging the curse and the sin from your path, paving it with promises, carpeting it with love, and fencing it around with the hedge of His divine perfections. Press onward, then, resisting your foe resolutely, bearing your cross patiently, drinking your cup submissively, and learning, while sitting at the Savior's feet, or leaning upon His bosom, to be like Him, "meek and lowly in heart."

JANUARY 4.

Let my prayer be set forth before you as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.  
Psalm 141:2

THIS passage presents the Christian to our view in his holiest and most solemn posture--drawing near to God, and presenting before the altar of His grace the incense of prayer. The typical reference to this is strikingly beautiful. "You shall make an altar to burn incense upon . . . . And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning; when he dresses the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lights the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations." That this incense was typical of prayer would appear from Luke 1:10, "And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense." And David, though dwelling in the more shadowy age of the church, thus correctly and beautifully interprets this type: "Let my prayer be set before you as incense."

But from where arises the incense of prayer ascending to the throne of the Eternal? Oh, it is from the heart. The believer's renewed, sanctified heart is the censer from where the fragrant cloud ascends. True prayer is the incense of a heart broken for sin, humbled for its iniquity, mourning over its plague, and touched, and healed, and comforted with the atoning blood of God's great sacrifice. This is the true censer; this it is at which God looks. "For the Lord sees not as man sees; for man looks on the outward

appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart." Precious censer! molded, fashioned, beautified by God. There exists not upon earth a more vile and unlovely thing, in the self-searching view of the true believer, than his own heart. And yet --oh wondrous grace!--God, by his renewing Spirit, has made of that heart a beautiful, costly, and precious censer, the cloud of whose incense ascends and fills all heaven with its fragrance. With all its indwelling evil and self-loathing, God sees its struggles, watches its conflict, and marks its sincerity. Not a feeling thrills it, not an emotion agitates it, not a sorrow shades it, not a sin wounds it, not a thought passes through it, of which He is not cognizant. Believer! Jesus loves that heart of your. He purchased it with his own heart's blood, agonies, and tears--and He loves it. It is His temple, His home, His censer, and never can it approach Him in prayer, but He is prepared to accept both the censer and incense with a complacency and delight which finds its best expression in the language of His own word, "I will accept you with your sweet savor." And what shall we say of the fragrance of this incense? Oh, how much have we yet to learn of the intrinsic sweetness of real prayer! We can but imperfectly conceive the fragrance there must be to God in the breathing of the Divine Spirit in the heart of a poor sinner. It is perhaps but a groan--a sigh--a tear--a look--but it is the utterance of the heart; and God can hear the voice of our weeping, and interpret the language of our desires, when the lips utter not a word; so fragrant to Him is the incense of prayer. "Lord, all my desire is before You, and my groaning is not hid from You."

JANUARY 5.

And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. Rev. 8:3-4

THIS angel is none other than the Angel of the Covenant, Jesus, our great High Priest, who stands before the golden altar in heaven, presenting the sweet incense of His divine merits and sacrificial death; the cloud of which ascends before God "with the prayers of the saints." Oh, it is the merit of our Immanuel, "who gave Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet--smelling savor," that imparts virtue, prevalence, and acceptableness to the incense of prayer ascending from the heart of the child of God. Each petition, each desire, each groan, each sigh, each glance, comes up before God with the "smoke of the incense" which ascends from the cross of Jesus, and from the "golden altar which is before the throne." All the imperfection and impurity which mingles with our devotions here is separated from each petition by the atonement of our Mediator, who presents that as sweet incense to God. See your Great High Priest before the throne! See Him waving the golden censer to and fro! See how the cloud of incense rises and envelopes the throne! See how heaven is filled with its fragrance and its glory! Believer in Jesus, upon the heart of that officiating High Priest your name is written; in the smoke of the incense which has gone up from that waving censer your prayers are presented. Jesus' blood cleanses them, Immanuel's merit perfumes them, and our glorious High Priest thus presents both our person and our sacrifice to his Father and our Father, to His God and our God. Oh wonderful encouragement to prayer! Who, with such an assurance that his weak, broken, and defiled, but sincere petitions shall find acceptance with God, would not breathe them at the throne of grace. Go, in the name of Jesus; go, casting yourself upon the merit which fills heaven with its fragrance; go, and pour out your grief, unveil your sorrow, confess your sin, sue out your pardon, make known your needs, with your eye of faith upon the Angel who stands at the "golden altar which is before the throne," and the incense which breathes from your oppressed and stricken heart will ascend up before God out of the Angel's hand, as a cloud,

rich, fragrant, and accepted.

JANUARY 6.

Lo, he goes by me, and I see him not: he passes on also, but I perceive him not. Behold, he takes away, who can hinder him? who will say unto him, What do you? Job 9:11-12

AND is this the way of the Lord with you, my beloved? Are you bewildered at the mazes through which you are threading your steps; at the involved circumstances of your present history? Deem yourself not alone in this. No mystery has lighted upon your path but what is common to the one family of God: "This honor have all his saints." The Shepherd is leading you, as all the flock are led, with a skillful hand, and in a right way. It is yours to stand if He bids you, or to follow if He leads. "He gives no account of any of His matters," assuming that His children have such confidence in His wisdom, and love, and uprightness, as in all the wonder-working of His dealings with them, to "be still and know that He is God." Throw back a glance upon the past, and see how little you have ever understood of all the way God has led you. What a mystery--perhaps now better explained--has enveloped His whole proceedings! When Joseph, for example, was torn from the homestead of his father, sold, and borne a slave into Egypt, not a syllable of that eventful page of his history could he spell. And yet God's way with this His servant was perfect. And could Joseph have seen at the moment that he descended into the pit, where he was cast by his envious brethren, all the future of his history as vividly and as palpably as he beheld it in after years, while there would have been the conviction that all was well, we doubt not that faith would have lost much of its vigor, and God much of His glory. And so with good old Jacob. The famine, the parting with Benjamin, the menacing conduct of Pharaoh's prime minister, wrung the mournful expression from his lips, "All these things are against me." All was veiled in deep and mournful mystery. Thus was it with Job, to whom God spoke from the whirlwind that swept every vestige of affluence and domestic comfort from his dwelling. And thus, too, with Naomi, when she exclaimed, "Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the Lord has brought me home again empty." That it is to the honor of God to conceal, should in our view justify all His painful and humiliating procedure with us. "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing," as it will be for His endless glory, by and by, fully to reveal it all. But there is one thing, Christian sufferer, which He cannot conceal. He cannot conceal the love that forms the spring and foundation of all His conduct with His saints. Do what He will, conceal as He may, be His chariot the thick clouds, and His way in the deep sea, still His love betrays itself, disguised though it may be in dark and impenetrable providence. There are under-tones, gentle and tender, in the roughest accents of our Joseph's voice. And he who has an ear ever hearkening to the Lord shall often exclaim, "Speak, Lord, how and when and where you may--it is the voice of my Beloved!"

JANUARY 7

The Lord is near unto those who are of a broken heart; and saves such as be of a contrite spirit. Psalm 34:18

A broken and a contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. Psalm 51:17

THERE are those by whom a broken heart is despised. Satan despises it--though he trembles at it. The world despises it--though it stands in awe of it. The Pharisee despises it--though he attempts its counterfeit. But there is one who despises it not. "you will not despise it," exclaims the penitent child, with his eye upon the loving heart of his God and Father. But why does God not only not despise it, but delights in and accepts it? Because He sees in it a holy and a fragrant sacrifice. It is a sacrifice, because it is

offered to God, and not to man. It is an oblation laid upon His altar. Moses never presented such an oblation--Aaron never offered such a sacrifice in all the gifts which he offered, in all the victims which he slew. And while some have cast their rich and splendid gifts into the treasury, or have laid them ostentatiously upon the altar of Christian benevolence, God has stood by the spot to which some poor penitent has brought his broken heart for sin, the incense of which has gone up before Him as a most precious and fragrant sacrifice. Upon that oblation, upon that gift, His eye has been fixed, as if one object, and one only, had arrested and absorbed His gaze--it was a poor broken heart that lay bleeding and quivering upon His altar. It is a sacrifice, too, offered upon the basis of the atoning sacrifice of His dear Son--the only sacrifice that satisfies Divine justice--and this makes it precious to God. So infinitely glorious is the atonement of Jesus, so divine, so complete, and so honoring to every claim of His moral government, that He accepts each sacrifice of prayer, of praise, of penitence, and of personal consecration, laid in faith by the side and upon that one infinite sacrifice for sin. He recognizes in it, too, the work of His own Spirit. When the Spirit of God moved upon the face of unformed nature, and a new world sprang into life, light, and beauty, He pronounced it very good. But what must be His estimate of that new creation which His Spirit has wrought in the soul, whose moral chaos He has reduced to life, light, and order!

But in what way does God evince His satisfaction with, and His delight in, the broken and contrite heart? We answer--first by the manifestation of His power in healing it. "He heals the broken in heart, and binds up their wounds." "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek: He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted." Never did a physician more delight to display his skill, or exercise the benevolent feelings of his nature in the alleviation of suffering, than does Jesus in His work of binding up and healing the heart broken for sin, by speaking a sense of pardon, and applying to it the balsam of His own most precious blood. But our Lord not only heals the contrite heart, but, as if heaven had not sufficient attraction as His dwelling-place, He comes down to earth, and makes that heart His abode. "Thus says the high and lofty One, that inhabits Eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also who is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." What, dear, humble penitent, could give you such a view of the interest which Christ takes in your case--the delight with which He contemplates your contrition, and the welcome and the blessing which He is prepared to bestow upon you, on your casting yourself down at His feet, as this fact, that He waits to make that sorrow-stricken heart of yours His chief and loved abode--reviving it, healing it, and enshrining Himself forever within its renewed and sanctified affections.

JANUARY 8.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved, and your house. Acts 16:30-31

THE faith of the child of God stands in the righteousness of the God-man Mediator--"the righteousness which is of God by faith." This faith has not been inappropriately termed the "poor man's grace." It is so because it comes to Jesus empty-handed. It travels to Christ in poverty and rags, in want and in woe. It is the grace of him who, feeling the working of an inward plague, and repudiating all idea of human merit, appears at the door of mercy, "poor in spirit," humbly knocking, and earnestly suing, and freely receiving, as a pensioner, the blessing of sovereign grace. Oh, how glorious to the eye of such an one appears the righteousness of the Incarnate God! How precious to his heart the atoning blood of Jesus! How suitable and attractive to his view the foundation to which he is invited, and upon which, with the confidence of

faith, he is encouraged to build his assured hope of future glory! Who would not desire, and who would not seek, establishment in a faith like this? a faith that can read its pardon in the blood--its justification in the righteousness--its sanctification in the grace, and its security in the resurrection, life, and intercession of the great High Priest enthroned in heaven. Oh, let a man's faith cling to this, and he is a saved man! And to be saved! Oh, how will eternity prolong the swelling chant!--"Saved, for ever saved! A sinner the very chief--a saint the very least--a child the most unworthy! yet here, through grace, I am saved, forever saved!" Before the glory and importance of this salvation, oh, how do fade and disappear the grandeur and the significance of all other objects! "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" "This is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that has the Son has life, and he that has not the Son has not life." But the faith of the true believer is built upon Christ. It has Christ for its basis, Christ for its object, Christ for its beginning and its end. It is built upon the Godhead of His person, the obedience of His life, and the vicariousness of His death. He who builds his faith short of Deity, builds upon the treacherous sand which the first heaving billow sweeps from beneath his feet. We want, in the great matter of our salvation, Deity to become incarnate--Deity to obey--Deity to atone--Deity to justify--Deity to uphold--Deity to comfort--and Deity to bring us at last to the glorious abode of Deity, to dwell amid its splendors forever.

JANUARY 9.

Jesus only. Matthew 17:8

Is not this the motto of every true believer? Whom does his heart in its best moments, and holiest affections, and intentest yearnings, supremely desire? The answer is, "Jesus only." Having by His Spirit enthroned Himself there, having won the affections by the power of His love and the attractions of His beauty, the breathing of the soul now is, "Whom have I in heaven but You, and who is there on earth that I desire beside You?" Blessed is that soul, the utterances of whose heart are the sincere and fervent expressions of a love of which Christ is the one and supreme object! Oh, to love Him more! Worthy, most worthy is He of our first and best affections. Angels love Him ardently and supremely; how much more should we, who owe to Him a deeper debt of love than they! Let the love of Christ, then, constrain us to love Him, in return, with an affection which shall evince, by the singleness of its object and the unreserved surrender of its obedience, that He who reigns the sovereign Lord of our affections is--"Jesus only."

In all the spiritual circumstances of the believer's history, it is still "Jesus only." In the corrodings of guilt upon the conscience, in the cloud which veils the reconciled countenance of God from the soul, where are we to look, save to "Jesus only"? In the mournful consciousness of our unfaithfulness to God, of our aggravated backslidings, repeated departures, the allowed foils and defeats by which our enemies exult, and the saints hang their heads in sorrow, to whom are we to turn, but to "Jesus only"? In the cares, anxieties, and perplexities which gather around our path, in the consequent castings-down of our soul, and in the disquietude of our spirit within us, to whom shall we turn, but to "Jesus only"? In those deep and mysterious exercises of soul-travail, which not always the saints of God can fully understand--when we see a hand they cannot see, and when we hear a voice then cannot hear; when we seem to tread a lone path, or traverse a sea where no fellow-voyager ever heaves in sight; the days of soul-exercise wearisome, and its nights long and dark--oh! to whom shall we then turn, save to "Jesus only"? Who can enter into all this, and sympathize with all this, but Jesus? To Him alone, then, let us repair, with every sin, and with every burden, and with every temptation, and with every sorrow, and with every mental and spiritual exercise, thankful to be shut up exclusively to "Jesus only."

And when the time draws near that we must depart out of this world, and go unto the Father, one object will fix the eye, from which all others are then receding--it is "Jesus only." Ah! to die, actually to die, must be a crisis of our being quite different from reading of death in a book, or from hearing of it in the pulpit, or from talking of it by the way-side. It is a solemn, an appalling thing to die! But to the believer in Jesus, how pleasant and how glorious! "Absent from the body," he is "present with the Lord." Jesus is with him then. The blood of Jesus is there, cleansing him from all his guilt; the arms of Jesus are there, supporting him in all his weakness; the Spirit of Jesus is there, comforting him in all his fears; and now is he learning, for the last time on earth, that as for all the sins, all the perils, all the trials, and all the sorrows of life, so now as that life is ebbing fast away, and death is chilling, and eternity is nearing, "Jesus only" is all--sufficient for his soul. Believer! look to "Jesus only"--lean upon Him, cleave to Him, labor for Him, suffer for Him, and, if need be, die for Him; thus loving and trusting, living and dying for, "JESUS ONLY."

JANUARY 10.

This is my beloved, and this is my friend. Song 5:16

THE object of the believer's trust is Jesus, his Beloved. He is spoken of by the apostle as "THE Beloved," as though he would say, "There is but one beloved of God, of angels, of saints--it is Jesus." He is the beloved One of the Father. "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delights." "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." But Jesus is also the church's beloved, the beloved of each member of that church. His person is beloved, uniting all the glories of the Godhead with all the perfections of the manhood. His work is beloved, saving His people from the entire guilt, and condemnation, and dominion of their sins. His commandments are beloved, because they are the dictates of His love to us, and the tests of our love to Him. O yes! you have but one beloved of your heart, dear believer. He is "white and ruddy, the chief among ten thousand;" He is all the universe to you; heaven would be no heaven without Him; and with His presence here, earth seems often like the opening portal of heaven. He loved you, He labored for you, He died for you, He rose for you, He lives and intercedes for you in glory; and all that is lovely in Him, and all that is grateful in you, constrain you to exclaim--"I am my Beloved's, and any Beloved is mine."

And where would you lean in sorrow but upon the bosom of your Beloved? Christ's heart is a human heart, a sinless heart, a tender heart; a heart once the home of sorrow, once stricken with grief; once an aching, bleeding, mournful heart. Thus disciplined and trained, Jesus knows how to pity and to support those who are sorrowful and solitary. He loves to chase grief from the spirit, to bind up the broken heart, to staunch the bleeding wound, and to dry the weeping eye, to "comfort all that mourn." It is His delight to visit you in the dark night-season of your sorrow, and to come to you walking upon the tempestuous billows of your grief, breathing music and diffusing calmness over your scene of sadness and gloom. When other bosoms are closed to your sorrow, or are removed beyond your reach, or their deep throbbings of love are stilled in death--when the fiery darts of Satan fly thick around you, and the world frowns, and the saints are cold, and your path is sad and desolate--then lean upon the love, lean upon the grace, lean upon the faithfulness, lean upon the tender sympathy of Jesus. That bosom will always unveil to welcome you. It will ever be an asylum to receive you, and a home to shelter you. Never will its love cool, nor its tenderness lessen, nor its sympathy be exhausted, nor its pulse of affection cease to beat. You may have grieved it a thousand times over, you may have pierced it through and through, again and again--yet returning to its deathless love, penitent and lowly, sorrowful and humble, you may lay within it your weeping, aching, languid head, depositing every burden, reposing every sorrow, and breathing every sigh upon the heart of Jesus. Lord! to whom shall I go? yes, to whom would I go, but unto You?

We lean truly upon Jesus that we may advance in all holiness, that the graces of the Spirit may be quickened and stimulated, that we may cultivate more heavenly-mindedness, and be constantly coming up from the world, following him without the camp, bearing His reproach. Let our path, then, be upward; let us gather around us the trailing garment, casting away whatever impedes our progress; and leaning upon our Beloved and our Friend, hasten from all below, until we find ourselves actually reposing in the bosom upon which, in faith and love, in weakness and sorrow, we had rested amid the trials and perils of the ascent. There is ever this great encouragement, this light upon the way, that it is a heaven-pointing, a heaven-conducting, a Heaven-terminating path; and before long the weary pilgrim will reach its sunlit summit; not to lie down and die there, as Moses did upon the top of Pisgah, but to commence a life of perfect purity and of eternal bliss.

JANUARY 11.

For none of us lives to himself, and no man dies to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. Romans 14:7-8

THE Lord Jesus can only erect and carry forward His kingdom in the soul upon the ruins of self: and as this kingdom of grace is perpetual in its growth, so the demolition of self is a work of gradual advancement. As the inner life grows, Christ grows more lovely to the eye, more precious to the heart. His blood is more valued, His righteousness is more relied on, His grace is more lived upon, His cross is more gloried in, His yoke is more cheerfully borne, His commands are more implicitly obeyed. In all things Christ is advanced, and the soul by all means advances in its knowledge of, and in its resemblance to, Christ. Reader, is Christ advanced by you? Is His kingdom widened, is His truth disseminated, is his fame spread, is His person exalted, is His honor vindicated, is His glory promoted, by the life which you are living? Oh, name not the name of Christ, if it do not be to perfume the air with its fragrance, and to fill the earth with its renown.

This "living unto the Lord" is a life of self-denial; but have the self-denying, the self-renouncing, no reward? Oh yes! their reward is great. They are such as the King delights to honor. When John the Baptist declared, "He must increase, but I must decrease," and on another occasion, "whose shoe-latchet I am not worthy to unloose," Christ pronounced him "the greatest born of women." When the centurion sent to say, "Lord, I am not worthy that you should come under my roof," our Lord places this crown upon his faith, "I tell you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." When the publican exclaimed, "God be merciful to me a sinner," he descended from the temple "justified rather" than the self-vaunting Pharisee. Yes, "when men are cast down, then there is lifting up." And what tongue can describe the inward peace, satisfaction, and contentment of that soul in whom this self-denying life of Christ dwells! Such a one has a continual feast. He may be deeply tried, sorely tempted, heavily afflicted, severely chastened, but his meek and submissive spirit exclaims, "It is the Lord, let Him do as seems good in His sight." Another characteristic of this life is--it is a conflicting life. It always wears the harness, and is ever clothed with the armor. Opposed by indwelling sin, assailed by Satan, and impeded by the world, every step in advance is only secured by a battle fought, and a victory achieved. It is also a holy life: springing from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, it must necessarily be so. All its actings are holy, all its breathings are holy, all its fruits are holy, and without holiness no man has this life, or can be an inheritor of that life to come, of which this is the seedling and the germ, the foretaste and the pledge. Need we add, that happiness, progression, and deathlessness are equally its characteristics? Happiness is but a phantom and a name, where Christ dwells not in the heart. Progression is but an advance towards eternal woe, where the love of God is not in the soul. And death is an eternal, lingering despair, where the Spirit of life has not quickened the inner

man, creating all things new.

Christian reader, that was a blissful day that witnessed your resurrection from a grave of sin to walk in newness of life! Happy hour when you left your soul's shroud in the tomb, exchanging it for the robe of a glorious deathlessness--when your enmity was conquered, and you were led in willing and joyous captivity, amid the triumphs of your Lord, to the altar where He bled--self-consecrated to His service! Ever keep in mind your deep indebtedness to sovereign grace, your solemn obligation to Divine love, and the touching motives that urge you to "walk worthy of the vocation with which you are called." And welcome all the dealings of God, whatever the character of those dealings may be, designed as they are but to animate, to nourish, and to carry forward this precious life in your soul.

JANUARY 12.

I give myself unto prayer. Psalm 119:4

OH, give yourself to prayer! Say not that your censer has nothing to offer; that it contains no sweet spices, no fire, no incense. Repair with it, all empty and cold as it is, to the great High Priest, and as you gaze in faith upon Him who is the Altar, the slain Lamb, and the Priest, thus musing upon this wondrous spectacle of Jesus' sacrifice for you, His Spirit will cast the sweet spices of grace, and the glowing embers of love, into your dull, cold hearts, and there will come forth a cloud of precious incense, which shall ascend with the "much incense" of the Savior's merits, an "offering and a sacrifice to God of a sweet-smelling savor." Nor forget that there is evening as well as morning incense. "When Aaron lights the lamps at even, he shall burn incense." And thus, when the day-season of your prosperity and joy is passed, and the evening of adversity, sorrow, and loneliness draws its somber curtains around you, then take your censer and wave it before the Lord. Ah! methinks at that hour of solemn stillness and of mournful solitude--that hour when all human support and sympathy fails--that then the sweetest incense of prayer ascends before God. Yes, there is no prayer so true, so powerful, so fragrant, as that which sorrow presses from the heart. Oh, betake yourself, suffering believer, to prayer. Bring forth your censer, sorrowful priest of the Lord! Replenish it at the altar of Calvary, and then wave it with a strong hand before God, until your person, your sorrows, and your guilt are all enveloped and lost in the cloud of sweet incense as it rises before the throne, and blends with the ascending cloud of the Redeemer's precious intercession. Prayer will soothe you--prayer will calm you--prayer will unburden your heart--prayer will remove or mitigate your pain--prayer will heal your sickness, or make your sickness pleasant to bear--prayer will expel the tempter--prayer will bring Jesus sensibly near to your soul--prayer will lift your heart to heaven, and will bring heaven down into your heart. Mourning Christian, give but yourself unto prayer in the hour of your sorrow and loneliness, and your breathings, sent up to heaven in tremulous accents, shall return into your own disconsolate and desolate heart, all rich and redolent of heaven's sweet consolations. The holy breathings which ascend from a believer's heart gather and accumulate in the upper skies, and when most he needs the refreshing, they descend again in covenant blessings upon his soul. That feeble desire, that faint breathing of the soul after God, and Jesus, and holiness, and heaven, shall never perish. It was, perhaps, so weak and tremulous, so mixed with grief and sorrow, so burdened with complaint and sin, that you could scarcely discern it to be real prayer, and yet, ascending from a heart inhabited by God's Holy Spirit, and touched by God's love, it rose like the incense-cloud before the throne of the Eternal, and blended with the fragrance of heaven.

JANUARY 13.

For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. 1 Tim. 2:5

THE salvation of man is an embodiment of God Himself. The essence, the heart, the mind, the attributes, the character, the government of God, are all embarked, embodied, and exhibited in the salvation of man. It is a work so surpassingly stupendous, glorious, and divine, we can account for its vast and unique character, and its transcendent results, upon no other principle than its essential demonstration of Deity--"God manifest in the flesh." To mix, then, anything extraneous with this great and finished work, to add to it anything of human device, would seem a crime of deepest dye--a sin, the pardon of which might well extend beyond the provision of its mercy. God has, at every point, with a jealous regard for His own glory, exhibited and protected this great truth. Over the cross beneath which as a sinner I stand--inscribed upon the portal of the refuge into which as a sinner I flee--above the fountain within which as a sinner I bathe--upon every object on which as a sinner I believingly gaze, God has written one sentence--solemn, pregnant, and emphatic--"Jesus only!"

Jesus alone could stoop to our low estate. He only could stand between justice and the criminal--the Day's-man between God and us. He only had divinity enough, and merit enough, and holiness enough, and strength enough, and love enough to undertake and perfect our redemption. None other could embark in the mighty enterprise of saving lost man but He. To no other hand but His did the Father from eternity commit His church--His peculiar treasure. To Jesus only could be entrusted the recovery and the keeping of this cabinet of precious jewels--jewels lost and scattered, and hidden in the fall, yet predestinated to a rescue and a glory great and endless as God's own being. Jesus only could bear our sin, and sustain our curse, endure our penalty, cancel our debt, and reconcile us unto God. In His bosom only could the elements of our hell find a flame of love sufficient to extinguish them; and by His merit only could the glories of our heaven stand before our eye palpable and revealed. Jesus must wholly save, or the sinner must forever perish. Listen to the language of Peter, uttered when "filled with the Holy Spirit," and addressed with burning zeal to the Christ-rejecting Sanhedrin: "This is the stone which was set at nothing of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Thus, in the great and momentous matter of our salvation, Jesus must be all.

JANUARY 14.

O Israel, you shall not be forgotten of me. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, your transgressions, and, as a cloud, your sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed you. Isaiah 44:21-22

I KNOW not a truth more calculated to light up the gloom of a lone chamber, to lift up the drooping spirit of a heart-sick child of God, than the announcement that God, for Christ's sake, has pardoned all his transgressions and his sins, and stands to him in the relation of a reconciled Father. What has all the restoring conduct of our Lord been towards us, but just this turning to us, when we had turned from Him? We have wandered, He has gone after us; we have departed, He has pursued us; we have stumbled, He has upheld us; we have fallen, He has raised us up again; we have turned from Him, He has turned to us. Oh! the wonderful love and patience of Christ! And what is still His language? "Return unto me; for I have redeemed you." And what should be the response of our hearts? "Behold, we come unto you; for you are the Lord our God." Then "let us search and try our ways, and turn again unto the Lord." What! after all my backslidings and recoveries, my departures and returns, may I turn again to the Lord? Yes! with confidence we say it, "turn AGAIN unto the Lord." That look of love beaming from the eye of Jesus invites you, woos you, to return AGAIN yet this once more to the shelter to His pierced side, to the home of His

wounded heart. Press to your heart the consolation and joy of this truth--the glance of Jesus falling upon His accepted child ever speaks of pardoned sin. Chastened, sorrowful, and secluded you may be, yet your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. Oh! that the Spirit, the Comforter, may give you this song to sing--"Bless the Lord, O my soul! and do not forget all his benefits; who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from destruction, and crowns you with loving-kindness and tender mercies."

JANUARY 15.

I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believes in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. John 11:25

EVERY truly gracious man is a living soul. He is in the possession of an inner, spiritual life. The first important characteristic of this spiritual life is its engrafting upon a state of death. The words of the apostle will explain our meaning: "For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God." "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live." The simple meaning of these declarations is--the living soul is dead to the law of God as an instrument of life, and to its works as a ground of salvation. It is dead, too, to the curse and tyranny of the law, and consequently to its power of condemning. To all this the soul made alive by Christ is dead with Christ. Thus is it most clear that a man, dead already though he originally is in trespasses and in sins, must morally die before he can spiritually live. The crucifixion with Christ must precede the living with Christ. He must die to all schemes and hopes of salvation in or by himself, before he can fully receive into his heart Christ as the life of his soul. This spiritual mystery the natural man cannot understand or receive: he only can who is "born of the Spirit." Has the law of God been brought into your conscience with that enlightening, convincing, and condemning power, as first to startle you from your spiritual slumber, and then to sever you from all hope or expectation of salvation in yourself? If so, then will you know of a truth what it is first to die before you live. Dying to the law, dying to self, you will receive Him into your heart, who so blessedly declared, "I am come that you might have life, and that you might have it more abundantly."

The Lord Jesus is ESSENTIAL LIFE. Standing by the grave that entombs the soul dead in sin, ESSENTIAL LIFE exclaims, "I am the resurrection and the life--come forth!" and in a moment the soul is quickened, and rises to newness of life. What but Deity could accomplish this? Take off your shoes from your feet; for you stands upon holy ground! Jesus is the TRUE GOD, and ESSENTIAL LIFE. The smallest seed, the meanest insect, the lowest creature on earth, and the mightiest angel and the brightest saint in heaven, draw their life from Christ. What a mighty and glorious Being, then, is the Son of God, the ceaseless energy of whose essence prevents each moment everything that has life from being destroyed, and from accomplishing its own destruction! Who would not believe in, who would not love, who would not serve such a Being? Who would not crown Him Lord of all?

JANUARY 16.

Examine yourselves, whether you be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know you not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except you be reprobates? 2 Cor. 13:5

ALAS! how is this precept overlooked! How few are they who rightly and honestly examine themselves! They can examine others, and speak of others, and hear for others, and judge of others; but themselves they examine not, and judge not, and condemn not. To the neglect of this precept may be traced, as one of its most fruitful causes, the relapse of the inner life of the Christian. Deterioration, and eventually

destruction and ruin, must follow in the steps of willful and protracted neglect, be the object of that neglect what it may. The vineyard must become unfruitful, and the garden must lose its beauty, and the machinery must stand still, and the enterprise must fail of success, and the health must decline, if toilsome and incessant watchfulness and care has not its eye broad awake to every symptom of feebleness, and to every sign of decay. If the merchantman examine not his accounts, and if the husbandman examine not his field, and if the nobleman examine not his estate, and if the physician examine not his patient, what sagacity is needed to foresee, as the natural and inevitable result, confusion, ruin, and death? How infinitely more true is this of the soul! The want of frequent, fearless, and thorough searching into the exact state of the heart, into the real condition of the soul, as before God, in the great matter of the inner life, reveals the grand secret of many a solemn case, of delusion, shipwreck, and apostasy. Therefore the apostle earnestly exhorts, "Examine yourselves;" do not take the state of your souls for granted, prove your own selves by the word, and rest not short of Christ dwelling in your hearts--your present life, and your hope of glory.

But how does Christ dwell in the believer? We answer--by his Spirit. Thus it is a spiritual, and not a personal or corporeal, indwelling of Christ. The Scripture testimony is most full and decisive on this point. "Know you not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit? If Christ be in you, the body is dead, because of sin; but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwells in you." And that this inhabitation of Christ by the Spirit is not the indwelling of a mere grace of the Spirit, but the Spirit Himself, is equally clear from another passage--"Hope makes not ashamed; because the love of God (here is a grace of the Spirit) is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which He has given us"--(here is the possession of the Spirit himself). This is the fountain of all the spiritual grace dwelling in the soul of the truly regenerate, and at times so blessedly flowing forth in refreshing and sanctifying streams. Thus, then, is it most clear, that by the indwelling of the holy Spirit, Christ has His dwelling in the hearts of all true believers.

JANUARY 17.

And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them. Isaiah 42:16

THESE words imply a concealment of much of the Lord's procedure with His people. With regard to our heavenly Father, there can be nothing mysterious, nothing inscrutable to Him. A profound and awful mystery Himself, yet to His infinite mind there can be no darkness, no mystery at all. His whole plan--if plan it may be called--is before Him. Our phraseology, when speaking of the Divine procedure, would sometimes imply the opposite of this. We talk of God's fore-knowledge, of His foresight, of His acquaintance with events yet unborn; but there is, in truth, no such thing. There are no tenses with God--no past--nor present--nor future. The idea of God's eternity, if perfectly grasped, would annihilate in our minds all such humanizing of the Divine Being. He is one ETERNAL NOW. All events, to the remotest period of time, were as vivid and as present to the Divine mind from eternity, as when at the moment they assumed a real existence and a palpable form.

But all the mystery is with us, poor finite creatures of a day. And why, even to us, is any portion of the Divine conduct thus a mystery? Not because it is in itself so, but mainly and simply because we cannot see the whole as God sees it. Could it pass before our eye, as from eternity it has before His, a perfect

and a complete whole, we should then cease to wonder, to cavil, and repine. The infinite wisdom, purity, and goodness that originated and gave a character, a form, and a coloring to all that God does, would appear as luminous to our view as to His, and ceaseless adoration and praise would be the grateful tribute of our loving hearts. Let us, then, lie low before the Lord, and humble ourselves under His mysterious hand. "The meek will He guide in judgment, and the meek will He teach His way. All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep His covenant and His testimonies." Thus writing the sentence of death upon our wisdom, our sagacity, and our strength, Jesus--the lowly one--seeks to keep us from the loftiness of our intellect and from the pride of our heart--prostrating us low in the dust at His feet. Holy posture! blessed place! There, Lord, would I lie; my trickling tears of penitence and of love falling upon those dear feet that have never misled, but have always gone before, leading me by a right way, the best way, to a city of rest. Wait, then, suffering believer, the coming glory--yielding yourself to the guidance of your Savior, and submitting yourself wholly to your Father's will.

JANUARY 18.

For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin. Psalm 38:18

The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin. 1 John 1:7

SEEK, cherish, and cultivate constantly and habitually a broken heart for sin. Do not think that it is a work which, once done, is to be done no more. Deem it not a primary stage in your spiritual journey, which, once reached, never again occurs in your celestial progress. Oh no! As in the natural life we enter the world weeping, and leave it weeping, so in the spiritual life--we begin it in tears of godly sorrow for sin, and we terminate it in tears of godly sorrow for sin--passing away to that blessed state of sinlessness, where God will wipe away all tears from our eyes. The indwelling of all evil--the polluting nature of the world along which we journey--our constant exposure to temptations of every kind--the many occasions on which we yield to those temptations, the perpetual developments of sin unseen, unknown, even unsuspected by others--the defilement which attaches itself to all that we put our hands to, even the most spiritual and holy and heavenly, the consciousness of what a holy God must every moment see in us--all, all these considerations should lead us to cherish that spirit of lowliness and contrition, self-abhorrence and self-renunciation, inward mortification and outward humility of deportment, which belong to and which truly prove the existence of the life of God in our souls.

And what, too, prompts a constant traveling to the atoning blood?--what endears the Savior who shed that blood?--what is it that makes His flesh food indeed, and His blood drink indeed?--what is it that keeps the conscience tender and clean?--what enables the believer to walk with God as a dear child? Oh, it is the sacred contrition of the lowly spirit, springing from a view of the cross of Jesus, and through the cross leading to the heart of God. Backsliding Christian! do you feel within your heart the kindlings of godly sorrow? Are you mourning over your wandering, loathing the sin that drew you from Christ, that grieved the Spirit, and wounded your own peace? Are you longing to feed again in the green pastures of the flock, and by the side of the Shepherd of the flock, assured once more that you are a true sheep, belonging to the one fold, known by, and precious to, the heart of Him who laid down His life for the sheep? Then approach the altar of Calvary, and upon it lay the sacrifice of a broken and a contrite heart, and your God will accept it. The door of your return stands open--the pierced heart of Jesus. The golden scepter that bids you approach is extended--the outstretched hand of a pacified Father. The banquet is ready, and the minstrels are tuning their harps to celebrate the return from your wanderings to your Father's heart and home, with the gladness of feasting, and with the voice of thanksgiving and of melody.

JANUARY 19

Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that you shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 1:5-8

HOW many Christian professors limit their spiritual knowledge to the first elements of truth! They seem never to pass beyond the alphabet of the gospel. But if we desire the advancement of the Divine life within us, we must know more of Jesus--we must discern more beauty in our Beloved--we must see more of the glory of our Incarnate God--we must know more of the love and grace of the Father in the gift of His dear Son--we must, in a word, grow in the knowledge of God and of Christ. Thus the soul will be established. Every step within the great sanctuary of truth will confirm the believing heart in the divinity and the vastness, the riches and the glory, of its treasures. That no such affluence of wisdom and knowledge, and truth and holiness, could flow from any other source than Deity, would be a reflection disarming every assault upon the faith of the Christian of its virulence and power. There can be no real establishment apart from growth in spiritual knowledge. Oh seek to be rooted and grounded in the faith! Do not be always a babe in knowledge, a mere dwarf in understanding, but go forward in the use of all God's ordained means of faith, until you "come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

And overlook not your individual responsibility in this matter of establishment. The Christian is here cast upon his own endeavor. He is to rouse himself to the great task; to labor as though the achievement of that task were of a power solely his own. "Work out your own salvation"--"It is God that works in you"--are words which at once link human accountability and individual responsibility with Divine power and accomplishment. Let every Christian professor feel that God has given him this work to do--that he is responsible for its being done and that all grace is laid up in Jesus for its performance, and the church of God would go forth in the great work of her Head, "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." Christian reader, persevere! Angels whisper--persevere! Saints, bending from their thrones in glory, whisper--persevere! God bids you--persevere! The Holy Spirit earnestly speaks--"Be you steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

JANUARY 20.

For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Col. 2:9.

WHAT a glorious declaration is this! How should our hearts leap for joy and our souls thrill with gladness at its very sound! All the "fullness of the Godhead bodily," all the fullness of the Church graciously, all the fullness of the sinner savingly, all the fullness of the Christian sanctifyingly--in a word, all that a poor, fallen, tried son of Adam needs, until he reaches heaven itself, where this fullness has come, is, by God's eternal love and wisdom, treasured up in the "second Adam, the Lord from heaven." God, the "Fountain of life," light, and grace, has ordained that the Lord Jesus Christ, his own beloved Son, should be the one source of supply from where all the salvation of the sinner, all the sanctity of the saint, and all the grace and truth of the Church, collectively and individually, should be derived--"of whose fullness all we have received, and grace for grace."

How precious ought Jesus to be to us, who has condescended to pour this heavenly treasure into our hearts, and to undertake its constant supply! In what way can we best prove our sense of His goodness, but by drawing largely from this fullness, and by glorifying Him in what we receive. Our resources are inexhaustible, because they are infinite. Nor can we come too frequently, nor draw too largely. Spring up, O well of grace and love, into our hearts! Oh, for more depth of indwelling grace! Oh, for more fervor of holy love! Oh, for richer supplies from the fullness of Christ! Oh, for a gracious revival in our souls! "Come down," blessed Jesus, "as rain upon the mown grass!" Breathe, O south wind of the Spirit, upon the garden of our souls, that the spices may flow out! Truly the well is deep, from where we have this living water; but faith can reach it, and in proportion to the strength of our faith, and the directness and simplicity with which it deals with Christ, will be the plenitude of our supply. "Drink, yes, drink abundantly, O beloved," is our Lord's gracious invitation to His Church.

JANUARY 21.

I in them. John 17:23

OBSERVE, these are not the words of the apostle, whose ardent mind and glowing imagination might be supposed to exaggerate a truth beyond its proper limits; but they are the words of Jesus himself-- of Him who is the Truth, and who therefore cannot lie. "I in them." Christ, dwelling in the soul, forms the inner life of that soul. The experience of this blessing stands connected with the lowest degree of grace, and with the feeblest faith; the lamb of the flock, the soul that has but touched the hem of the Savior's garment, prostrate as a penitent at the feet of the true Aaron, in each and in all Christ alike dwells. He has a throne in that heart, a temple in that body, a dwelling in that soul; and thus, as by a kind of second incarnation, God is manifest in the flesh, in Christ's manifestation in the believer.

You are, perhaps, a severely tried, a sorely tempted, a deeply afflicted believer. But cheer up! you have Christ living in you, and why should you yield to despondency or to fear? Christ will never vacate His throne, nor relinquish His dwelling. You have a suffering Christ, a humbled Christ, a crucified Christ, a dying Christ, a risen Christ, a living Christ, a triumphant Christ, a glorified Christ, a full Christ, dwelling in you by His Spirit. Yes; and you have, too, a human Christ, a feeling Christ, a sympathizing Christ, a tender, loving, gentle Christ, spiritually and eternally reposing in your heart. Why, then, should you fear the pressure of any want, or the assault of any foe, or the issue of any trial, since such a Christ is in you? "Fear not!" They are His own familiar and blessed words--"It is I, do not be afraid." You cannot want for any good, since you have the Fountain of all good dwelling in you. You cannot be finally overcome of any spiritual evil, since you have the Conqueror of sin, and Satan, and the world enthroned upon your affections. Your life--the divine and spiritual life--can never die, since Christ, ESSENTIAL LIFE, lives and abides in you. Like Him, and for Him, you may be opposed; but like Him, and by him, you shall triumph. The persecution which you meet, and the trials which you endure, and the difficulties with which you cope, shall but further your well-being, by bringing you into a closer communion with Jesus, and by introducing you more fully into the enviable state of the apostle--"Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. . . . For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us afar more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

JANUARY 22.

Now he which establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, is God; Who has also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. 2 Cor. 1:21-22

THE Holy Spirit renews, sanctifies, and inhabits the believer as a Divine person. It is not the common light of nature, nor the ordinary teaching of man, nor the moral suasion of truth, which has made him what he is--an experimental CHRISTIAN: all his real grace, his true teaching, flows from the Divine Spirit. His light is divine, his renewing is divine, his sanctification is divine. There is more real value in one ray of the Spirit's light, beaming in upon a man's soul, than in all the teaching which books can ever impart! The Divine Spirit, loosing the seals of the written Word, and unfolding to him the mysteries of the kingdom, the glories of Christ's person, the perfection of Christ's work, the fullness of Christ's grace, the revealed mind and will of God, has in it more wealth and glory than all the teaching the schools ever imparted. How precious the grace of the Holy Spirit, what tongue is sufficiently gifted to describe! How precious is his indwelling--an ever-ascending, heaven-panting, God-thirsting, Christ-desiring Spirit! How precious are all the revelations He makes of Christ! How precious are the consolations He brings, the promises He seals, the teachings He imparts, all the emotions He awakens, the breathings He inspires, and the affections He creates! How precious are those graces in the soul of which He is the Author--the faith that leads to a precious Savior, the love that rises to a gracious God, and the holy affections which flow forth to all the saints!

But through what channel does this Divine anointing come? Only through the union of the believer to Christ, the Anointed One. All the saving operations of the Spirit upon the mind are connected with Jesus. If He convinces of sin, it is to lead to the blood of Jesus; if He reveals the corruption of the heart, it is to lead to the grace of Jesus; if He teaches the soul's ignorance, it is to conduct it to the feet of Jesus: thus all His operations in the soul are associated with Jesus. Now, in conducting this holy anointing into the soul, He brings it through the channel of our union with the Anointed Head. By making us one with Christ, He makes us partakers of the anointing of Christ. And truly is the weakest, lowliest believer one with this anointed Savior. His fitness, as the Anointed of God, to impart of the plenitude of His anointing to all the members of his body, is a truth clearly and beautifully set forth. Thus is He revealed as the Anointed Head of the Church, the great High Priest of the royal priesthood: "You loves righteousness, and hate wickedness: therefore God, your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness above your fellows." "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek." In the Acts of the Apostles a distinct reference is made to this truth: "how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power." His human soul filled with the measureless influence of the Divine Spirit, the fullness of the Godhead dwelling in Him bodily, He became the true Aaron, of whose anointing all the priests were alike to partake. One, then, with Jesus, through the channel of his union to the Head, the lowest member is anointed with this Divine anointing.

JANUARY 23.

He that has the Son has life. 1 John 5:12.

A living Christ dwelling in a living soul. This implies permanency. The religion of some is a religion of the moment. Like the gourd of the prophet, it appears in a night, and it withers in a night. It is the religion of impulse and of feeling. It comes by fits and starts. It is easily assumed, and as easily laid aside. But here is the grand characteristic of a truly converted man--Christ lives in

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