

# The Lord's Prayer

by Thomas Watson

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*Thomas Watson's sermon on 'The Lord's Prayer' emphasizes the need for deliverance from the evils of the world, our hearts, and the temptations of Satan.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 106:35, Matthew 6:13, Mark 7:21-22, John 10:28, Galatians 1:4, Hebrews 12:10, James 1:27, 1 Peter 5:8, 1 John 2:16, Revelation 3:19

**Topics:** "The Power of Prayer", "Deliverance from Evil"

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## Description

Thomas Watson expounds on 'The Lord's Prayer,' particularly the petition 'Deliver us from evil,' emphasizing the need for divine protection from the evils of the world, our own hearts, and the devil. He illustrates how the world is defiling, ensnaring, deadening, and vexing, urging believers to seek deliverance from its temptations and troubles. Watson also highlights the importance of recognizing the heart as a source of sin and the necessity of prayer for strength against Satan's schemes. He concludes by reminding the congregation of the eternal consequences of sin and the need for God's grace to overcome it.

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## Transcript

The Lord's Prayer

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CHOICE EXCERPTS

A vexing vanity!

"Deliver us from evil." Matthew 6:13

In this petition, we pray to be delivered from the evil world. "He died for our sins, just as God our Father planned--in order to rescue us from this evil world in which we live." Galatians 1:4

It is an evil world, as it is a DEFILING world. The

opinions and examples of the world are defiling.

How easily are we hurried to sin, when we have the tide of natural corruption, and the wind of example to carry us! "You shall not follow a multitude to do evil." Exodus 23:2. Bad examples are contagious.

"They mingled among the pagans--and adopted their evil customs." Psalm 106:35.

Living in the world, is like traveling on a dirty road.

It requires a high degree of grace to keep ourselves "unspotted by the world." James 1:27.

It is an evil world, as it is an ENSNARING world. The world is full of snares. Company is a snare; recreation is a snare; riches are golden snares. The apostle John speaks of the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life." 1 John 2:16. The lust of the flesh is beauty; the lust of the eye is money; the pride of life is honor. These are the natural man's trinity.

The world is a flattering enemy. Whom it kisses--it betrays; it is a silken halter. The pleasures of the world, like opium, cast men into the sleep of carnal security. Lysimachus sold his crown for a cup of water. Just so, many part with heaven --for the world. They are enslaved with the world's golden fetters! The world bewitched Demas. 2 Timothy 4:10. One of Christ's own apostles was caught with a silver bait. It is hard to drink the wine of prosperity--and not be giddy. The world, through our innate corruption, is evil, as it is a snare. It is an evil world, as it is a DEADENING world. It dulls and

deadens the affections to heavenly objects. Earthly things choke the seed of the Word. A man entangled in the world is so taken up with secular concerns, that he can no more mind the things above--than an elephant can fly in the air! And even such as have grace in them--when their affections are beslimed with earth, they find themselves much indisposed to meditation and prayer; it is like swimming with a heavy stone around the neck!

It is an evil world, as it is a DECEITFUL world. The world makes us believe it will satisfy our desires--but it only increases them!

It is an evil world, as it is a VEXING world. It is full of trouble. "In this world you will have trouble." John 16:33.

Basil was of opinion that before the fall--the rose grew without prickles; but now every sweet flower of our life has its thorns! There are many things which cause trouble.

Some are troubled that they have no children, others that they have children. The world is a vexing vanity! If a man is poor--he is despised by the rich; if he is rich--he is envied by the poor. If we do not find an ensnaring world, we shall find it an afflicting world; it has more in it to trouble us than tempt us.

The world is a sea, where we are tossed upon the surging waves of sorrow, and often in danger of shipwreck!

The world is a wilderness, full of fiery serpents!

What great need then, have we to pray, "Lord, deliver us from being hurt by this evil world!"

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The Trojan horse

"Deliver us from evil." Matthew 6:13

In this petition, we pray to be delivered from the evil of our heart, that it may not entice us to sin.

The heart is the poisoned fountain, from whence all actual sins flow. "For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness."

Mark 7:21-22.

The cause of all evil lies in a man's own bosom--all sin begins at the heart. Lust is first conceived in the heart--and then it is midwifed into the world. Whence comes rash anger? The heart sets the tongue on fire.

The heart is the shop where all sin is contrived and hammered out.

The heart is the greatest seducer. "Each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust." James 1:14. The devil could not hurt us--if our own hearts did not give consent. All that he can do is to lay the bait--but it is our fault to swallow it! How needful, therefore, is this prayer, "Deliver us from the evil of our hearts!"

It was Augustine's prayer, "Lord, deliver me from that evil man--myself!"

Beware of the bosom traitor--the flesh. The heart

of a man is the Trojan horse--out of which comes  
a whole army of lusts! O let us pray to be delivered  
from the lusts and deceits of our own heart!

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Looking for some victim to devour!

"Deliver us from evil." Matthew 6:13

In this petition, we pray to be delivered from the  
evil of Satan--"the wicked one." Matthew 13:19.

In what respect is Satan the wicked one?

He was the first inventor of evil. John 8:44.

His inclination is only to evil. Ephesians 6:12.

His constant practice is doing evil. 1 Peter 5:8.

He has some hand in all the evils and mischief  
which happen in the world.

He hinders from all good.

He provokes to evil. The devil blows the fire of lust  
and strife. When men are proud, the old serpent has  
poisoned them, and makes them swell!

He is a restless adversary--he never sleeps.

Satan is a subtle contriver; there is no place that  
can secure us from his assaults and inroads.

Satan is a mighty adversary. He is called the  
"strong man." Luke 11:21. He takes men captive  
at his pleasure. "Who are taken captive by him  
at his will." 2 Tim 2:26.

The devil glories in the damnation of souls. His work  
is to angle for men's souls; he lays suitable baits.

He allures the ambitious man with honor.

He allures the covetous man with riches;

he baits his hook with silver!

He allures the lustful man with beauty;

he tempts men to Delilah's lap--to keep them  
from Abraham's bosom!

How needful then is this prayer, "Lord, deliver  
us from the evil one!"

"Be careful! Watch out for attacks from the  
Devil, your great enemy. He prowls around  
like a roaring lion, looking for some victim  
to devour!" 1 Peter 5:8.

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The burdens of prosperity

People are usually better in adversity, than prosperity.

A prosperous condition is not always so safe. True, it  
is more pleasing to the flesh--but it is not always best.

In a prosperous state, there is more burden. Many  
look at the shining and glittering of prosperity--but  
not at the burdens of prosperity.

[1] There is the burden of CARE. Therefore God calls  
riches "cares." Luke 8:14. A rose has its prickles--so  
have riches. We think them happy, who flourish in  
their silks and gold--but we do not see the troubles  
and cares which attend them! A shoe may have silver  
lace on it--yet pinch the foot. Many a man who goes  
to his hard labor, lives a more contented life than he

who has millions. Disquieting care is the evil spirit which haunts the rich man. When his chests are full of gold--his heart is full of care how to increase them, or how to secure what he has gotten. A large estate, like a long, trailing garment--is often more troublesome than useful.

[2] In a prosperous estate there is the burden of ACCOUNT. Such as are in high places, have a far greater account to give to God than others. "Unto whom much is given--of him shall be much required." The more golden talents any are entrusted with--the more they have to answer for. The more their revenues --the more their reckonings. God will say, "I gave you a great estate--what have you done with it? How have you employed it for My glory?"

[3] A prosperous condition has more DANGER in it. Such as are on the top of the pinnacle of honor--are in more danger of falling. They are subject to many temptations. Their table is often a snare. Millions are drowned in the sweet waters of pleasure.

A large sail overturns the vessel. Many, by having a too large sail of prosperity, have had their souls overturned! He has need of much wisdom and grace, to know how to wisely bear a high condition. It is hard to carry a full cup without spilling--and a full estate without sinning! Prosperity breeds pride. When the tide rises higher in the river, the boat rises higher; so, when the tide of an

estate rises higher, many men's hearts rise higher in pride. Prosperity breeds carnal security. Samson fell asleep in Delilah's lap--so do men in the lap of ease and plenty. The world's golden sands, are quicksands. God knows what is best for us. If we have less estate, we are in less danger. If we lack the riches and honors of others--so we lack their temptations. "How hard it is for rich people to get into the Kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God!" Luke 18:24-25.

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The sword which wounds the red dragon!

"In every situation take the shield of faith, and with it you will be able to extinguish the flaming arrows of the evil one!" Ephesians 6:16

No grace more bruises the serpent's head--than faith.

It is both a shield and a sword, defensive and offensive.

It is a shield to guard the head and defend the vitals.

The shield of faith prevents the fiery darts of temptation from piercing us through. Faith is also the sword which wounds the red dragon!

How does faith come to be so strong--that it can resist Satan and put him to flight?

Because faith brings the strength of Christ into the soul.

Samson's strength lay in his hair--ours lies in Christ. If a child is assaulted--it runs and calls to its father for help.

Just so, when faith is assaulted, it runs and calls Christ,

and in His strength overcomes!

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Buffeted by Satan's temptations

Why does God allow His people to be buffeted  
by Satan's temptations? He does it for many wise  
and holy ends.

God allows His children to be tempted, to test their love.

Our love to God is seen, when we can look a temptation  
in the face--and turn our back upon it. Though the devil  
comes as a subtle serpent, and offers a golden apple--yet  
the one who loves God will not touch the forbidden fruit.

When the devil offered Christ all the kingdoms of the  
world, and the glory of them--such was Christ's love to  
His Father, that He abhorred the temptation. True love  
will not be bribed. When the devil's darts are most fiery  
--a saint's love to God is most fervent. "If you love Me,  
you will keep My commandments." John 14:15

God allows His children to be tempted, to test their courage.

Many have no heart to resist a temptation. No sooner does  
Satan come with his solicitations--but they yield. They are  
like the coward, who as soon as the thief approaches, delivers  
his purse. He is a valorous Christian, who brandishes the sword  
against Satan, and will rather die than yield. The heroic spirit  
of a saint is never more seen than in a battlefield, when he is  
fighting with the red dragon--and by the power of faith puts  
the devil to flight!

God allows His children to be tempted, that they may be kept

from pride. Pride keeps grace low, so that it cannot thrive. As the head swells--the other parts of the body waste away. Just so, as pride swells--grace wastes away. God resists pride; and, that He may keep His children humble, He sometimes allows them to fall into temptation. "To keep me from getting puffed up, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me and keep me from getting proud." The thorn in the flesh was to burst the bubble of pride! Better is the temptation which humbles me--than the duty which makes me proud. Rather than a Christian should be proud, God lets him fall into the devil's hands a while--that he may be cured of swelling pride.

God allows His children to be tempted, that they may be fitter to comfort others who are in the same distress, and speak a word in due season to such as are weary. Paul was trained up in the fencing-school of temptation, and was able to acquaint others with Satan's wiles and stratagems, 2 Cor 2:11. A man who has ridden over a place where there are quicksands, is the fittest to guide others through that dangerous way. Just so, he who has been buffeted by Satan, and has felt the claws of the roaring lion--is the fittest man to deal with one who is tempted.

God allows His children to be tempted, to make them long more for heaven, where they shall be out of gunshot, and freed from the hissing of the old serpent! Satan vexes and molests the saints. He lays his snares, and throws his fireballs! But this only makes the children of God long to be gone from

hence, and pray that they had the wings of a dove, to fly away and be at rest! Heaven is the place of rest--no bullets of temptation fly there! The eagle that soars aloft in the air, and sits perching upon the tops of high trees--is not troubled with the stinging of serpents below. Just so, when believers have got into heaven above, they shall not be stung by the old serpent! The devil is cast out of the heavenly paradise. Heaven is compared to an exceeding high mountain. It is so high, that Satan's fiery darts cannot reach up to it! Death calls the saints off the battlefield, where the bullets of temptation fly thick--so that they may receive a victorious crown!

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To damn them with delights!

"So that Satan will not outsmart us. For we are very familiar with his evil schemes." 2 Corinthians 2:11

The serpent beguiled Eve with his subtlety; let us not be beguiled by his hellish snares and plots.

Satan has a dexterity in subtle contrivances.

He hurts more as a fox than a lion.

His snares are worse than his darts.

His error damns as well as His vice;

poison kills as well as a pistol.

Satan bewitches and ensnares men, by setting pleasing baits before them; as the riches, pleasures, and honors of the world. "All these things will I give you." Matthew 4:9. How many does he tempt with this golden apple! Pride, idleness, luxury--are the

three worms which are bred by prosperity. "Those who will be rich fall into temptation and a snare."

1 Timothy 6:9. Satan kills with these silver darts!

How many are ensnared by his luscious delights!

The pleasures of the world are the great engine by which Satan batters down men's souls. His policy is to tickle them to death--to damn them with delights!

The flesh would gladly be pleased, and Satan prevails by this temptation--he drowns them in the sweet waters of pleasure.

Such as have abundance of the world, walk in the midst of golden snares! We had need watch our hearts in prosperity, and pray not to be led into temptation.

We have as much need to be careful that we are not endangered by prosperity--as a man has to be careful at a feast where there are some poisoned dishes of food.

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This lion of hell is ever hunting after his prey!

"Be careful! Watch out for attacks from the Devil, your great enemy. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for some victim to devour!" 1 Peter 5:8

Consider Satan's diligence in tempting. He neglects no time. He who would have us idle--is always busy himself. This lion of hell is ever hunting after his prey! He compasses sea and land to make a proselyte.

He prowls around--he watches where he may throw in the fireball of temptation. He is a restless spirit; if we

repulse him, he will not desist--but come again with a new temptation.

Satan's diligence in tempting, is seen in the variety of temptations he uses. He does not confine himself to one kind of temptation--he has more plots than one. He has many tools to work with. If he finds one temptation does not prevail--he will utilize another.

If he cannot tempt to lust--he will tempt to pride.

If temptation to covetousness does not prevail--he will tempt to extravagance.

If he cannot make men profane--he will try to make them religious formalists.

If he cannot make them wicked--he will tempt them to be erroneous. Error damns as well as vice. Vice pistols; error poisons!

Satan has acquired long experience in the art of temptation. He has been a tempter for as long as he has been a devil. Having such experience, he knows what the temptations are, which have foiled others, and are most likely to prevail--as the fowler lays those snares which have caught other birds.

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God is either blind or forgetful

"Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord does not count against him."

Psalm 32:1-2

All the curses of God stand in full force against an unpardoned sinner. It is astonishing, that an unpardoned man could be merry, who is heir to all God's curses!

Luther professed there were three things which he dared not think of, without Christ:

his sins,

death,

the day of judgment.

Death to a Christless soul, is the "king of terrors."

Death is sent to the unpardoned soul with dreadful tidings. Death is God's jailer to arrest him. Death is a prologue to damnation. It takes away all earthly comforts; it takes away sugared morsels; no more mirth or music. "The music of harpists and musicians, flute players and trumpeters, will never be heard in you again." Rev 18:22. The sinner shall never more taste of luscious delights, for all eternity; his honey shall be turned into the "gall of asps." Job 20:14.

The sinner dying unpardoned, must go into damnation!

This is the second death--an undying death. He must forever bear the anger of a sin-revenging God. As long as God is God--so long the vial of His wrath shall be dropping upon the damned soul.

Oh! how sad, then, is it to live and die unpardoned!

You may lay a grave-stone upon that man, and write this epitaph upon it, "It would have been good for that

man--if he had never been born!" He will be engulfed in a dreadful a labyrinth of fire and brimstone for all eternity!

Now, if the misery of an unpardoned state is so inexpressible--what is the reason why so few seek after pardon? If they lack health--they go to the physician; but if they lack forgiveness of sin, they seem to be unconcerned, and do not seek after it. Why is this?

Men do not seek earnestly after forgiveness of sin, for lack of conviction. Few are convinced what a dreadful thing sin is--that it is distillation of all evil, that it brings all plagues on the body, and curses on the soul. Unless a man's sins are forgiven, there is not the vilest creature alive--the rat, serpent or toad, which is in a worse condition than the sinner! For when they die they go but into the earth; but he, dying without pardon, goes into hell torments forever! Men are not convinced of this--so they play with the viper of sin!

Men do not seek earnestly after forgiveness of sin, because they are seeking other things. They seek the world immoderately. The world is a golden snare. "The riches of the world, are the snares of the devil." The wedge of gold hinders many from seeking after pardon.

Men do not seek earnestly after forgiveness of sin,

out of hope of impunity. They flatter themselves in sin, and because they have been spared so long, therefore think God never intends to reckon with them. "He has said in his heart--God has forgotten; He hides His face and will never see it." Psalm 10:11.

They think that God is either blind or forgetful.

But let sinners know--that long forbearance is not forgiveness. God bore with Sodom a long time, but at last rained down fire and brimstone upon them.

The adjourning of the court, does not acquit the prisoner. The longer God is taking the blow--the heavier it will be at last, if sinners repent not!

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They are never separated

"You were sanctified, you were justified."

1 Corinthians 6:11

Justification and sanctification are not the same.

Justification is without us--sanctification is within us.

The one is by righteousness imputed--the other is by righteousness imparted. Justification is once and for all--sanctification is gradual. One person is sanctified more than another--but one cannot be more justified than another. One has more grace than another--but he is not more justified than another.

The matter of our justification is perfect, namely,

Christ's righteousness; but our sanctification is

imperfect, there are the spots of God's children. Our

graces are mixed with sin, our duties are defiled.

Thus justification and sanctification are not the same.

Yet, for all that, they are never separated. God never pardons and justifies a sinner--but He also sanctifies him.

"This is He who came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ." 1 John 5:6. Christ comes to the soul by blood, which denotes remission of sin; and by water, which denotes sanctification. Let no man say he is pardoned, who is not made holy! This I urge against those who talk of their sin being forgiven, and having a part in Christ--and yet remain unconverted, and live in the grossest sins!

Where God pardons, He purifies. Whoever God forgives, He transforms. Let no man say his sins are forgiven--who does not find an inherent work of holiness in his heart.

"I will place My Spirit within you and cause you to follow My statutes and carefully observe My ordinances."

Ezekiel 36:27

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Three worms which often breed in prosperity

"Give us this day our daily bread." Matthew 6:11

To make us content with "daily bread," though God straitens us in our allowance, think seriously of the danger there is in a high, prosperous condition.

Some are not content with "daily bread," but desire to have their barns filled, and heap up silver as dust; which proves a snare to them. "Those who will be rich

fall into a snare." 1 Tim 6:9. Pride, idleness, and lust--  
are three worms which often breed in prosperity.

Prosperity often deafens the ear against God. "I spoke  
unto you in your prosperity, but you said--I will not hear."

Jer 22:21. Soft pleasures harden the heart. In the body,  
the more fat--the less vitality. Just so, the more outward  
plenty--often the less piety.

Prosperity has its honey--and also its sting! Anxious care  
is the evil spirit which haunts the rich man--and will not  
let him rest. When his chests are full of money--his heart  
is full of care, either how to manage or how to increase,  
or how to secure what he has gotten.

Should this not make us content with that allowance which  
God gives us--if we have daily bread, though not dainties?

Think of the danger of prosperity! The spreading of a full  
table may be the spreading of a snare! Many have been  
sunk to hell, with golden weights!

"People who want to get rich fall into temptation and  
a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that  
plunge men into ruin and destruction!" 1 Timothy 6:9.

The world's golden sands are quicksands, which should  
make us take our daily bread, though it be but coarse,  
contentedly. If we have less prosperity--we have less  
snares. As we lack the rich provisions of the world--so  
we lack their temptations. "If we have food and clothing,  
we will be content with that." 1 Timothy 6:8.

If God keeps us to a spare diet--if He gives us less of

temporal things--He has made it up in spiritual things.

He has given us the Pearl of great price--the Lord Jesus, who is the quintessence of all good things. To give us Christ, is more than if God had given us all the world.

He can make more worlds--but He has no more Christs to bestow. Christ is such a golden mine, that the angels cannot dig to the bottom! His riches are unsearchable! Ephes. 3:8. From Christ we have justification, adoption and glorification!

Consider that it is not having an abundance, which makes us content. It is not a fancy cage which will make the bird sing. Having an abundance may make one less content.

One staff may help the traveler--but a bundle of staffs will be a burden to him. A great estate may be like a long trailing garment--more burdensome than useful. He who can say, "My God," has enough to rock his heart quiet in the lowest condition. What can he lack --who has the all-sufficient God for his portion!

"Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."

Hebrews 13:5

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Here is a strange sight!

"Happy is the man whom God corrects." Job 5:17

Affliction is a means to make us happy. It seems strange to flesh and blood--that affliction should

make us happy. When Moses saw the bush burning and not consumed, he said, "I will turn aside and see this strange sight!" Exod 3:3. Likewise, here is a strange sight--a man afflicted, and yet happy. The world counts them happy--who can escape affliction; but truly happy is the man whom God corrects.

How do afflictions contribute to our happiness?

Afflictions make us happy--as they are a means of bringing us nearer to God. The loadstone of prosperity does not draw us so near to God, as the cords of affliction.

When the prodigal was pinched with need, he said, "I will arise--and go to my father!" Luke 15:18. As the deluge brought the dove to the ark--the floods of sorrow make us hasten to Christ, our ark!

Afflictions make us happy--as they are safe guides to glory. The storm drives the ship into the harbor. Blessed storm--which drives the soul into the heavenly harbor!

Is it not better--to go through momentary affliction to eternal glory--than to go through momentary pleasure to eternal misery? The wicked must drink a sea of wrath; but the godly have only a cup of affliction.

Think, O Christian--what affliction leads to! It leads to paradise, where rivers of pleasure are always running! "Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs

them all." 2 Corinthians 4:16-17

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God's file and flail

"God disciplines us for our profit." Hebrews 12:10

What profit is in affliction? Afflictions are disciplinary. Afflictions teach us--they are the school of the cross.

Affliction shows us more of our own hearts.

Water in a glass looks clear--but set it on the fire, and the scum boils up. Just so, when God sets us upon the fire--corruption boils up which we did not discern before. Sharp afflictions are to the soul, as a soaking rain to the house; we do not know that there are holes in the roof until the shower comes --but then we see it drop down here and there. Just so, we do not know what unmortified lusts are in the soul, until the storm of affliction comes--then the hidden evils of the heart come dropping down in many places. Affliction is a sacred eye-salve, it clears our eyesight. Thus the rod gives wisdom.

Affliction quickens the spirit of prayer. Jonah was asleep in the ship--but at prayer in the whale's belly. Perhaps in a time of health and prosperity we prayed in a cold and formal manner, we put no coals to the incense. Then God sends some affliction or other--to stir us up to take hold of Him. "They poured out a prayer--when Your chastening was

upon them." Isaiah 26:16. In times of trouble  
we pray feelingly and fervently.

Affliction is a means to purge out our sins.

Affliction cures the pestilence of pride--and the  
fever of lust. Affliction is God's file--to scrub  
off our rust. Affliction is God's flail--to thresh  
off our husks. The water of affliction is not to  
drown us--but to wash off our spots.

Affliction is a means to wean us the world.

The world often proves, not only a spider's web--but  
a cockatrice egg. Corrupting worldly things, are great  
enchantments. They hinder us in our passage to heaven.

Affliction sounds a retreat, to call us off the immoderate  
pursuit of earthly things. When two things are frozen  
together--the best way to separate them is by fire; so,  
when the heart and the world are together--God has no  
better way to separate them than by the fire of affliction.

Affliction is a means to purify us. It works us up to  
further degrees of sanctity. "God disciplines us for our  
profit--that we may share in His holiness." Hebrews 12:10.

The vessels of mercy are the brighter for scouring. As you  
pour water on your linen when you would whiten it--so  
God pours the waters of affliction upon us to whiten our  
souls. Afflictions are in themselves bitter--but they bring  
forth the sweet fruits of righteousness. Hebrews 12:11.

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God shoots many kinds of arrows

"May Your will be done." Matthew 6:10

We pray here, that we may have grace to submit to God's will patiently--in whatever He inflicts.

Patient submission to God's will, is a gracious frame of soul, whereby a Christian is content to be at God's disposal, and acquiesces in His wisdom. "It is the Lord's will--let Him do what He thinks best." 1 Samuel 3:18

Patient submission to the will of God, lies in seeing His hand in the affliction. "Affliction does not spring from the soil, and trouble does not sprout from the earth."

Job 5:6. Affliction does not come by chance! Job eyed God in all that befell him. "The Lord gave me everything I had, and the Lord has taken it away. Praise the name of the Lord!" Job 1:21. Job looks beyond second causes --he sees God in the affliction! "The Lord has taken it away." There can be no submission to God's will--until there is an acknowledging of God's hand in the affliction.

Patient submission to God's will, lies in justifying God.

God is holy and just, not only when He punishes the wicked--but when He afflicts the righteous. "Now we are being punished because of our wickedness and our great guilt. But we have actually been punished far less than we deserve." Ezra 9:13

While we live here in this valley of tears, patient submission to God's will is much needed. The Lord sometimes lays heavy afflictions upon us. "Your arrows have struck deep, and Your blows are

crushing me!" Psalm 38:2. God sometimes lays many afflictions upon us. "He multiplies my wounds." Job 9:17. God shoots many kinds of arrows.

God sometimes afflicts with POVERTY--which is a great affliction. To have an estate reduced almost to nothing, is hard to flesh and blood. "The Almighty has made life very bitter for me. I went away full, but the Lord has brought me home empty." Ruth 1:20, 21

God sometimes afflicts with REPROACH. Dirt may be cast upon a pearl; and those names may be blotted, which are written in the book of life. Piety shields from hell--but not from slander.

God sometimes afflicts with the DEATH of loved ones.

"Son of man, I am going to take away your dearest treasure. Suddenly she will die!" Ezekiel 24:16

God sometimes afflicts with INFIRMITY of body.

Sickness takes away the comfort of life. Sometimes

God lets the infirmity continue long. Some diseases are chronic, and linger and hang about the body for many years. The Lord is pleased to exercise many of His precious ones with chronic affliction.

God tries His people with various afflictions--so that they have need of patient submission to His will.

Murmuring is not consistent with submission to

God's will. Murmuring is the height of impatience,

it is a kind of mutiny in the soul against God. "They

began to murmur against God." Numbers 21:5

When water is hot--then the scum boils up; when  
the heart is heated with anger against God--then  
murmuring boils up!

Murmuring springs from pride! Men think they  
have deserved better at God's hand; and, when  
they begin to swell with pride--they spit poison!

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Your dying day

"Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father  
has been pleased to give you the kingdom!"

Luke 12:32

What little cause have the saints to fear death!  
Are any afraid of going to a glorious kingdom?  
What is there in this world that should make us  
desirous to stay here? Is not this world "a valley  
of tears"--and do we weep to leave it? Are we  
not in a wilderness among fiery serpents--and  
are we afraid to leave these serpents?

God is ever displaying the banner of His love in  
heaven, and is there any love like His? Are there  
any sweeter smiles, or softer embraces than His?

What hurt can death do to them--but lead them  
to a glorious kingdom! Let this be a gospel  
antidote to expel the fear of death.

Christian, your dying day will be your wedding  
day--and do you fear it? Is a slave afraid to be

set free? Is a virgin afraid to be matched into the crown? Death may take away a few worldly comforts --but it gives that which is better; it takes away a flower--and gives a jewel! If the saints possess a kingdom when they die, they have no cause to fear death. A prince would not be afraid to cross the sea, though tempestuous--if he were sure to be crowned as soon as he came to shore!

Faith gives a title to heaven--but death gives a possession of heaven! Death brings us to the end of our sorrow, and the beginning of our joy! Death is the entrance into a blessed eternity!

"Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom!"

Luke 12:32

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First she looked--and then she lusted!

"Watch!" Mark 13:37

Many have lost heaven, for lack of watchfulness.

Our hearts are ready to decoy us into sin, and the devil lies in ambush with his temptations.

We must every day keep sentinel in our souls.

"I will stand upon my watch." Habakkuk 2:1.

Watch your eyes! "I made a covenant with my eyes." Job 31:1. Much sin comes in by the eye.

First Eve saw that the tree was good for food, and pleasant to the eyes--then she took and ate

it! First she looked--and then she lusted. The eye, by beholding an impure object, sets the heart on fire. The devil often creeps in, at the window of the eye! Watch your eyes!

Watch your ears! Much poison is conveyed through the ear. Let your ear be open to God--and shut to sin!

Watch your hearts! "The human heart is most deceitful and desperately wicked." Jeremiah 17:9.

Watch your heart when you are about holy things--it will be slipping out to vanity. When Christ had been praying and fasting, the devil tempted Him. Mt. 4:3.

After combating with Satan in prayer, we are apt to grow secure and take our spiritual armor off--and then the devil falls on us and wounds us!

Watch your hearts when you are in bad company.

The breath of the wicked is infectious. Nay, watch your hearts when you are in good company. The devil is subtle, and he can as well creep into the dove--as he did once into the serpent. Satan tempted Christ by an apostle.

Watch your hearts in prosperity. Now you are in danger of pride! The higher men's estates rise--the higher their hearts are lifted up in pride. It is hard to carry a full cup without spilling. Just so, it is hard to carry a full, prosperous estate without sinning.

As Samson fell asleep in Delilah's lap--so many have fallen so fast asleep in the lap of prosperity,

that they never awoke until they awoke in hell!

Oh, if you would get to heaven, be always upon your watch-tower! Keep close sentinel in your souls. Who would not watch--when it is for a glorious kingdom!

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The Delilah in the bosom!

If you would not come short of the kingdom of heaven, take heed of indulging any sin. One millstone will drown, as well as more. One sin lived in will damn, as well as more.

If any one sin reigns--it will keep you from reigning in the kingdom of heaven.

Especially keep from sins of your natural constitution; your darling sin. "I kept myself from my iniquity"--that sin which my heart would soonest decoy and flatter me into. As in the hive there is one master bee--so in the heart there is one master-sin. Oh, take heed of this!

How may this darling-sin be known?

1. That sin for which a man cannot endure the arrow of a reproof, is the bosom-sin. Men can be content to have other sins declaimed against; but if a minister puts his finger upon the sore, and touches upon that one special sin--then their eyes flash with fire, they are enraged, and spit the venom of malice!

2. That sin which a man's heart runs out most to, and he is most easily captivated by--is the Delilah in the bosom!

One man is overcome with wantonness, another by worldliness.

It is a sad thing for a man to be so bewitched by a beloved sin

that he will part with the whole kingdom of heaven--to gratify that lust!

3. That sin which a man is least inclined to part with, is the endeared sin. Of all his sons, Jacob could most hardly part with Benjamin. "Will you take Benjamin away!" Gen 42:35. So says the sinner, "This and that sin I have left--but must Benjamin go too? Must I part with this delightful sin? That goes to my heart!"

Take heed especially of this master-sin. The strength of sin lies in the beloved sin, which, like a cancer striking at the heart, brings death.

I have read of a monarch, who being pursued by the enemy, threw away the crown of gold on his head--that he might run the faster. Just so, the sin which you wore as a crown of gold must be thrown away--that you may run the faster to the kingdom of heaven.

Oh, if you would not lose glory, mortify the beloved sin! Set it, as Uriah--in the forefront of the battle to be slain. By plucking out this right eye--you will see the better to go to heaven!

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The world's golden sands!

"Do not love the world or anything in the world.

If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him." 1 John 2:15

If you would not fall short of the kingdom of heaven, take heed of worldly-mindedness. A covetous spirit chokes holy affections, as the earth puts out the fire.

"The riches of the world, are the snares of the devil!"

Riches are golden snares! If a man were to climb up a steep rock, and had weights tied to his legs--it would hinder him in his ascent. Just so, many golden weights will hinder us from climbing up the steep rock which leads to heaven.

The world is no friend to grace. The more the babe sucks--the weaker the mother is. Just so, the more the world sucks--the weaker our grace is.

Had a man a monopoly of all the wealth of the world; could he heap up riches to the stars--yet his heart would not be filled. Covetousness is never satisfied.

Joshua could stop the course of the sun--but could not stop Achan in his covetous pursuit of the wedge of gold.

He whose heart is locked up in his chest, will be locked out of heaven!

Some ships which have escaped the rocks--have been wrecked upon the sands. Just so, many who have escaped gross sins--have been wrecked upon the world's golden sands!

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An eyesore to the damned in hell

"There will be weeping there, and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown out!" Luke 13:28

A great aggravation of the loss of heaven will be to look upon others who have gained the kingdom. The

happiness of the godly in heaven, will be an eyesore to the damned in hell. When the wicked shall see those whom they hated and scorned--exalted to the kingdom, and shine with robes of glory, and they themselves miss the kingdom--it will be a dagger at the heart, and make them gnash their teeth for envy!

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The prosperity of the wicked

"I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. This is what the wicked are like--always carefree, they increase in wealth. Surely in vain have I kept my heart pure; in vain have I washed my hands in innocence."

Psalm 73:3, 12-13

The children of God have little cause to envy the prosperity of the wicked. They may have all they can desire; nay, they may have "more than heart can wish." Psalm 73:7. They steep themselves in pleasure! "They sing to the music of tambourine and harp; they make merry to the sound of the flute." Job 21:12. The wicked are high--when God's people are low in the world.

The goats scramble up the mountains of prosperity; when Christ's sheep are below in the valley of tears!

The wicked are clothed in purple; while the godly are in sackcloth. The prosperity of the wicked is a great stumbling block. But there is no cause to

envy them, if we consider two things:

First--that this is all they have! "Son, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things"--you had all your heaven here.

Secondly--that God has laid up better things for His children. He has prepared a kingdom of glory for them! They shall have the beatific vision; they shall be crowned with the pleasures of paradise forever! Oh, then do not envy the fleeting prosperity of the wicked!

The wicked go through a pleasant way--to execution!

The godly go through a foul way--to coronation!

See how happy all the saints are at death! They go to a kingdom! They shall see God's face, which shines ten thousand times brighter than the sun in its meridian glory. The godly at death shall be installed into their honor, and have the royal crown set upon their head.

They have in the kingdom of heaven--the quintessence of all delights. They shall lie in Christ's bosom, that bed of spices.

There is such a pleasant variety in the happiness of heaven, that after millions of years it will be as fresh and desirable as the first hour's enjoyment! In the kingdom of heaven, the saints are crowned with all those perfections which they are capable of. The desires of the glorified saints are infinitely satisfied; there is nothing absent which they could wish might be enjoyed; there is nothing present which they could wish

might be removed.

In the kingdom of heaven there is . . .

knowledge without ignorance,

holiness without sin,

beauty without blemish,

strength without weakness,

light without darkness,

riches without poverty,

ease without pain,

liberty without restraint,

rest without labor,

joy without sorrow,

love without hatred,

plenty without surfeit,

honor without disgrace,

health without sickness,

peace without discord,

contentment without cessation,

glory in its highest elevation!

Oh, the happiness of those who die in the

Lord! They go into this blessed kingdom!

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True faith

True faith is joined with holiness. As a little  
musk sweetens, so a little faith purifies. Though  
faith does but touch Christ--it fetches a healing  
virtue from Him. Justifying faith does that in a

spiritual sense, which miraculous faith does--it  
removes the mountains of sin, and casts them  
into the sea of Christ's blood!

True faith is prolific. It brings forth fruit; it has  
Rachel's beauty--and Leah's fruitfulness. Faith is  
full of good works. It believes as if it did not work  
--and it works as if it did not believe. Faith is the  
spouse-like grace which marries Christ; and good  
works are the children which it bears!

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The fire, the worm, the prison are eternal!

"And they will go away into eternal punishment,  
but the righteous into eternal life." Matthew 25:46

See what opposite ways, the godly and the wicked go  
at death! The godly go to a glorious kingdom; the  
wicked go to a loathsome prison! The devil is the jailer,  
and they are bound with the chains of darkness. Jude 6.  
What are these chains? Not iron chains--but worse; the  
chain of God's decree, decreeing them to righteous  
torment; and the chain of God's power, whereby He  
binds them fast under eternal wrath!

The deplorable condition of impenitent sinners, is that  
when they die--they go to a dreadful dungeon. Oh,  
think what horror and despair will possess the wicked,  
when they see themselves engulfed in misery, and their  
condition hopeless, helpless, endless! They are in a fiery  
prison--and there is no possibility of getting out!

A servant under the law, who had a hard master--at every seventh year might go free. But in hell there is no year of release when the damned shall go free--the fire, the worm, the prison are eternal!

If the whole world, from earth to heaven, were filled with grains of sand, and once in a thousand years an angel should come and fetch away one grain--how many millions of ages would pass before that vast heap of sand would be spent! Yet, if after all this time the sinner might come out of hell, there would be some hope. But this word "forever!" breaks the heart with despair!

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My sweet pomegranate wine

"Christ's love compels us." 2 Corinthians 5:14

True love to love God turns the soul into a seraphim; it makes it burn in a flame of affection. Love is the truest touchstone of sincerity.

Love is the queen of the graces; it commands the whole soul. If our love to God is genuine, we let Him have the supremacy of our love. We will set Him in the highest place of our soul. We will give Him the purest of our love. "I would give You spiced wine to drink, my sweet pomegranate wine." Canticles 8:2.

If the spouse had anything better--a cup more juicy and spiced--Christ would drink of that!

We give the creature the milk of our love;  
but God gets the cream!

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No serpent of sin will breed there

"Nothing impure will ever enter it." Revelation 21:27

The kingdom of heaven excels all other kingdoms in holiness. Earthly kingdoms are for the most part unholy; there is a common sore of luxury and uncleanness running in them. Earthly kingdoms are stages for sin to be acted on.

"All the tables are covered with vomit and there is not a spot without filth." Isaiah 28:8. But the kingdom of heaven is so holy--that it will not mix with any corruption. It is so pure a soil--that no serpent of sin will breed there. There, beauty is not stained with lust, and honor is not swelled with pride.

Holiness is the brightest jewel of the crown of heaven.

"Nothing impure will ever enter it." Revelation 21:27

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What would the damned in hell

give, for one hour's sleep!

"Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath!"

1 Thessalonians 1:10

In the kingdom of heaven--we shall be freed from the torments of hell.

Consider the multiplicity of those torments.

In this life, the body is usually exercised with only one pain at one time; but in hell there is a diversity of torments. There is . . .

darkness to affright,

fire to burn,

a lake of sulphur to choke,  
chains to bind, and  
the worm to gnaw!

The torments of hell will seize upon every part of the body and soul. The eye shall be tortured with the sight of devils; and the tongue that has sworn so many oaths, shall be tortured. "Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue." Luke 16:24.

The memory will be tormented to remember the mercies that have been abused, and seasons of grace neglected.

The conscience will be tormented with self-accusations.

The pains of hell are unmitigated, with no mixture of mercy. In this life, God in anger remembers mercy. But in hell there is no alleviation or lessening of the pains.

In hell, there is no oil of mercy to assuage the sufferings of the damned.

In the pains of hell, there is no intermission. "The smoke of their torment rises forever and ever, and they will have no rest day or night!" Rev 14:11. What would the damned in hell give, for one hour's sleep! They are perpetually on the rack. There is no expiration in the pains of hell; they must always lie scorching in flames of wrath!

But in the heavenly kingdom, the elect shall be freed from all infernal torments. "Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath!" A prison is not made for the King's children. Christ drank that bitter cup of God's wrath--

that the saints might never drink it!

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### Desiring God

We may know the kingdom of grace is set up in our hearts--by having true desires after God. By the beating of this pulse--we conclude there is life.

A true desire after God is sincere. We desire God for Himself, for His intrinsic excellencies. The savor of the ointment of Christ's graces draws the virgins' desires after Him. Canticles 1:3. A true saint desires God not only for what He has--but for what He is; not only for His rewards --but for His holiness. No hypocrite can thus desire God.

He may desire Him for His jewels--but not for His beauty!

A true desire after God is insatiable. It cannot be satisfied without God; let the world heap her honors and riches--they will not satisfy. No flowers or music will content him who is thirsty. Just so, nothing will quench the soul's thirst--but the blood of Christ! He faints away, his heart breaks with longing for God. Psalm 84:2; Psalm 119:20.

A true desire after God is active. It flourishes into endeavor.

"With my soul have I desired you in the night; yes, with my spirit within me will I seek you early." Isaiah 26:9. A soul that desires aright says, "I must have Christ! I must have grace! I must have heaven, though I take it by storm!"

A true desire after God is supreme. We desire Christ, not only more than the world--but more than heaven! "Whom have I in heaven but You?" Psalm 73:25. Heaven itself would

not satisfy--without Christ. Christ is the diamond in the ring of glory!

A true desire after God is increasing. A little of God will not satisfy--but the pious soul desires still more. A drop of water is not enough for the thirsty traveler. Though a Christian is thankful for the least degree of grace--yet he is not satisfied with the greatest degree of grace. He still thirsts for more of Christ, and His Spirit. A saint would have more knowledge, more sanctity, more of Christ's presence. A glimpse of Christ through the lattice of an ordinance is sweet; but the soul will never stop longing--until it sees Him face to face! It desires to have grace perfected in glory! It desires to be wholly plunged into the sweetness of God. We would be swallowed up in God, and be forever bathing ourselves in those perfumed waters of pleasure, which run at His right hand!

Surely this sincere desire after God is a blessed sign that the kingdom of grace has come into our hearts. The beating of this pulse shows life! "Desires for God--are from God." If iron moves upwards contrary to its nature--it is a sign some magnet has been drawing it. Just so, if the soul moves towards God in sincere desires--it is a sign the magnet of the Spirit has been drawing it!

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Satan's workshop!

"May Your kingdom come." Matthew 6:10

When we pray, "May Your kingdom come," we pray that the kingdom of grace may come into our hearts.

"The kingdom of God is within you." Luke 17:21.

Why is grace called a kingdom? Because, when grace comes, there is a kingly government set up in the soul. Grace rules the will and affections, and brings the whole man in subjection to Christ. Grace . . .

kings it in the soul,

sways the scepter,

subdues mutinous lusts, and

keeps the soul in a spiritual decorum.

Unless the kingdom of grace is set up in our hearts--our purest offerings are defiled. They may be good as to the matter--but not as to the manner; they lack that which would meliorate and sweeten them.

Until the kingdom of grace is in our hearts, our good works do not purify us--but we pollute them! Even the prayer of an ungracious person is sin. "The Lord hates the sacrifice of the wicked." Proverbs 15:8.

A sinner's best works are 'opera mortua'--dead works! And those works which are dead, cannot please God. A dead flower has no sweetness. Hebrews 11:6.

Unless the kingdom of grace is set up in our hearts--we are loathsome in God's eyes. "My soul loathed them."

Zech 11:8. A heart void of grace looks blacker than hell. Sin transforms man into a devil. So deformed is a graceless person, that when once he sees his own filth and leprosy, the first thing he does is to loathe and abhor himself. "You shall loathe yourself in your

own sight for all your evils!" Ezekiel 20:43.

Unless the kingdom of grace is set up in our hearts--we are of the bastard brood of the old serpent--and so cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven! "You are the children of your father the Devil!" John 8:44.

Unless the kingdom of grace is set up in our hearts--the kingdom of Satan is set up in them! They are said to be under "the power of Satan." Acts 26:18. Satan commands the will--by his subtle temptations he can draw it. He is said to take men captive "at his will."

2 Tim 2:26.

The sinner's heart is the devil's mansion-house. "I will return into my house." Matthew 12:44. The sinner's heart is Satan's workshop, where he works. "Satan, the mighty prince of the power of the air, who now works in the children of disobedience." Eph 2:2. The members of the body are the tools with which Satan works. He possesses men. In Christ's time many had their bodies possessed--but it is far worse to have the souls possessed. One is possessed with an impure devil, another with a revengeful devil, another with a covetousness devil, etc.

The ship goes full sail when the wind blows. Just so, men go full sail in sin when the devil, the prince of the air, blows them! Thus, until the kingdom of grace comes--men are under the power of Satan, who writes all his laws in blood.

Unless the kingdom of grace is set up in our hearts--we are exposed to the wrath of God. What will it be--when

God stirs up all His anger? So inconceivably torturing is God's wrath, that the wicked call to the rocks and mountains to fall on them and hide them from it. Rev 6:16. The hellish torments are compared to a fiery lake. Rev 20:15. Other fire is but painted fire--in comparison with this! This lake of fire burns forever. Mark 9:44. God's breath kindles this fire. Isa 30:33. Where shall we find buckets to quench it? Time will not finish it; tears will not quench it. To this fiery lake men are doomed--until the kingdom of grace is set up in them.

Hell follows death!

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He welcomes them to hell

"The prince of this world." John 16:11

The devil has a kingdom. His throne is set up in the hearts of men. Satan does not care for their purses--but their hearts! Satan's empire is very large. Most people in the world pay tribute to him.

His kingdom has two characters:

[1] Satan's kingdom is a kingdom of IMPIETY.

Nothing but sin goes on in his kingdom. Murder and heresy, lust and treachery, oppression and division--are the constant trade driven in his dominions. He is called "the unclean spirit."

Nothing else but iniquity is propagated in his kingdom.

[2] Satan's kingdom is a kingdom of SLAVERY.

He makes all his subjects--slaves. The sinner is

held captive under the grim tyranny of the devil!

Satan is a tyrant--and a worse tyrant than any other! Other tyrants do but rule over the body: but Satan rules over the soul! He rides his captives--as we ride upon horses.

Other tyrants have some pity on their slaves. Though they make them work in the galleys; yet they give them food, and let them have their hours for rest. But Satan is a merciless tyrant--who gives his slaves poison instead of food, and hurtful lusts to feed on! 1 Tim 6:9.

Nor will he let his slaves have any rest--he wearies them out to do his drudgery. "They weary themselves to commit iniquity." Jer 9:5.

When men have served him to their utmost strength--he welcomes them to hell with fire and brimstone! Thus he is the worst of tyrants. Men are willing slaves to Satan! They will fight and die for him! Therefore he is not only called "the prince of this world," but "the god of this world" (2 Cor 4:4), to show what power he has over men's souls.

O let us pray that "they may come to their senses and escape the Devil's trap, having been captured by him to do his will." 2 Timothy 2:26

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Sharp arrows!

"Our Father in heaven." Matthew 6:9

If God is our Father, then however He treats His children, is done in love. If He frowns; if He dips His pen in gall, and writes bitter things; if He disciplines--it is all done in love! "For the Lord disciplines the one He loves, and punishes every son whom He receives." Hebrews 12:6

A father loves his child as well when he chastises and disciplines him--as when he settles his inheritance on him! "Those whom I love--I rebuke and discipline." Rev 3:19. "Afflictions are sharp arrows--but they are shot from the hand of a loving Father!"

Correction is God's gymnasium. Correction is God's school of character. God afflicts His children--in love! He does it to humble and purify. Gentle correction is as necessary as daily bread! There is love in all! God smites--that He may save! "God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in His holiness." Heb. 12:10

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The epitome of misery!

Hell is the epitome of misery!

Surely sin must be the greatest evil--which separates us from the greatest good.

"Depart from Me, you who are cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his demons." Matthew 25:41

"Depart from Me."

Why, sinners might plead, "Lord, if we must depart from You, let us have Your blessing."

"No! Depart--you who are cursed."

"Lord, if we must depart from You, let it be into some place of ease and rest."

"No! Depart into fire!"

"Lord, if we must go into fire, let it be for a short time--let the fire be quickly put out."

"No! Go into everlasting fire!"

"Lord, if it is so, that we must be there, let us be with good company."

"No! Go with the devil and his demons!"

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We have no inherent power

"Deliver us from evil." Matthew 6:13

To keep us from falling into sin, let us be much in prayer. We have no inherent power to keep ourselves from sin. Let us pray the prayers of David,

"Hold me up--and I shall be safe!" Psalm 119:117.

"Hold up my goings in your paths, that my footsteps slip not." Psalm 17:5. "Keep back Your servant from presumptuous sins." Psalm 19:13.

The child is safe in the father's arms. Just so, we are only safe from falling into sin--while we are held up in the arms of Christ and free grace! "I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of My hand!" John 10:28

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What an odious thing

What an odious thing sin is! Sin is the accursed thing.

Josh 7:13. It is the abominable thing which God hates.

"Oh do not this abominable thing that I hate." Jer 44:4.

Sin is called filthiness. James 1:21. If all the evils in the world were put together, and their essence strained out, they could not make a thing so filthy as sin is! So odious is a sinner, that God loathes the sight of him. "My soul loathed them!" Zech 11:8.

He who defiles himself with avarice, what is he but a serpent licking the dust!

He who defiles himself with lust, what is he but a swine with a man's head!

He who defiles himself with pride, what is he but a bubble which the devil has blown up!

He who defiles himself with drunkenness, what is he but a staggering beast!

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Remedies and antidotes against sin

"Your Word have I hid in my heart--that I might not sin against You." Psalm 119:11

If you would be kept from the evil of sin--be well versed in Scripture. The Word is a two-edged sword, to cut asunder men's lusts!

When the fogs and vapors of sin begin to rise, let but the light of Scripture shine in the soul,

and it dispels them.

The Word shows the damnable evil of sin. It also furnishes us with precepts, which are so many remedies and antidotes against sin. When Christ had a temptation to sin, he beat back the tempter, and wounded him three times with the sword of the Spirit! "It is written!"

"Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly."

Colossians 3:16

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He is always fishing for our souls

"Be careful! Watch out for attacks from the Devil, your great enemy. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for some victim to devour!" 1 Peter 5:8

Satan continually lies in ambush, and watches to draw us to sin. The devil stands girded for battle. He is always fishing for our souls.

He is either laying snares--or shooting darts.

Therefore we have need to watch him--that we be not decoyed into sin.

Most sin is committed for lack of watchfulness.

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Watch your eyes!

If we would be kept from actual sins--let us be careful to avoid all the inlets and occasions of sin.

Do not run into evil company. He who would not

catch the plague--must not go into an infected house.

Guard your senses, which may be the inlets to sin.

Keep the two portals, the eye and the ear. Especially guard your eyes. Much sin comes in by the eye; the eye is often an inlet to sin; sin takes fire at the eye.

The first sin in the world, began at the eye. "When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye--she took some and ate it." Genesis 3:6. Looking begat lusting! Intemperance begins at the eye. Looking on the wine when it is red and gives its color in the glass, causes excess of drinking. Proverbs 23:31.

Covetousness begins at the eye. "When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and a wedge of gold, I coveted them and took them." Josh 7:21.

The fire of lust begins to kindle at the eye. David walking upon the roof of his house saw a woman washing herself, and she was, says the text, "beautiful to look upon," and he sent messengers and took her, and defiled himself with her. 2 Samuel 11:2.

Therefore watch your eyes! Job made a covenant with his eyes. Job 31:1. If the eye is once inflamed, it will be hard to stand out long against sin. If the outworks are taken by the enemy, there is great danger of the whole castle being taken.

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There is no fear of God before their eyes!

"Through the fear of the Lord, a man avoids evil."

Proverbs 16:6

If you would be kept from actual sins--get the fear of God planted in your hearts. The fear of God is a bridle to sin--and a spur to holiness. The fear of God puts a holy awe upon the heart and binds it to godly behavior. When the Empress Eudoxia threatened to banish Chrysostom, "Tell her," said he, "I fear nothing but sin!" The fear of God stands as a porter at the door of the soul, and keeps sin from entering.

All sin is committed for lack of the fear of God. "Their throat is an open grave; they deceive with their tongues.

Vipers' venom is under their lips. Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood; ruin and wretchedness are in their paths, and the path of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes!" Romans 3:13-18. Holy fear stands sentinel, and is ever watching against carnal security, pride, and wantonness. The fear of God is the Christian's lifeguard to defend him against the fiery darts of temptation!

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God's love tokens

"Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline."

Revelation 3:19

Afflictions are God's love tokens. Afflictions are sharp

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