

# Evening Thoughts - May

by Octavius Winslow

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of faith and the glory of God in all aspects of life, including sickness, sin, and salvation.*

**Scripture:** John 14:1, Romans 8:16, Ephesians 2:14, Hebrews 6:11, 1 Peter 4:11

**Topics:** "Faith", "Communion with Christ"

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## Description

Octavius Winslow reflects on the profound relationship between believers and Christ, emphasizing that Jesus is our peace and the bridge that removes barriers between us and God. He warns against the walls of unbelief and sin that separate us from experiencing Christ's presence and love. Winslow highlights the importance of recognizing our need for Christ, especially in times of trial and suffering, and encourages believers to seek a deeper communion with Him. He reassures that despite our shortcomings, Christ remains steadfast, waiting to reveal Himself to us. Ultimately, the sermon calls for a renewed faith and reliance on the grace of God in our daily walk.

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## Transcript

EVENING THOUGHTS or

DAILY WALKING WITH GOD

MAY 1.

"For he is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition between us." Ephes. 2:14

BEHIND this wall Jesus did once stand, and although thus partially obscured, yet to those who had faith to see Him, dwelling though they were in the twilight of the Gospel, He manifested Himself as the true Messiah, the Son of God, the Savior of His people. "Abraham rejoiced to see my day," says Jesus, "and he saw it, and was glad." But this wall no longer stands. The shadows are fled, the darkness is dispersed, and the true light now shines. Beware of those teachers who would rebuild this wall; and who by their superstitious practices, and legal representations of the Gospel, do in effect rebuild it. Remember that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes."

It is behind "our wall" that Jesus stands--the wall which we, the new covenant saints, erect. Many are the separating influences between Christ and His people; many are the walls which we, alas! allow to

intervene, behind which we cause Him to stand. What are the infidelity, I had almost said atheism, the carnality, the coldness, the many sins of our hearts, but so many obstructions to Christ's full and frequent manifestations of Himself to our souls? But were we to specify one obstruction in particular, we would mention unbelief as the great separating wall between Christ and His people. This was the wall which obscured from the view of Thomas his risen Lord. And while the little Church was jubilant in the new life and joy with which their living Savior inspired them, he alone lingered in doubt and sadness, amid the shadows of the tomb. "Except I thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe." Nothing more effectually separates us from, or rather obscures our view of, Christ than the sin of unbelief. Not fully crediting His word--not simply and implicitly relying upon His work--not trusting His faithfulness and love--not receiving Him wholly and following Him fully--only believing and receiving half that He says and commands--not fixing the eye upon Jesus as risen and alive, as ascended and enthroned, leaving all fullness, all power, all love. Oh this unbelief is a dead, towering wall between our Beloved and our souls!

And yet does He stand behind it? Does it not compel Him to depart and leave us forever? Ah no! He is there! Oh wondrous grace, matchless love, infinite patience! Wearied with forbearing, and yet there! Doubted, distrusted, grieved, and yet standing there--His locks wet with the dew of the night--waiting to be gracious, longing to manifest Himself. Nothing has prevailed to compel Him to withdraw. When our coldness might have prevailed, when our fleshliness might have prevailed, when our neglect, ingratitude, and backslidings might have prevailed, never has He entirely and forever withdrawn. His post is to watch with a sleepless eye of love the purchase of His dying agonies, and to guard His "vineyard of red wine night and day, lest any hurt it." Who can adequately picture the solicitude, the tenderness, the jealousy, with which the Son of God keeps His especial treasure? And whatever would force Him to retire--whether it be the coldness that congeals, or the fierce flame that would consume--yet such is His deathless love for His people, "He withdraws not His eyes front the righteous" for one moment. There stands the "Friend that sticks closer than a brother," waiting to beam upon them a glance of His love-enkindled eye, and to manifest Himself to them as He does not unto the world, even from behind our wall.

MAY 2.

"That God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen." 1 Peter 4:11

God's dealings with His people in seasons of bodily sickness have this for their ultimate and great end--"the glory of God." How illustrious was the glory brought to Jesus by the sickness and death of Lazarus! Shall we contemplate it for a moment? Let us go, then, in hallowed imagination, and stand--not by the sick bed, for the mortal struggle was now over--but by the grave of Lazarus. What a halo surrounds it! It scarcely seems like the place of the dead, for Essential Life is present, and the grave is preparing at His command to yield back its prey. Wrapped in His winding-sheet, reposing in the stillness of death, lay one whom Jesus loved. "Groaning in His spirit, and troubled," He approached the spot. Behold the sensibility of the Divine Redeemer! "Jesus wept." How truly human does He appear! How like the Elder Brother! Never more so than now. Philosophy may scorn to betray emotion, and human genius might deem it beneath its dignity to weep. But the philosophy and the genius of Jesus were Divine, and imparted a dignity and a sacredness to the sensibility and benevolence of His humanity: and if it be true that by genius a tear is crystallized and exhibited to the admiration of future ages, surely the tears of sympathy and love which Jesus dropped over the new-made grave of Lazarus, will thrill the holy heart with feeling to the remotest period of time, and perpetuate their wonder through eternity. Bereaved mourner! cease not to weep! Stifle not your emotions, impede not the flow of your tears. They well up from the fountain of feeling

placed in your bosom by the Son of God Himself; who, as if longing to experience the luxury of human sensibility, bowed His Deity to your nature--and wept. This only would I say, let your tears fall like the dew of heaven--gentle, noiseless, chastened; or rather, like the tears of Jesus--meek, resigned, submissive.

But not illustrious does appear His humanity only. Behold, on this occasion, how His Deity shone forth resplendent and overpowering. He who had just wept, and while yet the tear-drops lingered in His eye, with a voice of conscious, God-like power, which showed how completely Essential Life held death within its grasp, exclaimed, "Lazarus, come forth! And he that was dead came forth." Behold the spectacle, you condemners of His Divine nature--you who would pluck the diadem from His brow, and force us by your soulless, lifeless creed to a reliance upon a created Redeemer--gaze upon the wondrous scene! See the Savior bathed in human sensibility like a man--behold Him summon back the dead to life like a God! Never did the glory of His complex person--the Son of man, the Son of God--burst forth with more overpowering effulgence than at this moment. Who will deny that the sickness and death of Lazarus brought glory to the Deity of the Savior?

But what was true of this servant of Christ is also true of all the sick whom Jesus loves--their sickness is for His glory. Trace it in the origin of your sickness. It came not by accident nor by chance--words which should never find a place in the Christian vocabulary of a child of God. It was God who stretched you on that bed of languishing. By the arrangement of your heavenly Father, those circumstances transpired which resulted in your present painful visitation. You have been looking alone at second causes--I do not say that they are to be entirely excluded in attempting to unravel the mystery of the Divine procedure, for they often develop links in the chain of God's providence most harmonious and instructive--but there is such a thing as resting in second causes, and not using them rather as steps in the ladder which conducts us up to God Himself, as the first great cause of all the circumstances of our history, from our cradle to our grave. Oh how is the Lord glorified when the sinking patient whom He loves traces the mysterious and strange event which, arresting him in the midst of health and usefulness, has severed him from active life, from domestic duties, and public engagements, imprisoning him in that lone chamber of sickness and solitude, the prey of disease, and perhaps the destined victim of death--to the infinite, infallible, unerring wisdom of the Son of God!

MAY 3.

"The crown is fallen from our head: woe unto us, that we have sinned!" Lam. 5:16

MAN, in his original constitution, was a glorious temple. Two facts will prove it. First, he was like God in his moral image; and second, God dwelt in him. He was in every respect worthy of such a resident. He was the holy temple of a holy God. Not a flaw was there. The entire man was holy. There was perfect knowledge in the judgment, perfect holiness in the will, and perfect love in the heart. "Holiness to the Lord" was the inscription written on every window and every door, yes, on every part of this temple. A beautiful structure was man in his original state! Well did the mighty Architect, as He gazed upon His work, pronounce it "very good."

But, behold what sin has done! Man has lost his original resemblance to God. It is true, he yet retains his spiritual, intelligent, and immortal nature; these he can never lose. But his moral likeness to God--his knowledge, purity, justice, truth, and benignity, these glorious lineaments are blotted from his soul; and darkness, impurity, desolation, and death reign there. With the obliteration of his moral resemblance, the soul has lost all love to God. More than this; there is not only the absence of love, but there is positive

enmity. "The carnal mind is enmity against God," that enmity showing itself in a thousand ways; principally in its seeking to dethrone God. From his affections he has dethroned Him. To eject Him from the throne of His moral government in the universe is the great and constant aim of the carnal mind. If not so, why this perpetual war against God--against His being, His law, His will, His supreme authority to govern and reign? Why this refusal to acknowledge and obey Him? "Who is the Lord God, that I should obey Him?" Oh! there is no mystery in the case. Man has revolted from God, and having thrown off all allegiance to Him as his sovereign, he seeks to be a god to himself. Self is to him what Jehovah once was--the object of supreme delight. Having cast out God, he moves in a circle of which he himself is the center--all he does is from self, and for self. From this all the lines diverge, and to this they all again return. It needs not the argument or the illustration of a moment to show that this being the moral destitution of man, God has ceased to dwell in him. The temple polluted, defaced, and destroyed, the Divine resident has gone; and the heart, once so sweet a home of Deity, is now the dwelling-place of all sin. Another occupant has taken possession of the ruin; like ancient Babylon, it has become the den of every ravenous beast, a habitation of dragons, the impure abode of every foul, malignant passion. Reader, it is as impossible that God can make your bosom His dwelling-place, while every thought, and feeling, and passion is up in arms against Him, as it would be for Christ to dwell with Belial, or light to commingle with darkness. You must be renewed in the spirit of your mind. You must be born again.

MAY 4.

"O Israel, you have destroyed yourself; but in me is your help." Hosea 13:9

IT was God's eternal and gracious purpose to restore this temple. Satan had despoiled His work--sin had marred His image--but both usurpers He would eject, and the ruin of both He would repair. Oh, what mercy, infinite, eternal, and free, was this, that set him upon a work so glorious! What could have moved Him but His own love, what could have contrived the plan but His own wisdom, and what could have executed it but His own power? In this restoration, man was no auxiliary. He could be none. His destruction was his own, his recovery was God's. He ruined himself, that ruin he could not himself repair. It was a work as far surpassing all finite power, as it was first to speak it out of nothing! Yes, the work of restoration is a greater achievement of power than was the work of creation. To repair the temple when ruined was more glorious than to create it out of nothing. In one day He made man; He was four thousand years in redeeming man. It cost Him nothing to create a soul; it cost Him His dear Son to save it. And who can estimate that cost? He met with no opposition in creating man; in re-creating him, Satan, the world, yes, man himself, is against him.

We have said that it was God's gracious and eternal purpose to restore this ruined temple. The first step which He took in accomplishing this great work was his assumption of our nature, as though He Himself would be the model from which the new temple should be formed. This was one of the profoundest acts of God's wisdom, one of the greatest demonstrations of His love. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (marg. tabernacled among us). His human body the temple; His Godhead the indwelling Deity. Was ever a temple so glorious as this? "Immanuel, God with us." "God manifest in the flesh." Oh awful mystery! what imagination can conceive, what mind can fathom it? We can but stand upon the shore of this vast ocean of wisdom and love, and exclaim, "Oh the depth!" "Great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh." This was the first step towards His work of replenishing the earth with spiritual temples, to be filled now and eternally with the Divine presence and glory. The entire success and glory of His undertaking rested here. This was the foundation of the structure. He could only obey the law as He was "made of a woman;" He could only "redeem those who were under the law," as He was God in our

nature. The absolute necessity, then, of His Godhead will instantly appear. Had the basis of the great work He was about to achieve been laid in any other doctrine--anything inferior, and of course less infinite, less holy, less dignified--had the foundation been laid in mere creature excellence, however exalted that excellence might be--there could have been neither strength, permanency, nor glory in the temple. It would have fallen before the first storm of temptation, and fearful would have been its destruction. God well knew at what cost the work of redemption would be achieved. He knew what His violated law demanded--what his inflexible justice required--and through what costly channel His love must flow; therefore "He laid help upon one that was mighty,"--yes, "mighty to save." And what was the secret of His might?--His absolute Deity. Take a lower view than this, and you reduce the work of Christ to nothing--you tear the soul from the body, pluck the sun from the firmament, wrench the key-stone from the arch, and the foundation from the building. But look at His work through His Godhead, and oh, how vast, how costly; how glorious does it appear! what a basis for a poor sinner to build upon! what a resting-place for the weary soul! what faith, hope, and assurance does it inspire! how perfect the obedience, how infinitely efficacious the blood, and prevalent the intercession--all derived from the Godhead of Jesus! Glorious temple were You, blessed Son of God!

MAY 5.

"Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. But he spoke of the temple of his body." John 2:19, 21.

THIS temple was to be destroyed. Jesus must die! This was the second step in the accomplishment of the great work. Thus did He announce the fact to the obtuse and incredulous Jews "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." His death was as necessary to the satisfaction of justice, as His life of obedience had been to the fulfilling of the law. As the substitute of His people, He must yield up His life; as the Surety of the covenant, He must completely surrender Himself into the hands of Divine justice; as the Testator of His own will, there must of necessity be His death, otherwise the testament would have been of no force at all while He lived. There was no possible avenue for His escape, even had He sought it. He, or His people, must die. He must taste the bitterness of the death that was temporal, or His elect must have tasted of the bitterness of the death that was eternal. Oh yes, Jesus wished to die. Never for one moment did He really shrink from the combat. He well knew the conditions upon which He had entered into a covenant engagement in behalf of His people. He knew that the price of their pardon was His own blood, that His death was their life, and that His gloomy path through the grave was their bright passage to eternal glory. Knowing all this, and with the awful scene of Calvary full in view--the cross, the sufferings of the body, the deathly sorrow of the soul--He yet panted for the arrival of the moment that was to finish the work His Father had given Him to do.

Dear reader, how ready was Jesus thus to die! Where this eagerness? It sprang from His great love to sinners. Oh, this was it! We must go down to the secret depth of His love, if we would solve the mystery of His willingness to die. "God commends His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Thus was the "temple of His body" destroyed, that "through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage." See, dear reader, the source of your free pardon, the ground of your humble trust, the secret of your "strong consolation." It is all involved in the death of Jesus. You cannot ask too much, you cannot expect too much, you cannot repose too much at the foot of the cross. All is mercy here--all is love--all is peace. Sin cannot condemn, Satan cannot tempt, the world cannot allure, conscience cannot accuse; "there is no condemnation" to a poor soul that shelters itself beneath the cross of Jesus. Here

every dark cloud withdraws, and all is sunny--here every tear is dried, but that of joy, and every voice is hushed, but that of praise.

MAY 6.

"And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God has fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he has raised up Jesus again." Acts 13:32, 33

GREAT stress is laid upon the doctrine of the resurrection of Christ in the word. And the child of God may be but imperfectly aware, what an essential pillar it is to his hope, and how sanctifying and comforting the blessings are that spring from its full belief. The resurrection of Jesus is the great seal to the character and perfection of His work. Yes, His work, touching its saving effects, had been nothing apart from this Divine attestation. His perfect keeping of the law, and His suffering unto death, were but parts of the vast plan, and, taken separately and distinctly, were not capable of perfecting the salvation of the Church. The apostle so reasons. "If Christ do not be risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ; whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ do not be raised, your faith is vain; you are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." A moment's reflection will justify the conclusions which the apostle deduces from the supposition that Christ had not risen.

Our dear Lord endured the "curse of the law;" a part of that curse was death--death legal, death temporal, death eternal. He was "made a curse for us," and died. So long as He remained imprisoned in the grave, "death had dominion over Him." It had been in vain that we had looked to His obedience and sufferings for the proof of the all-sufficiency and acceptableness of His satisfaction, so long as the iron scepter of the king of terrors held Him in subjection. Oh what a momentous period were the three days that intervened between the giving up of the spirit upon the cross, and the bursting of the tomb--the salvation of the whole Church hung upon it--all who had already "fallen asleep" in Him, and all whom it was the purpose of God yet to call, were deeply interested in this one fact. But, on the third day, the destroyed temple was raised again--death had no more dominion over Him--his sting was extracted, his scepter was broken, the curse was rolled away, and the redemption of the Church was complete. "He was delivered for our offences, and rose again for our justification."

Through the incarnation, obedience, death, and resurrection of Christ, a way was opened, by which God could again dwell with man--yes, resume His abode in the very temple that sin had destroyed, and show forth the riches and glory of His grace far more illustriously than when this temple stood in its original perfection and grandeur. Here was the foundation of every successive temple that grace was about to raise. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." On the dignity of His person, His finished righteousness, His perfect atonement, His all-sufficient grace, and His inviolable faithfulness, believers, "as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house," for the everlasting indwelling of God the Holy Spirit.

MAY 7.

"And they come unto you as the people comes, and they sit before you as my people, and they hear your words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goes after their covetousness." Ezek. 33:31

FEW, save those who have been taught of the Spirit, and who have accustomed themselves to analyze closely the evidences of true conversion, are aware how far an individual may go, not merely in an outward reformation of character, and an external union to Christ, but in a strong resemblance to the positive and manifest evidences of the new birth, without the actual possession of a single one. In the exception that we make, we refer to a knowledge of the truth that is not saving in its effects, is not influential in its character, and which has its place in the judgment only, assented to, approved of, and even ably and successfully vindicated; while the soul, the seat of life--the will, the instrument of holiness--and the heart, the home of love, are all unrenewed by the Holy Spirit.

Beloved reader, you cannot be too distinctly nor too earnestly informed, that there is a great difference in Divine knowledge. There is a knowledge of the truth, in the attainment of which a man may labor diligently, and in the possession of which he may look like a believer; but which may not come under that denomination of a knowledge of Christ, in allusion to which our dear Lord in His memorable prayer uses these words, "This is life eternal, that they might know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." The fatal error to which you are exposed is--oh that you may have escaped it!--the substituting a knowledge of Divine truth in the judgment, for the quickening grace of God in the heart. It is surprising how far an outwardly moral individual may go in Divine attainments--spiritual knowledge--eminent gifts--and even great usefulness; and yet retain the carnal mind, the rebellious will, the unhumbled and unbroken heart. If the volume of Divine truth had not informed us of this, and supplied us with some striking cases in proof, we should be perpetually beguiled into the belief that a head filled with rational, speculative, theoretical truth, must necessarily be connected with some degree of Divine grace in the affections. But not so. Balaam's knowledge of Divine things was deep; he could ask counsel of God, and prophesy of Christ, but where is the undoubted evidence that he "knew the grace of God in truth?" Saul prophesied, had "another spirit" given him, and asked counsel of God; but Saul's heart was unchanged by the Holy Spirit. Herod sent for John, "heard him gladly, and did many things," and yet his heart and his life were strangers to holiness. Addressing the Pharisees, the apostle employs this striking language, "Behold, you are called a Jew, and rest in the law, and make your boast of God, and know His will, and approve the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law:" and yet deep hypocrisy was their crying sin. Oh let no man be so deceived as to substitute knowledge for grace. Better that his knowledge of the truth should be limited to its mere elements, its first principles, and yet with it be enabled to say, "Behold, I am vile," but "He has loved me, and given Himself for me," than to possess "all knowledge," and live and die destitute of the renewing grace of God upon the heart.

MAY 8.

"The Lord tries the righteous." Psalm 11:5

THE furnace works wonders for a believer. Oh that he should ever wish to be exempt from it! Indeed, it may be remarked, that real grace is inseparable from a state of trial. Where there is real faith, the Lord will try it. Where there is the true ore, the Refiner will prove it in the furnace. There is not a grace of the Spirit, but, more or less, and at one time or another, Jesus tries that grace. "The Lord tries the righteous." He tries their principles--tries their graces--tries their obedience--proves His own work--brings out the new man in all its muscular fullness--develops the nature and character of His work--and shows it to be His mighty product, and in all respects worthy of Himself. Much then as we would wish at times exemption from a state of trial, anxious for the more smooth and easy path, yet, if we are really born of God, and His grace has truly made us one of His family, like them, we have been "chosen in the furnace of affliction," and with them in the furnace, we are brought into the possession of some of the most costly blessings of

our lives.

Real grace, then, is tried grace. And mark how, in the process of its trial, the blessed and Eternal Spirit more deeply seals the believer. The hour of affliction is the hour of softening. Job bore this testimony, "He makes my heart soft." The hardness of the heart yields--the callousness of the spirit gives way--the affections become tender--conscience is more susceptible. It is the season of holy abstraction, meditation, and prayer--of withdrawal from the world and from creature delights, while the soul is more closely shut in with God. The heart, now emptied, humbled, and softened, is prepared for the seal of the Spirit; and what an impression is then made--what discoveries of God's love to the soul--what enlarged views of the personal glory of Christ--of the infinite perfection of His work--of the preciousness of the atoning sacrifice--of the hatefulness of sin, and of the beauty of holiness! His own personal interest in this great work of Christ is made more clear and certain to his soul. The Spirit bears a fresh witness to his acceptance, and seals him anew with the adopting love of God. It was the Psalmist's wisdom to acknowledge, "It is good for one that I have been afflicted."

MAY 9.

"The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Rom. 8:16

THREE important things are involved in these words--first, the Witness--then that with which He witnesses--and lastly, the great truth to which He witnesses. First, "the Spirit itself bears witness." The great business of making known to a poor sinner his acquittal in the high court of heaven, and his adoption into the King's family, is entrusted to no inferior agent. No angel is commissioned to bear the tidings, no mortal man may disclose the secret. None but God the Holy Spirit Himself. "The Spirit itself" He that rests short of this testimony wrongs his own soul. Dear reader, be satisfied with no witness to your "calling and election" but this. Human testimony is feeble here. Your minister, your friend, schooled as they may be in the evidences of experimental godliness, cannot assure your spirit that you are "born of God." God the Eternal Spirit alone can do this. He only is competent--He only can fathom the "deep things of God,"--He only can rightly discern between His own work and its counterfeit, between grace and nature --He only can make known the secret of the Lord to those who fear Him; all other testimony to your sonship is uncertain, and may fearfully and fatally deceive. "It is the Spirit that bears witness, because the Spirit is truth." Again and yet again would we solemnly repeat it--take nothing for granted touching your personal interest in Christ--rest not satisfied with the testimony of your own spirit, or with that of the holiest saint on earth; seek nothing short of "the Spirit itself." This only will do for a dying hour.

The second thing to be observed in the declaration is--that with which He witnesses--"the Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit." It is a personal testimony--not borne to others, but to ourselves--"with our spirit." The adoption of the believer into the family of God is so great a privilege, involving blessings so immense, for beings so sinful and in all respects unworthy, that, did not their heavenly Father assure them by His own immediate testimony of its truth, no other witness would suffice to remove their doubts and quiet their fears, and satisfy them as to their real sonship. The Eternal Spirit of God descends and enters their hearts, as a witness to their adoption. He first renews our spirit--applies the atoning blood to the conscience--works faith in the heart--enlightens the understanding--and thus prepares the believing soul for the revelation and assurance of this great and glorious truth--his adoption into the family of God. As it is "with our spirit" the Holy Spirit witnesses, it is necessary that, in order to perfect agreement and harmony, he who has the witness within himself should first be a repenting and believing sinner. He who says that he has this witness, but who still remains "dead in sins,"--a stranger to faith in the Lord Jesus--to the

renewings of the Holy Spirit--in a word, who is not born of God--is wrapping himself up in an awful deception. The witness we plead for is the holy testimony, in concurrence with a holy gospel, by a holy Spirit, to a holy man, and concerning a holy truth. There can be no discrepancy, no want of harmony, between the witness of the Spirit and the word of God. He witnesses according to, and in agreement with, the truth. Vague and fanciful impressions, visions, and voices, received and rested upon as evidences of salvation, are fearful delusions. Nothing is to be viewed as an evidence of our Divine sonship which does not square and harmonize with the revealed word of God. We must have a "Thus says the Lord," for every step we take in believing that we are the children of God. Let it be remembered, then, that the Spirit bears His testimony to believers. His first step is to work repentance and faith in the heart; then follows the sealing and witnessing operation. "In whom also, after that you believed, you were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise."

The last particular is the great truth to which He testifies, "that we are the children of God." The Spirit is emphatically spoken of as a Spirit of adoption. "For you have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but you have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." And again, "And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Now it is the peculiar office of the Spirit to witness to the adoption of the believer. Look at the blessed fact to which He testifies--not that we are the enemies, the aliens, the strangers, the slaves, but that we are "the children of God." High and holy privilege! "The children of God!" Chosen from all eternity--"having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,"--all their iniquities laid on Jesus, their blessed Surety, justified by the "Lord our righteousness,"--called by the effectual operation of the Eternal Spirit--inhabited, sanctified, sealed by God the Holy Spirit. Oh exalted state! oh holy privilege! oh happy people! Pressing on, it may be, through strong corruptions, deep trials, clinging infirmities, fiery temptations, sore discouragements, dark providences, and often the hidings of a Father's countenance, and yet "the children of God" now, and soon to be glorified hereafter.

MAY 10.

"By terrible things in righteousness will you answer us, O God of our salvation." Psalm 65:5.

DEEPER experience of the truth of God is frequently the result of sore but sanctified trial. A believer knows but imperfectly what he is in himself, or what the truth of God is to him, until placed in circumstances favorable to the development of both. The Lord will have His people, and especially the ministers of His gospel, experimentally acquainted with His truth. They shall not testify of an unknown, unfelt, and unexperienced Savior. They shall be enabled to say, "That which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life, declare we unto you." And more valuable and precious is one grain of the truth of God experienced in the heart than the whole system occupying a place only in the judgment. To deepen, then, their knowledge of the truth--to ground and settle them in it--to bring it out in all its practical power, a good, a covenant God often places His children in sore trial and temptation. It is in the storm and the hurricane, amid rocks and shoals, that the mariner becomes practically acquainted with his science. All that he knew before He launched his vessel on the ocean, or encountered the storm, was but the theory of the school; but a single tempest, one escape from shipwreck, has imparted more experimental knowledge than years of mere theoretical toil. So learns the believer. Oh, how theoretical and defective his views of Divine truth--how little his knowledge of his own heart--his deep corruptions, perfect weakness, little faith--how imperfect his acquaintance with Jesus--His fullness, preciousness, all-sufficiency, sympathy, until the hand of God falls

upon him!--and when, like Job, messenger after messenger has brought the tidings of blasted gourds, of broken cisterns--when brought down and laid low, like him they are constrained to confess, "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye sees You. Why I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

Welcome whatever makes you more acquainted with God; despise nothing that will deepen your intimacy with God in Christ. Welcome the cross--it may be heavy; welcome the cup--it may be bitter; welcome the chastening--it may be severe; welcome the wound--it may be deep; oh! welcome to your heart whatever increases your knowledge of God; receive it as a boon sent to you from your Father; receive it as a heaven-sent message to your soul. And hearken to the voice that is in that rod: "My child, I want you to know me better; for in knowing me better you will love me better, and in loving me better you will serve me better. I send this chastening, this loss, this cross, only to draw you closer and closer to my embrace--only to bring you nearer and nearer to me." Welcome, then, whatever brings you into closer transaction, communion, and fellowship with your heavenly Father.

MAY 11.

"The Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit." John 14:26

IN no one aspect does the happy tendency and, we may add, the indispensable necessity of the discipline of the covenant more manifestly appear, than that through this channel mainly is the believer brought into communion with, and into enjoyment of, the tenderness and sympathy of the Spirit. The wisdom, the faithfulness, and the power of the Spirit, the soul has been brought to acknowledge and experience in conversion; but to know the Spirit as a Comforter, to experience His tenderness and sympathy, His kindness and gentleness, we must be placed in those peculiar circumstances that call it into exercise. In a word, we must know what sorrow is, to know what comfort is: and to know what true comfort is, we must receive it from the blessed and Eternal Spirit, the Comforter of the Church.

The God and Father of His people foreknew all their circumstances. He knew that He had chosen them in the furnace of affliction, that this was the peculiar path in which they should all walk. As He foreknew, so He also fore-arranged for all those circumstances. In the eternal purposes of His wisdom, grace, and love, He went before His Church, planning its history, allotting its path, and providing for every possible position in which it could be placed; so that we cannot imagine an exigency, a trial, a difficulty, or a conflict, but is amply provided for in the covenant of grace. Such is the wisdom and such the goodness of God towards His covenant family!

The great provision for the suffering state of the believer is the Holy Spirit--the special, the personal, and abiding Comforter of the Church. It was to this truth our dear Lord directed the sorrowing hearts of His disciples, when, on the eve of His return to His kingdom, He was about to withdraw from them His bodily presence. His mission on earth was fulfilled, His work was done, and He was about to return to His Father and to their Father, to His God and to their God. The prospect of separation absorbed them in grief. Thus did Jesus mark, and thus too He consoled it. "But now I go my way to Him that sent me; and none of You asks me, Where go you? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow has filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell You the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you." Mark the circumstances of the disciples; it was a season of deep sorrow. Then observe, how Jesus mitigated that sorrow, and chased away the dark cloud of their grief, by the promise of the Spirit as a Comforter--assuring those who the presence and

abiding of the Spirit as a Comforter would more than recompense the loss of His bodily presence. What the Spirit then was to the sorrowing disciples, He has been in every successive age, is at the present moment, and will continue to be to the end of time--the personal and abiding Comforter of the afflicted family of God.

MAY 12.

"Christ, who is our life." Coloss. 3:4

THE renewed man is a living soul, in consequence of his union with the life of Christ. We too little trace the life which is in us to the life which is in Jesus. The Spirit Himself could not be our life apart from our union to Christ. It is not so much the work of the Spirit to give us life, as to quicken in us the life of Christ. The apostle thus briefly but emphatically states it--"Christ, who is our life." Hence we see the relation and the fitness of the second Adam to the Church of God. In consequence of our federal union to the first Adam, we became the subjects of death--he being emphatically our death. And in consequence of our covenant union to the second Adam, we become the subjects of life--He being emphatically "our life." Hence it is said, "The second Adam is a quickening spirit."

The headship of Christ, in reference to the life of His people, is written as with the point of a diamond in the following passages:--"In Him was life;" "The Son quickens whom He will;" "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear shall live;" "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believes in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live;" "He that eats me, even he shall live by me." Now this life that is in Christ becomes the life of the believer in consequence of his union with Christ. "You are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God;" "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me." And what is the crowning act of Christ as the life of His people? What but His resurrection from the dead? "We are risen with Christ;" "You are also risen with Him;" "That I may know the power of His resurrection." This doctrine of the Lord's resurrection is the pivot upon which the whole system of Christianity hinges. He is risen, and in virtue of this, His people are partakers of a resurrection-life to eternal glory. It is utterly impossible that they can perish, for they have already the resurrection-life in their souls. Their own resurrection to everlasting life is pledged, secured, antedated, in consequence of the risen Christ being in them the hope of glory. Thus is Christ the life of His people. He is the life of their pardon--all their iniquities are put away by His blood. He is the life of their Justification--His righteousness gives them acceptance with God. He is the life of their sanctification--His grace subdues the power of the sins, the guilt of which His blood removes. He is the life of their joys, of their hopes, of their ordinances; the life of everything that makes this life sweet, and the life to come glorious.

MAY 13.

"Because I live, you shall live also." John 14:19

THE divine life of a believer, from its very necessity, is deathless. The life of Adam was never so secure, even when he lifted his noble brow in spotlessness to God. The new life is more secure in a state of imperfection, than his was in a state of innocence. He stood in his own righteousness, upheld by his own power, and yet He fell. But we are more secure, because we stand in the righteousness, and are kept by the power, of God. His life was hidden in himself; our life is hidden in Christ, and is as secure in Christ as Christ's is in God. It is truly remarked by Charnock, that "Adam had no reserve of nature to supply nature upon any defect;" but out of Christ's fullness we receive grace upon grace. How much more ready are we to complain against this small measure of grace, than to praise God for the weakest grace, and to thank

him for an inexhaustible source, on which we may at all times fall back. The believer ever has a reserve of grace. His resources may often be exhausted, but he has a stock in Christ's hand, and which, for the wisest end, is kept solely in Christ's hands, upon which he is privileged at any moment to draw. Well is it that that supply of grace is not all in our own hands, else it would soon be wasted; and well is it that it is not in angels' hands, else they would soon be weary with our continual coming. But the covenant was made with Christ, He being the Mediator as well as the Surety; and in Him it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell. Thus, in His hands the Father has entrusted the keeping of His weakest child--even your soul, beloved, though you are the weakest of the weak. An infant as much belongs to the family as the most matured member. Its place in the parent's heart is as strong, and its claim upon its share of the patrimony is as valid. So is it with the feeblest child of God.

And most faithfully does our Lord Jesus discharge His office. Is the Church a garden? Jesus repairs early to the vineyard, to see "whether the tender grapes appear, and the pomegranates bud." Is it a flock? Jesus "feeds His flock like a shepherd: he gathers the lambs with His arm, and carries them in His bosom." Can any imagery more affectingly set forth the tenderness not towards weak grace--the weak lamb carried, not on the shoulders, not in the arms, but in the bosom of the Shepherd? Yes, there is one image, the most expressive and tender in the universe of imagery--a mother's love for her infant. Does God compare His love to this? Harken words: "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yes, they may forget, yet will I not forget you." Oh that you would, in the simplicity of faith, press this precious truth to your trembling, doubting, fearful heart. Nothing does the Holy Spirit seem to take such pains in comforting and strengthening, as real grace in its greatest weakness. Would He indulge our weak faith? Oh no! But while He would have us sue for the highest degrees, He would yet watch over the lowest degree of grace in the soul.

MAY 14.

"Why gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." 1 Peter 1:13

ALL things and all events point us to, and are leading us towards, eternity. Oh how we absorb in our present sufferings and light afflictions the thought of the coming death--the coming grave--the coming judgment--the coming heaven--the coming hell! Our sojourn here is but brief. We flit away like the shadow across the sun-dial. We weep today, we are wept for to-morrow. Today we are toiling, and fighting, and suffering; and anon, if believers in Jesus, we are with Him, and "are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaks better things than that of Abel."

Christ will soon appear in the clouds of heaven. "The coming of the Lord draws near." "The Lord is at hand." Let us hew out no more cisterns off earthly good; but following the stream of the Lord's love--deepening and widening as it ascends--let us rise to the fountain-head in glory; having our conversation in heaven, and our affections on things above, where Christ sits--and from where He will come again--at the right hand of God. "Drink, yes, drink abundantly, O beloved," of this river, is your Lord's loving invitation. You cannot take to it too many vessels, nor vessels too empty. The precious "fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem," is "for sin and uncleanness." Then, as sinners, plunge into it, "wash and be clean." Think not that you are alone in your grief, as cisterns of

creature-good thus broken. A "cloud of witnesses" surrounds you, all testifying that the fled joy of earth gives place to the full and permanent bliss of heaven; that Jesus now turns His people's sorrow into joy, by the sustaining power of faith and the sweet discoveries of love; and that He will perfect that joy when He brings them to drink of the "pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb."

MAY 15.

"For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul." Jer. 31:25

His preeminent fitness for this peculiar and difficult office is apparent. His identity with their very nature describes Him as well calculated to address Himself to their case. Of the nature thus oppressed and weary He in part partook. But for this, so infinitely removed had He been from their condition, He had been incapable of meeting its peculiar necessity. Absolute Deity could not, through the medium of sympathy, have conveyed a word of comfort to the weary. There had been wanting, not the power to relieve, but the mode of relieving, the oppressed and sorrowful heart. There had been needed the connecting and transmitting chain--the heavenly highway of thought, of feeling, and of sympathy--between these extremes of being, the loving heart of God and the desolate heart of man. Unacquainted with grief, untouched by sorrow, unobscured by care, unaffected by weariness, an absolute God could not possibly offer the support and the condolence which sympathetic feeling alone could give, and which a jaded spirit, a sorrow-touched, care-oppressed, and sin-obscured soul demanded.

Nor could angels afford the help required. The only burden which they know is the burden of love; the only weariness they feel is the weariness of ever-burning devotion and zeal. It is this which gives strength to their wings, and swiftness to their flight. They are represented as "hearkening to the voice of the Lord," ready to speed their way on some embassy of mercy and love. In fulfilling this their ministry, their eye never slumbers, their pinions never droop. But we needed a nature so constituted as to enter into, and as it were become a part of, the very weariness it sought to relieve. Look at Jesus! "Behold the man!" With weariness in every form He was intimate; He knew what bodily weakness was. Do you not love to linger in pensive thoughtfulness over that touching incident of His life which describes Him as sitting fatigued upon Jacob's well? "Jesus, being wearied, sat thus on the well." Picture Him to your eye! See the dust upon His sandals, for He had walked forty miles that day--the sweat upon His brow, the air of languor upon His countenance, and the jaded expression in His eye! Do we deify His humanity? No. It was real humanity--humanity like our own. It is our joy, our boast, our glory, our salvation, that He was really man, as He was truly God.

Consider, too, what He endured for man, from man. This was no small part of the weariness of our nature into which He entered. How soon did He come to the end of the creature! Alas! the creature has an end, and sooner or later God brings us to it--and in the exercise, too, of the tenderest love of His heart. When most He needed its sheltering protection, He found the creature a withered gourd--and He bore His sorrow alone. And when He repaired to it for the refreshing of sympathy, He found it a broken cistern--and He panted in vain. Where were His disciples now? He was in trouble, but there was no one to help; He was in the storm, but no one would know Him; refuge failed Him, no man cared for His soul; He was in sorrow, but no bosom proffered its pillow; He was accused, but no tongue was heard in His defense; He was scourged, but no arm was lifted to repel; He was condemned, but no one vindicated His innocence, nor sought to arrest His progress to the cross! Oh how fully did Jesus realize the creature's nothingness, and so enter into His people's condition of weariness!

MAY 16.

"Preaching peace by Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all)." Acts 10:36.

LET us turn our attention to the subject-matter of our Lord's address to the weary. What does He speak to them? Some would reply, the law. No; but the law of God never spoke a word of comfort to the weary. It was not designed for such. Its very nature forbids it. It can anathematize, alarm, and wound; but not a solitary word of consolation and soothing can it address to a soul weary and heavy-laden with sorrow and with guilt. But it is the glorious gospel of the blessed God that the Lord Jesus speaks to His weary ones. It was designed and framed especially for them. Its very nature fits it for such. Every word is an echo of the love of God's heart. Every sentence is fraught with grace, mercy, and truth. The word which Jesus speaks is just the word the weary want. It unfolds a free pardon, complete acceptance, perfect reconciliation with God, and all-sufficient grace to perfect this work in holiness. It bids me as a sinner approach just as I am; my poverty, my vileness, my guilt, my utter destitution forming no just hindrances to my salvation, because His atoning work has made it a righteous thing in God to justify the guilty, and a gracious act in Jesus to save the lost. Yes, He condescends to assure me in that word of a free-grace gospel, which He speaks with a tongue so eloquent, that I honor Him in accepting His proffered boon, and that I glorify Him by trusting my soul into His Almighty hands.

The Lord Jesus speaks at the present time to the weary. We need constantly to bear in mind the immutability of our Lord; that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and for ever." That all that He ever has been--and oh! what has He not been!--He is at this moment. What countless numbers are now bathing their souls in the bliss of heaven, whose tears were once dried, whose fears were once quelled, whose burden was once removed, by those precious words spoken in season--"Come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"! Oh could they, bending now from their thrones, but speak to us, they would testify what substance, what reality, what sweetness, what power, and what charm they once found in them; and they would bid every weary spirit, every weeping penitent, every tried saint, believe and press the promise to their heart. But a dearer, a lovelier, and a better than they bids you receive it. Jesus Himself speaks to you: "Come unto me--and I will give you rest." All that He was in their happy experience, He will be in yours. The grace that made them what they once were, and what they now are, is sufficient for you. Go, and lay your weariness on Christ. Ask not, "Will He bear my burden." He bears every burden brought to Him. Not one poor weary, heavy-laden sinner does He turn away. You are perhaps a mourning penitent--He will receive you. You are perhaps a vile outcast--He will welcome you. He says He will, and He cannot deny Himself; it is impossible that He should lie.

MAY 17.

"And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaks. And he said, I will not let you go, except you bless me." Genesis 32:24-26

NEVER was there a conflict of so illustrious a nature, and of so strange a result, between powers so dissimilar and extreme. The incarnate God, as if to demonstrate His own Divine power, and at the same time to make the victory of human weakness over infinite might more illustrious and palpable, touches the wrestling patriarch, and he is a cripple! Then at the moment of his greatest weakness, when taught the lesson of his own insufficiency, that flesh might not glory in the Divine presence, Omnipotence retires as if

vanquished from the field, and yields the palm of victory to the disabled but prevailing prince. And why all this? To teach us the amazing power of prayer, which the feeblest believer may have when alone with Jesus.

No point of Christian duty and privilege set before you in this work will plead more earnestly and tenderly for your solemn consideration, dear reader, than this. It enters into the very essence of your spiritual being. This is the channel through which flows the oil that feeds the lamp of your Christian profession. Dimly will burn that lamp, and drooping will be your spiritual light, if you are not used to be much alone with Jesus. Every feeling of the soul, and each department of Christian labor, will be sensibly affected by this woeful neglect. He who is but seldom with Jesus in the closet will exhibit, in all that he does for Jesus in the world, but the fitful and convulsive movements of a mind urged on by a feverish and unnatural excitement. It is only in much prayer--that prayer secret and confiding--that the heart is kept in its right position, its affections properly governed, and its movements correctly regulated. And are there not periods when you find it needful to leave the society of the most spiritual--sweet as is the communion of saints--to be alone with Jesus? He Himself has set you the example. Accustomed at times to withdraw from His disciples, He has been known to spend whole nights amid the mountains' solitude, alone with His Father.

Oh the sacredness, the solemnity of such a season! Alone with God! alone with Jesus! no eye seeing, no ear hearing, but His; the dearest of earthly being excluded, and no one present save Jesus only, the best, the dearest of all! Then, in the sweetest and most unreserved confidence, the believer unveils his soul, and reveals all to the Lord. Conscience is read--motives are dissected--principles are sifted--actions are examined--the heart is searched--sin is confessed--iniquity is acknowledged, as could only effectually be done in the presence of Jesus alone. Is there, among all the privileges of a child of God, one in its costliness and its preciousness surpassing this?

MAY 18.

"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Philip. 3:12-14

OH holy resolve of a regenerate man! Here is the springing up of the well of living water in the heart. Here is the turning of the soul to God. See how the fountain rises! See how the flame ascends! It is the mighty energy of God the Holy Spirit, drawing the soul upward, heavenward, Godwards.

Nothing more strikingly and truly proves the reality, we would say the divinity, of the work within, the vital principle of grace implanted in the heart of the regenerate, than the growing energy and holy tendency that ever accompany it. It is the property of that which has life in itself to increase--to multiply itself. The seed cast into the earth will germinate. Presently will appear the tender sprout, this will advance to the young sapling, and this in time to the gigantic tree, with its overshadowing branches, and richly laden with fruit. Obeying the law of its nature, it aspires to that perfection which belongs to it. It must grow. Nothing can prevent it, but such a wound as will injure the vital principle, or cutting it down entirely. The life of God in the soul of man contains the principle of growth. He that is not advancing--adding grace to grace, strength to strength--fruitful in every good word and work--increasing in the knowledge of God, of His own heart, of

the preciousness, fullness, and all sufficiency of Jesus, and in Divine conformity, "growing up into Christ in all things,"--has great reason to suspect the absence of the Divine life in his soul. There may be much that marks a resemblance to the new birth, there may be the portrait finely executed, the marble statue exquisitely chiseled, but there is not the living man, "the new creature." We can expect no increase of perfection in a finished picture or in a piece of statuary; that which has not life in it cannot grow. This is self-evident. An individual may look like a believer, and even die with a false peace, like that of the righteous, and all the while retain his dwelling among the tombs.

Let no dear child of God write hard and bitter things against himself, as he reads this last sentence. Let him not come to any hasty, unbelieving, doubting, and God-dishonoring conclusions. What are you to yourself?--worthless--vile--empty? What is Jesus to you?--precious--lovely--all your salvation and all your desire? What is sin to you?--the most hateful thing in the world? And what is holiness?--the most lovely, the most longed for? What is the throne of grace to you?--the most attractive spot? And the cross?--the sweetest resting-place in the universe? What is God to you?--your God and Father--the spring of all your joys--the fountain-head of all your bliss--the center where your affections meet? Is it so? Then you are born again--then you are a child of God--then you shall never die eternally. Cheer up, precious soul! the day of your redemption draws near. Those low views of yourself--that brokenness, that inward mourning, that secret confession, that longing for more spirituality, more grace, more devotedness, more love, does but prove the existence, reality, and growth of God's work within you. God the Holy Spirit is there, and these are but the fruits and evidences of His indwelling. Look up, then, beloved reader, and let the thought cheer you--that soul never perished, that felt itself to be vile, and Jesus to be precious.

MAY 19.

"And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end." Heb. 6:11.

THE doctrine of an assured belief of the pardon of sin, of acceptance in Christ, and of adoption into the family of God, has been, and yet is, regarded by many as an attainment never to be expected in the present life; and when it is expressed, it is viewed with a suspicion unfavorable to the character of the work. But this is contrary to the Divine word, and to the concurrent experience of millions, who have lived and died in the full assurance of hope. The doctrine of assurance is a doctrine of undoubted revelation, implied and expressed. That it is enforced as a state of mind essential to the salvation of the believer, we cannot admit; but that it is insisted upon as essential to his comfortable and holy walk, and as greatly involving the glory of God, we must strenuously maintain. Else why these marked references to the doctrine? In Colossians 2:1, 2, Paul expresses "great conflict" for the saints, that their "hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding," etc. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, 10:22, he exhorts them, "Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith;" with similar language in our motto. To crown all, the apostle Peter, 2nd Epistle 1:10, thus earnestly exhorts, "Why the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure." We trust no further proof from the sacred word is required to authenticate the doctrine. It is written as with a sunbeam, "the Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."

It is the duty and the privilege of every believer diligently and prayerfully to seek the sealing of the Spirit. He rests short of his great privilege, if he slights or undervalues this blessing. Do not be satisfied with the faint impression which you received in conversion. In other words, rest not content with a past experience. Many are satisfied with a mere hope that they once passed from death unto life; and with this feeble and,

in many cases, doubtful evidence they are content to pass all their days, and to go down to the grave. Ah, reader, if you are really converted, and your soul is in a healthy, growing, spiritual state, you will want more than this; and especially, too, if you are led into deeper self-knowledge--a more intimate acquaintance with the roughness of the rough way, the straightness of the straight path--you will want a present Christ to lean upon and to live upon. Past experience will not do for you, save only as it confirms your soul in the faithfulness of God. "Forgetting those things that are behind," you will seek a present pardon, a present sense of acceptance; and the daily question, as you near your eternal home, will be, "How do I now stand with God?--is Jesus precious to my soul now?--is He my daily food?--what do I experience of daily visits from and to Him?--do I more and more see my own vileness, emptiness, and poverty; and His righteousness, grace, and fullness?--and should the summons now come, am I ready to depart and to be with Christ?" As you value a happy and a holy walk--as you would be jealous for the honor and glory of the Lord--as you wish to be the "salt of the earth," the "light of the world"--to be a savor of Christ in every place--oh seek the sealing of the Spirit. Rest not short of it--reach after it--press towards it: it is your duty--oh that the duty may be your privilege then shall you exclaim with an unfaltering tongue, "Abba, Father," "My Lord, and my God!"

MAY 20.

"Until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: which in his times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only has immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man has seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting." Amen. 1 Tim. 6:14-16

STRONG is the testimony of the Holy Spirit in the word to the essential Deity of our blessed Lord. And if He has laid such amazing stress upon it, surely it should be a solemn matter with us how we think of and treat it. The great, the grand glory of Immanuel is His essential glory--the glory of His Godhead. It is only in this light that we can approach Him with the hope of pardon and acceptance. It is then we talk of Him as a Mediator--it is then we view Him as the Sin-bearer of His people--it is then we contemplate Him as their Surety, their Righteousness, their covenant Head. In vain we speak of His atoning blood, of His finished righteousness, of His mediatorial fullness, if we look not up to Him in the "glory He had with the Father before the world was." This it is that imparts such efficacy to His work, and throws such surpassing luster around it. And what is the witness of the Spirit to this doctrine? It is this; that all the names, the perfections, the works, and the worship proper only to Deity belong to Christ--thus proclaiming Him with a loud voice to be, what He really is--Jehovah Je

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