**PEARLS from PHILPOT**

(Choice formatted selections  
from the works of J. C. Philpot)

Volume 1

Volume 2

Volume 3

Volume 4

Volume 5

Volume 6

Volume 7

Volume 8

Volume 9

Volume 10

Volume 11

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**Man's religion & God's religion**

"That no flesh should glory in His presence."   
1Co 1:29

**Man's religion** is to build up the creature.  **God's religion** is to throw the creature down in   
the dust of self-abasement, and to glorify Christ.

**What a mystery are you!**   
  
"So I find this law at work—When I want to do  
good, evil is right there with me." Rom 7:21  
 **Are you not often a mystery to yourself?**  
  
Warm one moment—cold the next!  
  
Abasing yourself one hour—  
exalting yourself the following!  
  
Loving the world, full of it, steeped up to   
your head in it today—crying, groaning, and   
sighing for a sweet manifestation of the love   
of God tomorrow!  
  
Brought down to nothingness, covered with  
shame and confusion, on your knees before   
you leave your room—filled with pride and self  
importance before you have got down stairs!  
  
Despising the world, and willing to give it all   
up for one taste of the love of Jesus when in   
solitude—trying to grasp it with both hands   
when in business!  
  
**What a mystery are you!**   
  
Touched by love—and stung with hatred!  
  
Possessing a little wisdom—and a great deal of folly!  
  
Earthly minded—and yet having the affections in heaven!  
  
Pressing forward—and lagging behind!  
  
Full of sloth—and yet taking the kingdom with violence!  
  
And thus the Spirit, by a process which we may feel   
but cannot adequately describe—leads us into the  
**mystery of the two natures** perpetually struggling   
and striving against each other in the same bosom.   
So that one man cannot more differ from another,  
than **the same man differs from himself.**   
  
But the mystery of the kingdom of heaven is this—  
that our carnal mind undergoes no alteration, but   
maintains a perpetual war with grace. And thus,   
the deeper we sink in self abasement under a   
sense of our vileness, the higher we rise in a   
knowledge of Christ, and the blacker we are in   
our own view—the more lovely does Jesus appear.

**What stupid blockheads!**

"**Are you still so dull?**" Jesus asked them.   
Mat 15:16  
  
What lessons we need day by day to teach   
us anything aright, and how it is for the most  
part, "line upon line, line upon line—here a   
little, and there a little." O . . .  
what slow learners!  
what dull, forgetful scholars!  
what ignoramuses!  
**what stupid blockheads!**  
what stubborn pupils!   
  
Surely no scholar at a school, old or young,   
could learn so little of natural things as we seem

to have learned of **spiritual things** after . . .   
so many years instruction,  
so many chapters read,  
so many sermons heard, so many prayers put up,  
so much talking about religion.  
  
How small, how weak is the amount of   
growth—compared with all we have read   
and heard and talked about!  
  
But it is a mercy that the Lord saves whom   
He will save—and that we are saved by free   
grace—and free grace alone!

**Take me as I am with all my sin and shame**  
  
"Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed;   
save me, and I shall be saved." Jer 17:14  
  
Here is this **sin!** Save me from it!   
  
Here is this **snare!** Break it to pieces!   
  
Here is this **lust!** Lord, subdue it!   
  
Here is this **temptation!** Deliver me out of it!   
  
Here is **my proud heart!** Lord, humble it!   
  
Here is **my unbelieving heart!** Take it away,   
and give me faith; give me submission to   
Your mind and will.  
  
**Take me as I am with all my sin and   
shame** and work in me everything well  
pleasing in Your sight.

**Nothing but a huge clod of dust**  
  
"Set your affection on things above—not   
on things on the **earth**." Col 3:2  
  
Everything upon earth, as viewed by the eyes   
of the Majesty of heaven—is base and paltry.   
  
Earth is after all, **nothing but a huge clod of   
dust**, and as such, as insignificant in the eyes   
of its Maker as the small dust of the balance,   
or the drop of the bucket.   
  
What, then, are . . .  
its highest objects,   
its loftiest aims,   
its grandest pursuits,  
its noblest employments,  
in the sight of Him who inhabits   
eternity; but base and worthless?   
  
Vanity is stamped on all earth's attainments.  
  
All earthly pursuits and high accomplishments . . .  
wealth,  
rank,   
learning,  
power, or  
pleasure,  
**end in death!**  
  
The breath of God's displeasure soon   
lays low in the grave all that is rich   
and mighty, high and proud.  
  
But that effectual work of grace on the heart,   
whereby the chosen vessels of mercy are   
delivered from the power of darkness and   
translated into the kingdom of God's dear   
Son, **calls them out of . . .**  
those low, groveling pursuits,  
those earthly toys,  
those base and sensual lusts in which other  
men seek at once their happiness and their ruin.

**How can they escape?**   
  
"He will keep the feet of His saints."   
1Sa 2:9  
  
The Lord sees His poor scattered pilgrims   
traveling through a valley of tears—journeying   
through a waste-howling wilderness—a path   
beset with baits, traps, and snares in every   
direction.   
  
**How can they escape?**   
  
Why, the Lord 'keeps their feet'. He carries them   
through every rough place—as a tender parent   
carries a little child. When about to fall—He   
graciously lays His everlasting arms underneath   
them. And when tottering and stumbling, and   
their feet ready to slip—He mercifully upholds   
them from falling altogether.   
  
But do you think that He has not different **ways**   
for different **feet**? The God of creation has not   
made two flowers, nor two leaves upon a tree   
alike—and will He cause all His people to walk   
in precisely the same path? No. We have . . .  
each our path,   
each our troubles,  
each our trials,  
each peculiar traps and snares laid for our feet.   
  
And the wisdom of the all-wise God is shown by His   
eyes being in every place—marking the footsteps of   
every pilgrim—suiting His remedies to meet their   
individual case and necessity—appearing for them   
when nobody else could do them any good—watching   
so tenderly over them, as though the eyes of His   
affection were bent on one individual—and carefully   
noting the goings of each, as though all the powers   
of the Godhead were concentrated on that one   
person to keep him from harm!

**God will meet all your needs**  
  
"And my **God will meet all your needs** according   
to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus." Php 4:19  
  
Until we are brought into the depths of poverty,  
we shall never know nor value Christ's riches.  
  
If, then, you are a child of God, a poor and   
needy soul, a tempted and tried believer in   
Christ, "**God will meet all your needs.**"   
  
They may be very great.   
  
It may seem to you, sometimes, as though there   
were not upon all the face of the earth **such a   
wretch as you**—as though there never could be  
a child of God in your state . . .  
so dark,  
so stupid,  
so blind and ignorant,  
so proud and worldly,  
so presumptuous and hypocritical,  
so continually backsliding after idols,  
so continually doing things that you  
know are hateful in God's sight.  
  
But whatever your need be—it is not beyond the   
reach of divine supply! And the deeper your need,   
the more is Jesus glorified in supplying it.   
  
Do not say then, that . . .  
your case is too bad,  
your needs are too many,   
your perplexities too great,   
your temptations too powerful.   
  
No case can be too bad!  
  
No temptations can be too powerful!  
  
No sin can be too black!  
  
No perplexity can be too hard!  
  
**No state in which the soul can get, is beyond   
the reach of the almighty and compassionate   
love, that burns in the breast of the Redeemer!**

**That sympathizing, merciful, feeling,   
tender, and compassionate heart**  
  
"For we do not have a High Priest who is unable   
to sympathize with our infirmities." Heb 4:15  
  
The child of God, spiritually taught and convinced,   
is deeply sensible of his infirmities. Yes, that he is   
encompassed with infirmities—that he is nothing else   
but infirmities. And therefore the great High Priest   
to whom he comes as a burdened sinner—to whom   
he has recourse in the depth of his extremity—and   
at whose feet he falls overwhelmed with a sense   
of his helplessness, sin, misery, and guilt—is so   
suitable to him as one able to sympathize with   
his infirmities.  
  
We would, if left to our own conceptions, naturally  
imagine that Jesus is too holy to look down in   
compassion on a filthy, guilty wretch like ourselves.   
  
Surely, surely, He will spurn us from His feet. Surely,   
surely, His holy eyes cannot look upon us in our . . .  
blood,   
guilt,  
filth,  
wretchedness,  
misery,  
and shame.   
  
Surely, surely, He cannot bestow . . .  
one heart's thought,  
one moment's sympathy,  
or feel one spark of love   
towards those who are so unlike Him.  
  
Nature, sense, and reason would thus argue,   
"I must be holy—perfectly holy—for Jesus to love;   
I must be pure—perfectly pure—spotless and   
sinless, for Jesus to think of. But . . .  
that I, a sinful, guilty, defiled wretch;  
that I, encompassed with infirmities;  
that I, whose heart is a cage of unclean birds;  
that I, stained and polluted with a thousand iniquities;  
that I can have any inheritance in Him—or that He can   
have any love or compassion towards me—nature, sense,   
reason, and human religion in all its shapes and forms,   
revolts from the idea."  
  
It is as though Jesus specially address Himself to the   
poor, burdened child of God who feels his infirmities,   
who cannot boast of his own wisdom, strength,   
righteousness, and consistency—but is all weakness   
and helplessness. It seems as if He would address   
Himself to the case of such a helpless wretch—and   
pour a sweet cordial into his bleeding conscience.  
  
We, the children of God—we, who each knows his own   
plague and his own sore—we, who carry about with us   
day by day a body of sin and death, that makes us   
lament, sigh, and groan—we, who know painfully what   
it is to be encompassed with infirmities—we, who come   
to His feet as being nothing and having nothing but sin   
and woe—"we do not have a High Priest who is unable   
to sympathize with our infirmities," but One who carries   
in His bosom that . . . **sympathizing,  
merciful,  
feeling,  
tender, and  
compassionate heart.**

**Why are you cast down, O my soul?**  
  
"**Why are you cast down, O my soul?** Why so   
disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for   
I will yet praise Him, my Savior and my God."  
Psa 42:11  
  
Do you forget, O soul, that the way to heaven   
is a very strait and narrow path—too narrow for   
you to carry your sins in it with you?  
  
God sees it good that you should be cast down.   
  
You were getting very **proud**, O soul.   
  
The **world** had gotten hold of your heart.   
  
You were seeking great things for yourself.   
  
You were secretly roving away from the Lord.   
  
You were too much lifted up in SELF.  
  
The Lord has sent you these trials and difficulties   
and allowed these temptations to fall upon you,   
to bring you down from your state of false security.   
  
There is reason therefore, even to praise God   
for being cast down, and for being so disturbed.   
  
How this opens up parts of God's Word which   
you never read before with any feeling.   
  
How it gives you sympathy and communion   
with the tried and troubled children of God.   
  
How it weans and separates you from dead professors.  
  
How it brings you in heart and affection,  
out of the world that lies in wickedness.   
  
And how it engages your thoughts, time after time,   
upon the solemn matters of eternity—instead of being   
a prey to every idle thought and imagination, and   
tossed up and down upon a sea of vanity and folly.   
  
But, above all, when there is a sweet response from   
the Lord, and the power of divine things is inwardly   
felt, in enabling us to hope in God, and to praise His   
blessed name—then we see the benefit of being cast   
down and so repeatedly and continually disturbed.  
  
"**Why are you cast down, O my soul?** Why so   
disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for   
I will yet praise Him, my Savior and my God."  
Psa 42:11

**Treasure in earthen vessels**  
  
"But we have this **treasure in earthen vessels**."  
2Co 4:7  
  
Do not be surprised if you feel that in yourself   
you are but an earthen vessel—if you are made   
deeply and daily sensible of your frail body.  
  
Do not be surprised . . .  
if your clay house is often tottering;  
if sickness sometimes assails your mortal tabernacle;  
if in your flesh there dwells no good thing;  
if your soul often cleaves to the dust; and   
if you are unable to retain a sweet sense   
of God's goodness and love.   
  
Do not be surprised nor startled . . .  
at the corruptions of your depraved nature;  
at the depth of sin in your carnal mind;  
at the vile abominations which lurk and work   
in your deceitful and desperately wicked heart.   
  
Bear in mind that it is the will of God that this   
**heavenly treasure** which makes you rich for   
eternity, should be **lodged in an earthen vessel.**   
  
We have ever to feel our native weakness—and   
that without Christ we can do nothing—that we may  
be clothed with humility, and feel ourselves the   
chief of sinners, and less than the least of all saints.   
  
We thus learn to prize the heights, breadths,   
lengths, and depths of the love of Christ, who   
stooped so low to raise us up so high!

**All trials, all temptations,   
all strippings, all emptyings**

The very **trials** and **afflictions**, and the sore   
**temptations** through which God's family pass,   
all eventually endear Christ to them.

And depend upon it, if you are a child of God,   
you will sooner or later, in your travels through   
this wilderness, find your need of Jesus as "able   
to save to the uttermost."

There will be such things in your heart, and such   
feelings in your mind—the temptations you will   
meet with will be such—that nothing short of a   
Savior that is able to save to the uttermost   
can save you out of your desperate case and   
felt circumstances as utterly lost and helpless.

This a great point to come to. **All trials, all   
temptations, all strippings, all emptyings**   
that do not end here are valueless—because   
they lead the soul away from God.

But the convictions, the trials, the temptations,   
the strippings, the emptyings, that bring us to   
this spot—that **we have nothing**, and **can do   
nothing**, but the Lord alone must do it all—these   
have a blessed effect, because they eventually   
make Jesus very near and dear unto us.

**No fear!**  
  
"There is **no fear** of God before their eyes."  
Rom 3:18  
  
Those who have every reason to fear as to   
their eternal state before God, have for the   
most part, **no fear** at all. They are secure,   
and free from doubt and fear.  
  
The depths of human hypocrisy,   
the dreadful lengths to which profession may go,   
the deceit of the carnal heart,   
the snares spread for the unwary feet,   
the fearful danger of being deceived at the last;  
these traps and pitfalls are not objects of anxiety   
to those dead in sin.   
  
As long as they can pacify natural conscience,   
and do something to soothe any transient   
conviction—**they are glad to be deceived!**  
  
**God does not see fit to disturb their quiet.**   
He has no purpose of mercy towards them;   
they are not subjects of His kingdom;  
they are not objects of His love.   
  
He therefore leaves them carnally secure, as   
in a dream—from which they will not awake   
until the day of judgment.

**These difficulties . . .**  
  
"From all your idols will I cleanse you." Eze 36:25  
  
When there are no **crosses**, **temptations**, or **trials**,   
a man is sure to go out after and cleave to idols.   
  
It matters not what experience he has had. If once he   
ceases to be plagued and tried, he will be setting up   
his household gods in the secret chambers of his heart.   
  
Profit or pleasure, self-indulgence or self-gratification,  
will surely, in one form or another, engross his thoughts,   
and steal away his heart.   
  
Nor is there anything too trifling or insignificant to   
become an idol. Whatever is meditated on preferably   
to God—whatever is desired more than He—whatever   
more interests us, pleases us, occupies our waking   
hours, or is more constantly in our mind—becomes   
an idol, and a source of sin.   
  
It is not the **magnitude** of the idol, but its **existence**as an object of worship—that constitutes idolatry. I have   
seen some 'Burmese idols' not much larger than my hand;   
and I have seen some 'Egyptian idols' weighing many tons.  
But both were equally idols—and the comparative size had  
nothing to do with the question.   
  
So spiritually, **an idol is not to be measured by its size,**or its relative importance or non-importance. A flower may   
be as much an idol to one man, as a chest full of gold to   
another.   
  
If you watch your heart, you will see idols rising and setting   
all day long, nearly as thickly as the stars by night.   
  
But God sends . . .  
trials,  
difficulties,  
temptations,  
besetments,  
losses,  
afflictions,   
to pull down these idols—or rather   
to pull away our hearts from them.  
  
**These difficulties . . .**  
pull us out of fleshly ease,  
make us cry for mercy,   
pull down all rotten props,  
hunt us out of false refuges, and  
strip us of vain hopes and delusive expectations.

**Idolatry!**   
  
"They tell how you turned to God from **idols**   
to serve the living and true God." 1Th 1:9  
  
Nothing is too small or too insignificant   
which, at times, may not be an idol.  
  
**What is an idol?**   
Something my carnal mind loves.  
  
How may I know whether my carnal mind loves it?   
When we think of it, and are very much pleased with   
it. We pet it, love and fondle it, dallying and playing   
with it, like a mother with her babe. See how she   
takes the little thing and gazes at it. Her eyes are   
fixed on it—she dotes upon it because she loves it.   
  
Thus we may know an idol if we examine our own  
hearts—by what our imagination, desires and secret   
thoughts are going out after.  
  
Instead of being spiritually minded, having his   
heart and affections in heaven, he has something   
in his mind which it is going out after—something   
or other laying hold of the affections.  
  
The child of God has, more or less, all these evil  
propensities working within. **There is idolatry in   
every man's heart.** How deep this idolatry is   
rooted in a man's heart! How it steals upon his   
soul! Whatever is indulged in—how it creeps over   
him, until it gets such power that it becomes master.   
  
A man does not know himself—if he does not   
know what power this idolatry has over him.   
  
None but God can make the man know it—and   
when the Lord delivers him, he then turns to   
God and says, "What a vile wretch I have been!   
What a monster to go after these idols, loving   
this thing, and that. A wretch—a monster of   
iniquity, the vilest wretch that ever crawled   
on the face of God's earth—for my wicked  
heart to go out after these idols!"  
  
When the soul is brought down to a sense of its   
vileness and loathsomeness—and God's patience   
and forbearance—it turns to God from idols, to   
serve the only living and true God, who pardons   
the idolater.

**Through the inward conflicts,   
secret workings**  
  
**Through the inward conflicts, secret workings**,   
mysterious changes, and ever-varying exercises   
of his soul, the true Christian becomes established   
in a deep experience of . . .  
his own folly and God's wisdom,  
his own weakness and Christ's strength,  
his own sinfulness and the Lord's goodness,  
his own backslidings and the Spirit's recoveries,  
his own base ingratitude and Jehovah's patience,  
the aboundings of sin and the super-aboundings of grace.   
  
He thus becomes daily more and more confirmed in . . .  
the vanity of the creature,  
the utter helplessness of man,  
the deceitfulness and hypocrisy of the human heart,  
the sovereignty of distinguishing grace,  
the fewness of heaven-taught ministers,  
the scanty number of living souls,  
and the great rareness of true religion.

**Wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores**  
  
"The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.   
From the sole of the foot even unto the head, there   
is no soundness in it—but only **wounds, and bruises,   
and putrefying sores**. They have not been closed,   
neither bound up, neither soothed with ointment."  
Isa 1:5-6  
  
Every thought, word, and action is polluted by sin.   
  
Every mental faculty is depraved.   
  
The **will** chooses evil.  
  
The **affections** cleave to earthly things.  
  
The **memory**, like a broken sieve,   
retains the bad and lets fall the good.  
  
The **judgment**, like a bribed or drunken judge,   
pronounces mindless or wrong decisions.  
  
The **conscience**, like an opium eater, lies   
asleep and drugged in stupefied silence.   
  
When all these 'master faculties of the mind' are   
so drunken and disorderly—need we wonder that   
the bodily members are a godless, rebellious crew?  
  
Lusts call out for gratification.  
  
Unbelief and infidelity murmur.  
  
Tempers growl and mutter.  
  
Every bad passion strives hard for the mastery.   
  
**O the evils of the human heart**, which, let loose,   
have **filled earth with misery, and hell with victims;**

which deluged the world with the flood—burnt   
Sodom and Gomorrah with fire from heaven—and   
are ripening the world for the final conflagration!   
  
**Every sin** which . . .  
has made this fair earth a 'present hell';  
has filled the air with groans; and  
has drenched the ground with blood;  **dwells in your heart and mine!**  
  
Now, as this is opened up to the conscience by the   
Spirit of God—we feel indeed to be of all men most   
sinful and miserable—and of all **most guilty, polluted,   
and vile.** But it is this—and nothing but this—which   
cuts to pieces our 'fleshly righteousness, wisdom, and   
strength'—which slays our delusive hopes—and lays us   
low at the footstool of mercy—without one good thought,   
word, or action to propitiate an angry Judge.   
  
It is this which brings the soul to this point—   
that **if saved, it can only be saved by the   
free grace, sovereign mercy, and tender   
compassion of Almighty God.**

**The** **wilderness wanderer**  
  
"**They wandered in the wilderness** in a solitary  
way; they found no city to dwell in." Psa 107:4  
  
The true Christian finds this world to be a wilderness.   
  
There is no change in the world itself.   
  
The change is in the man's heart.   
  
**The** **wilderness wanderer** thinks it altered—a   
different world from what he has hitherto known . . .  
his friends,  
his own family,  
the employment in which he is daily engaged,  
the general pursuits of men—  
their cares and anxieties,  
their hopes and prospects,  
their amusements and pleasures, and   
what I may call 'the general din and whirl of life',   
all seem to him different to what they were—and   
for a time perhaps he can scarcely tell whether the   
change is in them, or in himself.   
  
This however is the prominent and uppermost feeling  
in his mind—that he finds himself, to his surprise—a   
**wanderer in a world** which has changed altogether its   
appearance to him. The fair, beautiful world, in which was   
all his happiness and all his home—has become to him   
a dreary wilderness.   
  
Sin has been fastened in its conviction on his conscience.   
The Holy Spirit has taken the veil of unbelief and ignorance   
off his heart. He now sees the world in a wholly different   
light–and instead of a paradise it has become a wilderness—  
for sin, dreadful sin, has marred all its beauty and happiness.  
  
It is not because the world itself has changed that the Christian  
feels it to be a wilderness—but because he himself has changed.  
  
There is nothing in this world which can really gratify or satisfy   
the true Christian. What once was to him a happy and joyous   
world has now become a barren wilderness.   
  
The scene of his former . . .  
pursuits,  
pleasures,  
habits,  
delights,  
prospects,  
hopes,  
anticipations of profit or happiness—  
is now turned into a barren wasteland.   
  
He cannot perhaps tell how or why the change has   
taken place, but he feels it—deeply feels it. He may   
try to shake off his trouble and be a little cheerful   
and happy as he was before—but if he gets a little   
imaginary relief, all his guilty pangs come back upon   
him with renewed strength and increased violence.  
  
God means to make the world a wilderness to every   
child of His, that he may not find his happiness in it,  
but be a stranger and a pilgrim upon earth.

**Temptation**  
  
"The Lord knows how to deliver the godly  
out of **temptations**." 2Pe 2:9  
  
Few will sincerely and spiritually go to the Lord,   
and cry from their hearts to be delivered from the   
power of a **temptation**—until it presses so weightily   
upon their conscience, and lies so heavy a burden   
upon their soul, that none but God can remove it.   
  
But when we really feel the burden of a **temptation**;  
when, though our flesh may love it, our spirit hates   
it—when, though there may be in our carnal mind a   
cleaving to it, our conscience bleeds under it, and   
we are brought spiritually to loathe it and to loathe   
ourselves for it—when we are enabled to go to the   
Lord in real sincerity of soul and honesty of heart,   
beseeching Him to deliver us from it—I believe, that   
the Lord will, sooner or later, either remove that   
**temptation** entirely in His providence or by His grace,   
or so weaken its power that it shall cease to be what   
it was before, drawing our feet into paths of darkness   
and evil.   
  
As long, however, as we are in that state of which   
the prophet speaks, "**Their heart is divided**—now   
shall they be found faulty" (Hos 10:2)—as long   
as we are in that carnal, wavering mind, which James   
describes—"A double minded man is unstable in all   
his ways;" as long as we are hankering after the   
**temptation**, casting longing, lingering side glances   
after it, rolling it as a sweet morsel under our tongue;   
and though conscience may testify against it, yet not   
willing to have it taken away, there is . . .  
no hearty cry,   
nor sigh,   
nor spiritual breathing of our soul,   
that God would remove it from us.   
  
But when we are brought, as in the presence of a heart-  
searching God, to hate the evil to which we are tempted;   
and cry to Him that He would—for His honor and for our   
soul's good—take the **temptation** away, or dull and   
deaden its power—sooner or later the Lord will hear   
the cry of those who groan to be delivered from those   
**temptations**, which are so powerfully pressing them   
down to the dust.

**Idling life away like an idiot or a madman**  
  
**When one is spiritually reborn**, he   
sees at one and the same moment . . .  
God and self,  
justice and guilt,  
power and helplessness,  
a holy law and a broken commandment,  
eternity and time,  
the purity of the Creator, and   
the filthiness of the creature.   
And these things he sees—not merely as   
declared in the Bible—but as revealed in   
himself as personal realities, involving all   
his happiness or all his misery in time and   
in eternity. Thus it is with him **as though   
a new existence** had been communicated,   
and as if for the first time he had found   
there was a God!  
  
**It is as though all his days he had been asleep**,   
and were now awakened—asleep upon the top of   
a mast, with the raging waves beneath—**as if all   
his past life were a dream**, and the dream were   
now at an end. He has been . . .  
hunting butterflies,  
blowing soap bubbles,  
fishing for minnows,  
picking daisies,  
building houses of cards, and  
**idling life away like an idiot or a madman**.   
  
He had been perhaps wrapped up in a religious  
profession—advanced even to the office of a deacon,   
or mounted in a pulpit. He had learned to talk about   
Christ, and election, and grace, and fill his mouth   
with the language of Zion.   
  
But what did he experimentally know of these   
things? **Nothing, absolutely nothing!**  
  
**Ignorant of his own ignorance** (of all kinds of   
ignorance the worst)—he thought himself rich,  
and increased with goods, and to have need of   
nothing—and knew not that he was wretched,   
and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

**This wily devil!**  
  
What a foe to one's peace is one's own spirit!  
What shall I call it? It is often an infernal spirit.   
Why? Because it bears the mark of Satan upon it.  
  
The pride of our spirit,  
the presumption of our spirit,  
the hypocrisy of our spirit,  
the intense selfishness of our spirit,  
are often hidden from us.  
  
**This wily devil**, SELF, can wear such  
masks and assume such forms!  
  
**This serpent**, SELF, can so creep and crawl,  
can so twist and turn, and can disguise itself  
under such false appearances—that it is often   
hidden from ourselves.  
  
Who is the greatest enemy we have to fear? We all  
have our enemies. **But who is our greatest enemy?**  
  
He whom you carry in your own bosom—your daily,  
hourly, and unmovable companion, who entwines  
himself in nearly every thought of your heart—who . . .  
sometimes puffs up with pride,  
sometimes inflames with lust,  
sometimes inflates with presumption, and  
sometimes works under pretend humility and fleshly holiness.  
  
God is determined to stain the pride of human glory.  
He will never let SELF, (which is but another word for  
the creature,) wear the crown of victory. It must be  
crucified, denied, and mortified.

**To bathe in the ocean of endless bliss!**  
  
"Blessed are those whose strength is in You,  
who have set their hearts on pilgrimage.   
As they pass through the Valley of Baca, ("weeping")  
they make it a place of springs;  
the autumn rains also cover it with pools.   
They go from strength to strength,  
until each appears before God in Zion."   
Psa 84:5-7  
  
Every living soul that has been experimentally taught   
his lost condition—that has known something of a resting  
place in Christ—that has turned his back upon both the   
world and the professing church—and gone weeping   
Zionward, that he may . . .  
live in Jesus  
feel His power,  
taste His love,  
know His blood,  
rejoice in His grace;   
every such soul shall, like Israel of old, be borne safely   
through this waste howling wilderness—shall be carried   
through this valley of tears—and taken to enjoy eternal   
bliss and glory in the presence of Jesus—**to bathe in the   
ocean of endless bliss!**

**Your eyes will see the King in His beauty!**  
  
"**Your eyes will see the King in His beauty!**"   
Isa 33:17  
  
Where in heaven or on earth can there be found such   
a lovely Object as the Son of God? If you have never   
seen any beauty in Jesus . . .  
you have never seen Jesus,  
He has never revealed Himself to you,  
you never had a glimpse of His lovely face,  
nor a sense of His presence,  
nor a word from His lips,  
nor a touch from His hand.   
  
But if you have seen Him by the eye of faith—and   
He has revealed Himself to you even in a small   
measure—you have seen a beauty in Him beyond   
all other beauties, for it is . . .  
a holy beauty,  
a divine beauty,  
the beauty of His heavenly grace,  
the beauty of His uncreated and eternal glory.  
  
How beautiful and glorious does He show Himself to be   
in His atoning blood and dying love. Even as sweating   
great drops of blood in Gethsemane's gloomy garden,   
and as hanging in torture and agony upon Calvary's   
cross—faith can see a beauty in the glorious Redeemer,   
even in the lowest depths of ignominy and shame!  
  
"How is your Beloved better than others?"  
"My Beloved is dark and dazzling, better   
than ten thousand others!" Son 5:9-10

**Can the Ethiopian change his skin?**  
  
"**Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the   
leopard its spots?** Neither can you do good   
who are accustomed to doing evil."   
Jer 13:23  
  
**Before the soul can know anything about salvation**,   
it must learn deeply and experimentally the nature of   
sin—and of itself, as stained and polluted by sin.   
  
The soul is **proud**—and needs to be humbled.  
  
The soul is **careless**—and needs to be awakened.  
  
The soul is **alive**—and needs to be killed.  
  
The soul is **full**—and requires to be emptied.  
  
The soul is **whole**—and needs to be wounded.  
  
The soul is **clothed**—and requires to be stripped.  
  
**The soul is, by nature . . .**  
self-righteous,   
self-seeking,  
buried deep in worldliness and carnality,  
utterly blind and ignorant,  
filled with . . .  
presumption,   
arrogance,   
conceit,   
and enmity.  
  
It hates all that is heavenly and spiritual.   
  
Sin, in all its various forms, is its natural element.   
  
**To make man the direct opposite of what he originally is . . .**  
to make him love God—instead of hating Him;  
to make him fear God—instead of mocking Him;  
to make him obey God—instead of rebelling against Him;   
to make him to tremble at His dreadful majesty—  
instead of defiantly charging against Him;  
to do this mighty work, and to effect this wonderful   
change—requires the implantation of a new nature by   
the immediate hand of God Himself!  
  
"**Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the   
leopard its spots?** Neither can you do good   
who are accustomed to doing evil."   
Jer 13:23

**That Heavenly Teacher**  
  
We do not learn that we are **sinners** merely  
by reading it in the Bible. It must be wrought—  
I might say, burnt into us.   
  
Nor will anyone sincerely and spiritually cry for   
**mercy**—until sin is spiritually felt and known . . .  
in its misery,  
in its dominion,  
in its guilt,  
in its entanglements,  
in its wiles and allurements,  
in its filth and pollution, and  
in its condemnation.   
  
**Where the Holy Spirit works**, He kindles . . .  
sighs,  
groans,  
supplications,  
wrestlings, and pleadings   
to know **Christ**, feel His love, taste the efficacy   
of His atoning blood, and embrace Him as all   
our salvation and all our desire.   
  
And though there may, and doubtless will be,   
much barrenness, hardness, deadness, and   
apparent carelessness often felt—still **that   
heavenly Teacher** will revive His work—though   
often by painful methods—nor will He let the   
quickened soul rest short of a personal and   
experimental enjoyment of Christ and His   
glorious salvation.

**Preserving grace before regeneration**  
  
"To those who have been **called**,   
who are **loved** by God the Father   
and **preserved** in Jesus Christ."   
Jude 1

What a mercy it is for God's people that before   
they have a 'vital union' with Christ—before they  
are grafted into Him experimentally—they have an   
'eternal, immanent union' with Him before all worlds.   
It is by virtue of this eternal union that they come   
into the world . . .  
at such a time,  
at such a place,  
from such parents,  
under such circumstances,   
as God has appointed.   
  
It is by virtue of this eternal union that the circumstances   
of their lives are ordained. By virtue of this eternal union   
they are **preserved in Christ before they are effectually   
called**.  **They cannot die until God has brought about a vital   
union with Christ!**   
  
Whatever **sickness** they may pass through—whatever  **injuries** they may be exposed to—whatever **perils** assault   
them on sea or land—**die they will not, die they cannot;**  
until God's purposes are executed in bringing them into   
a vital union with the Son of His love.   
  
Thus, this eternal union watched over every circumstance   
of their birth, watched over their childhood, watched over   
their manhood, watched over them until the appointed   
time and spot, when "the God of all grace," according to   
His eternal purpose, was pleased to quicken their souls,   
and thus bring about an experimental union with the Lord   
of life and glory.

**Free!**  
  
"If the Son sets you **free**, you will be **free indeed**."  
Joh 8:36  
  
To be made **free** implies a liberty from the **WORLD**   
and the spirit of covetousness in the heart. If we   
were to follow into their shops some who talk much   
of 'gospel liberty', we might find that the world's   
fetter had not been struck off their heart—that they  
had a 'golden' chain, though invisible to their own   
eyes, very closely wrapped round their heart.   
  
And there is a being made **free** from the power of **SIN**.   
I greatly fear, if we could follow into their holes and   
corners, and secret chambers, many who prattle about   
gospel liberty, we would find that sin had not yet lost   
its hold upon them, that there was some secret or open   
sin that entangled them, that there was . . .  
some lust,  
some passion,  
some evil temper,  
some wretched pride or other,  
that wound its fetters very close round their heart.   
  
And also there is a being made **free** from **SELF** . . .  
proud self,  
presumptuous self,  
self-exalting self, flesh-pleasing self,  
hypocritical self,  
self in all its various shapes and turns,  
self in all its crooked hypocrisy and windings.   
  
"If the Son sets you **free**, you will be **free indeed**."

**These fugitive, transitory things**   
  
"The world and its desires pass away, but the man   
who does the will of God lives forever." 1Jn 2:17  
  
There is a **reality** in true religion, and indeed,   
rightly viewed, a reality in nothing else. For every   
other thing passes away like a dream of the night,   
and comes to an end like a tale that is told. Now   
you cannot say of a thing that passes away and   
comes to an end—that it is real. It may have the   
appearance of reality—when in fact it is but a shadow.   
  
Money, jewels, pictures, books, furniture, securities,   
are transitory. Money may be spent, jewels be lost,   
books be burnt, furniture decay, pictures vanish by   
time and age, securities be stolen.   
  
Nothing is real but that which has an **abiding** substance.   
  
**Health** decays,   
**strength** diminishes,   
**beauty** flees the cheek,   
**sight** and **hearing** grow dim,   
the **mind** itself gets feeble,   
**riches** make to themselves wings and flee away,   
**children** die,   
**friends** depart,   
**old age** creeps on,   
and **life** itself comes to a close.   
  
**These fugitive, transitory things** are then mere shadows.  
There is no substance, no enduring substance in them. They   
are for time, and are useful for a time. Like our daily food   
and clothing, house and home—they support and solace us  
in our journey through life. But there they stop—when life   
ends they end with it.   
  
But real religion—and by this I understand the work of God   
upon the soul—abides in death and after death, goes with   
us through the dark valley, and lands us safe in a blessed   
eternity. It is, therefore, the only thing in this world of   
which we can say that it is **real**.  
  
"The world and its desires pass away, but the man   
who does the will of God lives forever." 1Jn 2:17

**A sad motley mixture**

(The following is an excerpt from Philpot's letter to   
a church which desired him to come as their pastor)  
  
"I am less than the least of all God's people."   
Eph 3:8  
  
"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;  
of whom I am the worst." 1Ti 1:15

**Many are foolishly apt to think that a minister is more   
spiritual than anyone else**. But I am daily more and more   
sensible of the desperate wickedness of my deceitful heart,   
and my miserable ruined state as a sinner by nature and by   
practice. I feel utterly unworthy of the name of a Christian,   
and to be ranked among the followers of the Lamb.  
  
**I have no desire to palm myself off on any church**, as   
though I were anything. I am willing to take a low place.   
  
The more you see of me, you will be sure to find out more of   
my infirmities, failings, waywardness, selfishness, obstinacy,   
and evil temper. I am carnal, very proud, very foolish in   
imagination, very slothful, very worldly, dark, stupid, blind,   
unbelieving and ignorant.   
  
I cannot but confess that **I am a strange compound**—**a sad   
motley mixture** of all the most hateful and abominable vices   
that rise up within me, and face me at every turn.

**When You shall enlarge my heart.**  
  
"I will run the way of Your commandments, **when**  
**You shall enlarge my heart.**" Psa 119:32  
  
The Word of God is full of precepts—but we are totally   
unable to perform them in our own strength. **We cannot,   
without divine assistance, perform the precept . . .**  
with a single eye to the glory of God,  
from heavenly motives, and  
in a way acceptable to the Lord,   
without special power from on high.   
  
We need an extraordinary power to be put forth in our   
hearts—a special work of the Spirit upon the conscience,   
in order to spiritually fulfill in the slightest degree, the  
least of God's commandments.   
  
**None but the Lord Himself can enlarge the heart   
of His people.** None but the Lord can expand their   
hearts Godwards, and remove that narrowedness   
and contractedness in divine things—which is the   
plague and burden of a God-fearing soul.   
  
When the Lord is absent,   
when He hides His lovely face,   
when He does not draw near to visit and bless,   
the heart contracts in its own narrow compass.  
  
But when the Lord is pleased to favor the soul with His   
own gracious presence, and bring Himself near to the   
heart, His felt presence opens, enlarges, and expands   
the soul—so as to receive Him in all His love and grace.

**Our refuge!**  
  
"The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my   
deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take   
**refuge**. He is my shield and the horn of my   
salvation—my stronghold." Psa 18:2  
  
On every side are hosts of **enemies** ever   
invading our souls—trampling down every   
good thing in our hearts—accompanied by   
a flying troop of temptations, doubts, fears,  
guilt and bondage sweeping over our soul.   
**And we, as regards our own strength,**

**are helpless against them.**   
  
But there is a **refuge** set before us in the   
gospel of the grace of God. The Lord Jesus   
Christ, as King in Zion, is there held up   
before our eyes as . . .  
the Rock of **our refuge**,  
our strong Tower,  
our impregnable Fortress;   
and we are encouraged by every precious promise   
and every gospel invitation when we are overrun   
and distressed by these wandering, ravaging,   
plundering tribes—to flee unto and find a safe  **refuge** in Him.  
  
"Keep me safe, O God, for in You I take **refuge**."  
Psa 16:1  
  
"O Lord my God, I take **refuge** in You; save   
and deliver me from all who pursue me."  
Psa 7:1

**Supernatural light**  
  
"For **God**, who commanded the light to shine out   
of darkness, **has shined in our hearts**, to give   
the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in   
the face of Jesus Christ." 2Co 4:6  
  
Until, then, this **supernatural light** of God   
enters into the soul, a man has no saving   
knowledge of Jehovah. He may . . .  
say his prayers,  
read his Bible, attend preaching,  
observe ordinances,   
bestow all his goods to feed the poor,   
or give his body to be burned;  
**but he is as ignorant of God as   
the cattle that graze in the fields!**   
  
He may—call himself a Christian, and be   
thought such by others—talk much about   
Jesus Christ, hold a sound creed—maintain   
a consistent profession—pray at a prayer   
meeting with fluency and apparent feeling,   
stand up in a pulpit and contend earnestly   
for the doctrines of grace—excel hundreds   
of God's children in zeal, knowledge and   
conversation.  
  
And yet, if this ray of **supernatural light** has   
never shone into his soul—he is only twofold   
more the child of hell than those who make   
no profession!

**Little heathen?**  
  
(from Philpot's biography, written by his son)  
  
There was nothing my father mistrusted more  
than **'childhood piety.'** He insisted that children  
should never be taught or allowed to use the   
language of 'personal possession' in reference  
to God. To sing, for instance, "Rock of Ages,  
cleft for ME" or, "MY Jesus".  
  
Herein he was most logical. For **by early influence   
and example you can train up a child to be** . . .  
a little patriot,  
a little Catholic,  
a little Calvinist, or   
a little Bolshevist.   
  
But no power on earth can make him a child of God.

He took great care that we, his children, attended   
the means of grace, and never missed chapel or   
family prayers. **But he never expected us to be   
anything but little heathen**.We had, it is true,   
to be **well behaved** **little heathen**.If not, we got   
"the stick", or its equivalent.  
  
"Who were **born**, not of blood, nor of the will of the  
flesh, nor of the will of man—but **of God**." Joh 1:13

**My desire is . . .**  
to exalt the **grace** of God;  
to proclaim **salvation** through Jesus Christ alone;  
to declare the sinfulness, helplessness and  
hopelessness of **man** in a state of nature;  
to describe the living experience of the  
children of God in their . . .  
trials,  
temptations,  
sorrows,  
consolations  
and blessings.

**And how is he lost?**

"O visit me with Your salvation." Psa 106:4  
  
Salvation only suits the condemned—the lost.   
A man must be lost—utterly lost—before he   
can prize God's salvation.   
  
**And how is he lost?** **By . . .**  
losing all his religion,  
losing all his righteousness,  
losing all his strength,  
losing all his confidence,  
losing all his hopes,  
losing all that is of the flesh;  
losing it by its being taken from him,   
and stripped away by the hand of God.

**Wearied, torn, and half expiring**  
  
**The poor sheep has gone astray**; and having   
once left the fold, it is pretty sure to have gotten

into some strange place or other. It has fallen   
down a rock—or has rolled into a ditch—or is   
hidden beneath a bush—or has crept into a   
cave—or is lying in some deep, distant ravine,   
where none but an experienced eye and hand   
can find it out.   
  
Just so with the Lord's lost sheep. **They   
get into strange places.** They . . .  
fall off rocks,  
slip into holes,  
hide among the bushes, and  
sometimes creep off to die in caverns.   
  
When the sheep has gone astray, the shepherd   
goes after it to find it. Here he sees a footprint;   
there a little lock of wool torn off by the thorns.   
Every nook he searches—into every corner he looks–   
until at last he finds the poor sheep **wearied, torn,   
and half expiring**, with scarcely strength enough to   
groan forth its misery. The shepherd does not beat   
it home, nor thrust the goad into its back—but he   
gently takes it up, lays it upon his shoulder, and   
brings it home rejoicing.

**I am weak and ignorant, full of sin**  
**I am weak and ignorant, full of sin** and   
compassed with infirmity. But I bless God   
that He has in some measure shown me   
the power of eternal things, and by free   
and sovereign grace stopped me in that   
career of vanity and sin in which, to all   
outward appearance, I was fast hurrying  
down to the chambers of death.

**By the grace of God**  
  
"**By the grace of God I am what I am."**1Co 15:10  
  
What but sovereign grace—rich, free and   
super-abounding grace—has made the   
difference between you and the world   
who cannot receive Him?   
 **But for His divine operations upon your   
soul**, you would still be of the world, hardening   
your heart against everything good and godlike,   
walking on in the pride and ignorance of unbelief   
and self-righteousness, until you sank down into  
the chambers of death!

**The outpouring of the everlasting wrath of God**  
  
"The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all."   
Isa 53:6  
  
What heart can conceive, what tongue express   
what the holy soul of Christ endured when "the   
Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all?"  
  
In the garden of Gethsemane . . .  
what a load of guilt,  
what a weight of sin,  
what an intolerable burden of the wrath of God,  
did that sacred humanity endure, until the pressure   
of sorrow and woe forced the drops of blood to fall   
as sweat from His brow!  
  
When the blessed Lord was made sin (or a sin offering)   
for us, He endured in His holy soul all the pangs of . . .  
distress,  
horror,  
alarm,  
misery, and  
guilt that all the elect would have felt in hell forever  
as they would have experienced under **the outpouring   
of the everlasting wrath of God** . . .  
the anguish,   
the distress,   
the darkness,   
the condemnation,   
the shame,   
the guilt,   
the unutterable horror.  
  
What heart can conceive—what tongue express—the   
bitter anguish which must have wrung the soul of our   
suffering Substitute under this agonizing experience?

**Struggling against the power of sin?**  
  
How many poor souls are **struggling against the   
power of sin**, and yet never get any victory over it!   
  
How many are daily led captive by . . .  
the lusts of the flesh,  
the love of the world,  
and the pride of life,   
and never get any victory over them!   
  
How many fight and grapple with tears, vows,   
and strong resolutions against their besetting   
sins, who are still entangled and overcome by   
them again and again! **Now, why is this?**   
  
Because they do not know the secret of spiritual   
strength against, and spiritual victory over them.  
  
It is only by virtue of a living union with the  
Lord Jesus Christ—drinking into His sufferings   
and death—and receiving out of His fullness,   
that we can gain any victory over . . .  
the world,  
sin,  
death,  
or hell.   
  
Sin is never really or effectually subdued in any other way.   
  
It is not by legalistic strivings and earnest resolutions,   
vows, and tears—the vain struggle of 'religious flesh'   
to subdue 'sinful flesh'—that can overcome sin.   
  
But it is by a believing acquaintance with, and a   
spiritual entrance into the sufferings and sorrows   
of the Son of God—having a living faith in Him,   
and receiving out of His fullness supplies of grace   
and strength.

**The anointing**  
  
"But **the anointing** which you have received from  
Him abides in you." 1Jn 2:27  
  
All the powers of earth and hell are combined against   
this holy anointing, with which the children of God are   
so highly favored. But if God has locked up in the bosom   
of a saint one drop of this divine unction, that one drop   
is armor against . . .  
all the assaults of **sin**,  
all the attacks of **Satan**,  
all the enmity of **self**, and  
all the charms, pleasures, and amusements of the **world**.   
  
Waves and billows of **affliction** may roll over the soul—  
but they cannot wash away this holy drop of anointing oil.   
  
**Satan** may shoot a thousand fiery darts to inflame all   
the combustible material of our carnal mind—but all his   
fiery darts cannot burn up that one drop of oil which   
God has laid up in the depths of a broken spirit.   
  
The **world**, with all its charms and pleasures, and its   
deadly opposition to the truth of God, may stir up waves   
of ungodliness against this holy anointing—but all the   
powers of earth combined can never extinguish that   
one drop which God has Himself lodged in the depths   
of a believer's heart.   
  
And so it has been with all the dear saints of God.   
Not all their . . .  
sorrows,   
backslidings,  
slips,  
falls,  
miseries, and  
wretchedness,   
have ever—all combined, drunk up the anointing that   
God has bestowed upon them. If **sin** could have done  
it—we would have sinned ourselves into hell long ago;   
and if the **world** or **Satan** could have destroyed it or   
us—they would long ago have destroyed both. If **our   
carnal mind** could have done it—it would have swept   
us away into floods of destruction.   
  
But the anointing abides sure, and cannot be destroyed;   
and where once lodged in the soul, it is **secure against   
all the assaults of earth, sin, and hell.**   
  
"But **the anointing** which you have received from  
Him abides in you." 1Jn 2:27

**Can I be a child of God, and be thus?**  
  
Perhaps you are a poor, tempted creature—and   
your daily sorrow, your continual trouble is that   
you are so soon overcome—that . . .  
your temper,  
your lusts,  
your pride,  
your worldliness, and  
your carnal, corrupt heart  
are perpetually getting the mastery.   
  
And from this you sometimes draw bitter conclusions.   
You say, in the depth of your heart, "**Can I be a child   
of God, and be thus?** What mark have I of being in   
favor with God when I am so easily—so continually   
overcome?"  
  
But the Spirit reveals Christ—taking of the things of   
Christ, and showing them unto us—applying the word   
with power to our hearts, and bringing the sweetness,   
reality, and blessedness of divine things into our soul.   
It is only in this way that He overcomes all unbelief   
and infidelity, doubt and fear, and sweetly assures  
us that all is well between God and the soul.  
  
Faith keeps eyeing the atonement—faith looks not   
so much to sin, as to salvation from sin—at the way   
whereby sin is pardoned, overcome, and subdued.

**The truth shall make you free!**  
  
"You shall know the truth, and **the truth shall  
make you free!**" Joh 8:32  
  
To a spiritual mind, sweet and self-rewarding is the task, if   
task it can be called, of **searching the Word as for hidden   
treasure.** No sweeter, no better employment can engage  
heart and hands than, in the spirit of prayer and meditation,   
of separation from the world, of holy fear, of a desire to   
know the will of God and do it, of humility, simplicity,   
and godly sincerity—to seek to enter into those heavenly   
mysteries which are stored up in the Scriptures—and this,  **not to furnish the head with notions, but to feed the   
soul with the bread of life.**   
  
Truth, received in the love and power of it . . .  
informs and establishes the judgment,  
softens and melts the heart,  
warms and draws upward the affections,  
makes and keeps the conscience alive and tender;  
is the food of faith,   
is the strength of hope,   
is the main-spring of love.  
  
To know the truth is to be made blessedly free . . .  
free from error;  
free from the vile heresies which everywhere abound;  
free from presumption;  
free from self-righteousness;   
free from the curse and bondage of the law;  
free from the condemnation of a guilty conscience;  
free from a slavish fear of the opinion of men;  
free from the contempt of the world;  
free from the scorn of worldly professors;  
free from following a multitude to do evil;  
free from companionship with those who   
have a name to live, but are dead.   
  
"You shall know the truth, and **the truth shall  
make you free!**" Joh 8:32

**Sin cannot be subdued in any other way.**  
  
"The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by  
faith in the Son of God." Gal 2:20  
  
There is no way except by being spiritually immersed  
into Christ's death and life—that we can ever get a  
**victory over our besetting sins**. If, on the one hand,   
we have a view of a **suffering** Christ, and thus become   
immersed into His sufferings and death—the feeling,   
while it lasts, will subdue the power of sin.   
  
Or, on the other hand, if we get a believing view of   
a **risen** Christ, and receive supplies of grace out of   
His fullness—that will lift us above sin's dominion.   
  
If sin is powerfully working in us, we need one of   
these two things to subdue it.  
  
When there is a view of the sufferings and sorrows,   
agonies and death of the Son of God—power comes   
down to the soul in its struggles against sin—and   
gives it a measure of holy resistance and subduing   
strength against it.  
  
So, when there is a coming in of the grace and love   
of Christ—it lifts up the soul from the love and power   
of sin into a purer and holier atmosphere. **Sin cannot   
be subdued in any other way.** You must either be   
immersed into Christ's sufferings and death—or you   
must be immersed into Christ's resurrection and life.   
A sight of Him as **a suffering God**—or a view of Him as   
**a risen Jesus**—must be connected with every successful   
attempt to get the victory over sin, death, hell, and the   
grave.   
  
You may strive, vow, and repent—and what does it   
all amount to? You sink deeper and deeper into sin   
than before. Pride, lust, and covetousness come in   
like a flood—and you are swamped and carried away   
almost before you are aware!  
  
But if you get a view of a suffering Christ, or of a   
risen Christ—if you get a taste of His dying love—a   
drop of His atoning blood—or any manifestation of   
His beauty and blessedness—there comes from this   
spiritual immersion into His death or His life a subduing   
power—and this gives a victory over temptation and   
sin which nothing else can or will give.   
  
Yet I believe we are often many years learning this   
divine secret—striving to repent and reform, and cannot;   
until at last by divine teaching we come to learn a little   
of what the Apostle meant when he said, "The life I now   
live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God." And   
when we can get into this life of faith—this hidden life,   
then our affections are set on things above.   
  
There is no use setting to work by 'legal strivings'—they   
only plunge you deeper in the ditch. You must get Christ   
into your soul by the power of God—and then He will   
subdue—by His smiles, blood, love, and presence—every   
internal foe.

**Two kinds of repentance**  
  
"**Godly sorrow** brings repentance that leads to  
salvation and leaves no regret—but **worldly  
sorrow** brings death." 2Co 7:10  
  
There are **two kinds of repentance** which need to be   
carefully distinguished from each other, though they   
are often sadly confounded—**evangelical** repentance,   
and **legal** repentance.  
  
Cain, Esau, Saul, Ahab, Judas, all repented—but their   
repentance was the remorse of natural conscience—not   
the godly sorrow of a broken heart and a contrite spirit.   
They trembled before God as an angry judge—but were   
not melted into contrition before Him as a forgiving Father.  
They neither hated their sins nor forsook them—they  
neither loved holiness nor sought it.

Cain went out from the presence of the Lord;   
Esau plotted Jacob's death;   
Saul consulted the witch of Endor;   
Ahab put honest Micaiah into prison;   
and Judas hanged himself.   
  
How different from this forced and false repentance of   
a reprobate, is the repentance of a child of God—that true   
repentance for sin, that godly sorrow, that holy mourning   
which flows from the Spirit's gracious operations.   
  
This repentance does not spring from a sense of the wrath of   
God in a broken law—but from His mercy in a blessed gospel—  
from a view by faith of the sufferings of Christ in the garden   
and on the cross—from a manifestation of pardoning love;   
and is always attended with self-loathing and self-abhorrence,   
with deep and unreserved confession of sin and forsaking it,   
with most hearty, sincere, and earnest petitions to be kept   
from all evil, and a holy longing to live to the praise and   
glory of God.

**Have we nothing to give to Christ?**

**Yes!**  
Our sins,   
our sorrows,   
our burdens,   
our trials, and above all,  
the salvation and sanctification of our souls.   
  
**And what has He to give us?** What? Why . . .  
everything worth having, everything worth a moment's anxious thought,  
everything for time and eternity!

**After you have suffered a while**  
  
"But the God of all grace, who has called us unto   
His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, **after you have   
suffered a while**—make you perfect, establish,   
strengthen, settle you." 1Pe 5:10  
  
There is no divine establishment, no spiritual   
strength, no solid settlement—except by suffering.   
But after the soul has suffered, after it has felt   
God's chastising hand, the effect is . . .  
to perfect,  
to establish,  
to strengthen,  
and to settle it.

By suffering, a man becomes settled into a solemn   
conviction of the **character of Jehovah** as revealed   
in the Scripture, and in a measure made experimentally   
manifest in his conscience. He is settled in the persuasion   
that "all things work together for good to those who love   
God, and are the called according to His purpose"—in the   
firm conviction that everything comes to pass according   
to God's eternal purpose—and are all tending to the good   
of the Church, and to God's eternal glory.  
  
His soul, too, is settled down into a deep persuasion of   
the misery, wretchedness, and emptiness of the creature;   
into the conviction that the world is but a shadow—and   
that the things of time and sense are but bubbles that   
burst the moment they are grasped—that of all things   
sin is most to be dreaded—and the favor of God above

all things most to be coveted—that nothing is really worth   
knowing except Jesus Christ and Him crucified—that all   
things are passing away—and that he himself is rapidly   
hurrying down the stream of life, and into the boundless   
ocean of eternity.   
  
Thus he becomes settled in a knowledge of the truth,   
and his soul remains at anchor, looking to the Lord to   
preserve him here, and bring him in peace and safety   
to his eternal home.

**In this scene of confusion and distraction**  
  
"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness.   
We do not know what we ought to pray for—but the   
Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groans that words   
cannot express." Rom 8:26  
  
"We do not know what we ought to pray for." How   
often do we find and feel this to be our case . . .  
darkness covers our mind;  
ignorance pervades our soul;  
unbelief vexes our spirit;  
guilt troubles our conscience;  
a crowd of evil imaginations, or foolish or worse   
than foolish wanderings distract our thoughts;  
Satan hurls in thick and fast his fiery darts;  
a dense cloud is spread over the mercy-seat;  
infidelity whispers its vile suggestions,   
until, amid all this rabble throng, such confusion   
and bondage prevail that words seem idle breath,   
and prayer to the God of heaven but empty mockery.   
  
**In this scene of confusion and distraction**, when   
all seems going to the wreck—how kind, how gracious   
is it in the blessed Spirit to come, as it were, to the   
rescue of the poor bewildered saint, and to teach   
him how to pray and what to pray for.   
  
He is therefore said "to help our **weaknesses**," for   
these evils of which we have been speaking are not   
willful, deliberate sins, but wretched infirmities of   
the flesh. He helps, then, our infirmities—by subduing   
the power and prevalence of unbelief—by commanding   
in the mind a solemn calm—by rebuking and chasing   
away Satan and his fiery darts—by awing the soul with   
a reverential sense of the power and presence of God—   
by presenting Jesus before our eyes as the Mediator at   
the right hand of the Father—by raising up and drawing   
forth faith upon His Person and work, blood and   
righteousness—and, above all, by Himself interceding   
for us and in us "with groans that words cannot express."

**His own sore and his own afflictions**  
  
"When a prayer or plea is made by any of Your people   
Israel—each one aware of **his own sore and his own   
afflictions**, and spreading out his hands toward this   
Temple—then hear from heaven, Your dwelling place.   
Forgive, and deal with each man according to all he   
does, since You know his heart, for You alone know   
the hearts of men." 2Ch 6:29-30  
  
The man for whom Solomon prays is he who  
knows and feels, painfully feels, his "own sore"   
and his "own afflictions"—whose heart is indeed   
a grief to him—whose sins do indeed trouble him.   
  
How painful this sore often is!   
How it runs night and day!   
How full of ulcerous matter!  
How it shrinks from the probe!   
  
Most of the Lord's family have a "sore"—each   
some tender spot—something perhaps known   
to himself and to God alone—the cause of his   
greatest grief. It may be . . .  
some secret slip he has made,  
some sin he has committed,  
some word he has spoken, or  
some evil thing he has done.  
  
He has been entangled, and entrapped, and cast   
down—and this is his grief and his sore which he   
feels—and that at times deeply before God.   
  
For such Solomon prays, "then hear from heaven,   
Your dwelling place. Forgive, and deal with each   
man according to all he does, since You know his   
heart, for You alone know the hearts of men."  
Yes—God alone knows the heart—He knows   
it completely—and sees to its very bottom.

**What are we, when we have no trials?**  
  
The Lord has appointed **the path of sorrow** for the  
redeemed to walk in. Why? One purpose is to wean   
them from the world—another purpose is to show them   
the weakness of the creature—a third purpose is to   
make them feel the liberty and vitality of genuine   
godliness made manifest in their soul's experience.   
  
**What are we, when we have no trials?**   
Light,   
frothy,   
worldly-minded,   
carnal,   
frivolous.   
  
We may talk of the things of God, but they   
are at a distance—there are . . .  
no solemn feelings,  
no melting sensations,  
no real brokenness,  
no genuine contrition,  
no weeping at the divine feet,  
no embracing of Christ in the arms of affection.   
  
What can bring a man here? A few dry notions   
floating to and fro in his brain? That will never   
bring the life and power of vital godliness into   
a man's heart. It must be by being 'experimentally   
acquainted with trouble'. When he is led into the   
path of tribulation, he then begins to long after,   
and, in God's own time and way, he begins to   
drink into, the sweetness of vital godliness,   
made manifest in his heart by the power of God.  
  
When affliction brings a man down, it empties   
him of all his high thoughts, and lays him low   
in his own eyes.

**Spiritual poverty**  
  
"Blessed are the **poor in spirit**." Mat 5:5  
  
**Spiritual poverty** is a miserable feeling of soul-  
emptiness before God, an inward sinking sensation   
that there is nothing in our hearts spiritually good,   
nothing which can deliver us from the justly merited   
wrath of God, or save us from the lowest hell.   
  
To be **poor in spirit**, then, is to have this wretched   
emptiness of spirit, this nakedness and destitution   
of soul before God.  
  
He who has never thus known what it is to groan   
before the Lord with breakings forth of heart as a   
needy, naked wretch—he that has never felt his   
miserable destitution and emptiness before the   
eyes of a heart-searching God—has not yet   
experienced what it is to be **spiritually poor**.

**Satisfaction!**  
  
"I will **satisfy** her poor with bread." Psa 132:15  
  
What a sweetness there is in the word "satisfy!"   
  
The **world** cannot satisfy the child of God.   
Have we not tried, some of us perhaps for   
many years, to get some satisfaction from it?   
  
But can wife or husband satisfy us?   
Can children or relatives satisfy us?   
Can all the world calls good or great satisfy us?   
Can the pleasures of sin satisfy us?   
  
Is there not in all an aching void? Do we not reap   
dissatisfaction and disappointment from everything   
that is of the creature, and of the flesh? Do we not   
find that there is little else but sorrow to be reaped   
from everything in this world? There is little else to   
be gathered from the world but . . .  
disappointment,  
dissatisfaction,  
"vanity and vexation of spirit."   
  
The poor soul looks round upon the world and the   
creature—upon all the occupations, amusements   
and relations of life—and finds all one melancholy   
harvest—so that all it reaps is **sorrow, perplexity,   
and dissatisfaction**.  
  
Now when a man is brought here—to desire satisfaction,   
something to make him happy, something to fill up the   
aching void, something to bind up broken bones, bleeding   
wounds, and leprous sores—and after he has looked at   
everything—at doctrines, opinions, notions, speculations,   
forms, rites and ceremonies in **religion**—at the **world** with   
all its charms—and at **self** with all its varied workings, and   
found nothing but bitterness of spirit, vexation and trouble   
in them all, and thus sinks down a miserable wretch—why,   
then when the Lord opens up to him something of the bread   
of life, he finds a satisfaction in that which he never could   
gain from any other quarter.   
  
And that is the reason why the Lord so afflicts his people;   
why some carry about with them such weak, suffering   
bodies; why some have so many family troubles; why  
others are so deeply steeped in poverty; why others have   
such rebellious children; and why others are so exercised   
with spiritual sorrows that they scarcely know what will   
be the end.   
  
It is all for one purpose—to make them miserable out   
of Christ—dissatisfied except with gospel food—to render   
them so wretched and uncomfortable that God alone can   
make them happy, and alone can speak consolation to   
their troubled minds.

**The religion of a dead professor . . .**  
  
How different the religion of a child of God   
is, from the religion of a dead professor!   
  
**The religion of a dead professor . . .**  
begins in self, and ends in self;  
begins in his own wisdom, and ends in his own folly;  
begins in his own strength, and ends in his own weakness;  
begins in his own righteousness, and ends in his own damnation!   
  
There is in him never any going out of soul   
after God, no secret dealings with the Lord.   
  
But the child of God, though he is often faint, weary,   
and exhausted with many difficulties, burdens and   
sorrows—yet he never can be satisfied except in living   
union and communion with the Lord of life and glory.   
  
Everything short of that leaves him empty.   
  
All the things of time and sense leave a child of God   
unsatisfied. Nothing but vital union and communion   
with the Lord of life, to . . .  
feel His presence,  
taste His love,  
enjoy His favor,  
see His glory;  
nothing but this will ever satisfy the desires   
of ransomed and regenerated souls. This the   
Lord indulges His people with.

**Have we not leaned upon a thousand things?**   
  
"**If you lean on Egypt**, you will find it to   
be a stick that breaks beneath your weight  
and pierces your hand." Isa 36:6  
  
**Have we not leaned upon a thousand things?**   
And what have they proved? Broken reeds that   
have run into our hands, and pierced us . . .   
our own strength and resolutions,   
the world and the church,   
sinners and saints,   
friends and enemies,   
have they not all proved, more or less, broken reeds?   
The more we have **leaned** upon them, like a man   
leaning upon a sword, the more have they pierced   
our souls.   
  
The Lord Himself has to wean us . . .  
from the world,  
from friends,  
from enemies,  
from self,   
in order to bring us to **lean** upon Himself; and   
every prop He will remove, sooner or later, that   
we may **lean** wholly and solely upon His Person,  
love, blood, and righteousness.

**Poor, moping, dejected creatures**  
  
We are, most of us, **so fettered down by . . .**  
the chains of time and sense,  
the cares of life and daily business,  
the weakness of our earthly frame,  
the distracting claims of a family, and   
the miserable carnality and sensuality of our fallen nature,   
**that we live at best a poor, dragging, dying life.**   
  
Many of us are **poor, moping, dejected creatures**.  
  
We have . . .  
a variety of trials and afflictions,  
a daily cross and   
the continual plague of an evil heart.  
  
We know enough of ourselves to know that in SELF   
there is neither help nor hope, and never expect a   
smoother path, a better, wiser, holier heart. As then . . .  
the weary man seeks rest,  
the hungry man seeks food,  
the thirsty man seeks drink,  
and the sick man seeks health,   
so do we stretch forth our hearts and arms that we   
may embrace the Lord Jesus Christ, and sensibly   
realize union and communion with Him.   
He discovers the evil and misery of sin that we may   
seek pardon in His bleeding wounds and pierced side.  
  
He makes known to us our nakedness and shame,   
and, as such, our exposure to God's wrath, that we   
may hide ourselves under His justifying robe.  
  
He puts gall and wormwood into the world's choicest   
draughts, that we may have no sweetness but in and   
from Him.

**No sight, short of this**

"He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree."  
1Pe 2:24  
  
We beg of the Lord, sometimes, to give us . . .  
a broken heart,  
a contrite spirit,  
a tender conscience,  
and a humble mind.   
  
But it is only a view by faith of what the gracious   
Redeemer endured upon the cross, when He bore   
our sins in his own body with all their weight and   
pressure, and with all the anger of God due to them,   
that can really melt a hard, and break a stony heart.   
  
**No sight, short of this**, can make sin felt to be hateful;   
bring tears of godly sorrow out of the eyes, sobs of true   
repentance out of the breast, and the deepest, humblest   
confessions before God as to what dreadful sinners and   
base backsliders we have been before the eyes of His   
infinite Purity, Majesty, and Holiness.   
  
Oh, what hope is there for our guilty souls; what   
refuge from the wrath of God so justly our due;   
what shelter from the curse of a fiery law, except   
it be in the cross of Jesus?   
  
O for a view of Him revealed to the eyes of our   
enlightened understanding, as bearing our sins   
in His own body on the tree!

**The penetrating light of the Spirit**  
  
"For God . . . made **His light** shine in our hearts   
to give us the light of the knowledge of the   
glory of God in the face of Christ." 2Co 4:6  
  
"But you have **an anointing from the Holy One**,  
and all of you know the truth." 1Jn 2:20  
  
**The only saving light** is the light of God shining   
into the soul—giving us to see and know "the only   
true God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent."  
  
A man may have the clearest light in his judgment,   
and yet never have **the penetrating light of the Spirit**   
producing conviction in his soul. He may have the   
soundest knowledge of the doctrines of grace, and   
see the harmonious scheme of salvation—and yet   
never have by **divine teaching**, seen a holy God, nor   
have ever felt the spirituality of God's righteous law   
condemning him as a transgressor.   
  
If we do not have this **penetrating light of the   
Spirit**, we shall be sure to go astray. We shall . . .  
be entangled in some error,  
plunge into some heresy,  
imbibe some doctrine of devils,  
drink into some dreadful delusion,  
or fall into some dreadful sin, and  
have our faith shipwrecked forever.  
  
A false light can but wreck us on the rocks of   
presumption or despair. But the light of divine   
life in the soul is accompanied with all the   
graces of the Spirit. It is . . .  
the light of the glory of God,  
the light of Jesus' countenance,  
and the light of the Spirit's teaching,   
and therefore an infallible guide and guard.  
And this infallible pilot will guide the soul   
to whom it is given safe into the harbor of   
endless rest and peace.

**All true religion**  
  
Jesus is . . .  
our sun, and without Him all is darkness;   
our life, and without Him all is death;   
the beginner and finisher of our faith;   
the substance of our hope;  
the object of our love.  
  
It is the Spirit who quickens us . . .  
to feel our need of Christ;   
to seek all our supplies in Him and from Him;  
to believe in Him unto everlasting life,   
and thus live a life of faith upon Him.   
  
By His . . .  
secret teachings,  
inward touches,  
gracious smiles,  
soft whispers,  
sweet promises,   
manifestations of Christ's glorious Person and work,   
Christ's agonizing sufferings and dying love,   
the Holy Spirit draws the heart up to Christ.   
  
He thus wins our affections, and setting Christ  
before our eyes as "the chief among ten thousand   
and the altogether lovely One," draws out that love   
and affection towards Jesus which puts the world   
under our feet.   
  
**All true religion** flows from the Spirit's grace,   
presence and power.

**The regenerating operations of the Holy Spirit**  
  
From the very nature of the fall, it is impossible   
for a dead soul to . . .  
believe in God,   
know God,   
or love God.   
  
It must be quickened into spiritual life before it can   
savingly know the only true God. And thus there lies   
at the very threshold—in the very heart and core of   
the case—the absolute necessity of **the regenerating   
operations of the Holy Spirit** upon the soul.   
  
The very completeness and depth of the fall render the   
**regenerating work of the Holy Spirit** as necessary, as   
indispensable as the **redeeming work of the Son of God**.

**This hard school of painful experience**  
  
**In times of trial and darkness**, the saints and servants   
of God are instructed. They see and feel what the flesh   
really is, how alienated from the life of God—they learn   
in whom all their strength and sufficiency lie—they are   
taught that in them, that is, in their flesh, dwells no   
good thing—that no exertions of their own can maintain   
in strength and vigor the life of God—and that all they   
are and have, all they believe, know, feel, and enjoy,   
with all their ability, usefulness, gifts, and grace—flow   
from the pure, sovereign grace—the rich, free, undeserved,   
yet unceasing goodness and mercy of God.   
  
They learn in **this hard school of painful experience**   
their emptiness and nothingness—and that without Christ   
indeed they can do nothing. They thus become clothed   
with humility, that lovely, becoming garb—cease from   
their own strength and wisdom—and learn experimentally   
that Christ is, and ever must be, all in all to them, and   
all in all in them.

**Many difficulties, obstacles, and hindrances**  
  
"Oh, that we might know the Lord! Let us press  
on to know Him!" Hos 6:3  
  
The expression, "press on," implies that there are **many   
difficulties, obstacles, and hindrances** in a man's way,   
which keep him back from "knowing the Lord." Now the   
work of the Spirit in his soul is to carry him on in spite   
of all these obstacles—to lead him forward—to keep   
alive in him the fear of God—to strengthen him in his   
inner man—to drop in those hopes—to communicate   
that inward grace—so that he is compelled to press on.   
  
Sometimes he seems driven,   
sometimes drawn,   
sometimes led, and   
sometimes carried,   
but in one way or another the Spirit of God so   
works upon him that, though he scarcely knows   
how—he still "presses on."   
  
His very burdens make him groan for deliverance—his   
very temptations cause him to cry for help—the very   
difficulty and ruggedness of the road make him want   
to be carried every step—the very intricacy of the path   
compels him to cry out for a guide—so that the Spirit   
working in the midst of, and under, and through every   
difficulty and discouragement, still bears him through,   
and carries him on—and thus brings him through every   
trial and trouble and temptation and obstacle, until He   
sets him in glory.   
  
It is astonishing to me how our souls are kept alive.  
The Christian is **a marvel to himself**. Carried on, and   
yet so secretly—worked upon, and yet so mysteriously;  
and yet led on, guided, and supported through so many   
difficulties and obstacles—that he is **a miracle of mercy**  
as he is carried on amid all . . .  
difficulties,  
obstacles,  
trials, and  
temptations.

**The poison fang of sin!**  
  
We must go down into the depths of the fall   
to know what our hearts are, and what they are   
capable of—we must have the keen knife of God   
to cut deep gashes in our conscience and lay   
bare the evil that lies so deeply imbedded in   
our carnal mind—before we can enter into and   
experience the beauty and blessedness of   
salvation by grace.  
  
"From the sole of the foot even unto the head   
there is no soundness in it—but **wounds, and   
bruises, and putrefying sores**—they have not   
been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified   
with ointment." Isa 1:6  
  
When the Church of God fell in Adam, **she fell with   
a crash which broke every bone** and bruised her   
flesh with wounds which are ulcerated from head to toe.   
  
Her understanding, her conscience, and her   
affections were all fearfully maimed . . .  
her understanding was blinded;  
her conscience stupefied;  
her affections alienated.   
  
Every mental faculty thus became perverted and distorted.   
  
When Adam fell into sin and temptation—sin rushed   
into every faculty of body and soul—and penetrated   
into the inmost recesses of his being.  
  
As when a man is bitten by a poisonous serpent,   
the venom courses through every artery and vein,   
and he dies a corrupted mass from head to foot;   
so did **the poison fang of sin** penetrate into   
Adam's inmost soul and body, and infect him   
with its venom from the sole to the crown.   
  
But it is only as sin's desperate and malignant   
character is opened up by the Holy Spirit that it   
is really seen, felt, grieved under, and mourned   
over as indeed a most dreadful and fearful reality.  
  
"The whole head is sick—and the whole heart faint."   
  
Every thought, word, and action is polluted by sin.   
  
**Every mental faculty is depraved . . .**  
the **will** chooses evil;  
the **affections** cleave to earthly things;  
the **memory**, like a broken sieve,   
retains the bad and lets fall the good;  
the **judgment**, like a bribed or drunken judge,   
pronounces heedless or wrong decisions;  
the **conscience**, like an opium eater, lies   
asleep and drugged in stupefied silence.

**A penitent backslider and a forgiving God!**   
  
"And while he was still a long distance away,   
his father saw him coming. Filled with love   
and compassion, he ran to his son, embraced   
him, and kissed him." Luk 15:20  
  
After a child of God has enjoyed something of   
the goodness and mercy of God revealed in the   
face of His dear Son, he may wander from his   
mercies—stray away from these choice gospel   
pastures—and get into a waste howling wilderness,   
where there is neither food nor water—and yet,   
though half starved for poverty, has in himself   
no power to return.   
  
But in due time the Lord seeks out this wandering   
sheep, and the first place he brings him to is the   
mercy seat—confessing his sins and seeking mercy.   
  
O what a meeting!   
  
**A penitent backslider and a forgiving God!**   
  
O what a meeting!   
  
**A guilty wretch drowned in tears**—**and a loving   
Father falling upon his neck and kissing him!**   
  
O what a meeting for a poor, self-condemned wretch,   
who can never mourn too deeply over his sins, and yet   
finds grace super-abounding over all his abounding   
sins—and the love of God bursting through the cloud,   
like the sun upon an April day—and melting his heart   
into contrition and love!

**Salvation!**  
  
Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say:   
"Now has come the **salvation**." Rev 12:10  
  
The sweetest song that heaven ever proclaimed,   
the most blessed note that ever melted the soul,   
is "**salvation**."   
  
To be **saved from . . .**  
death and hell;   
the worm which dies not;   
the fire which is not quenched;   
the sulphurous flames of the bottomless pit;  
the companionship of tormenting fiends;   
all the foul wretches under which earth has groaned;  
blaspheming God in unutterable woe;  
an eternity of misery without hope;  
and **saved into . . .**  
heaven;  
the sight of Jesus as He is;  
perfect holiness and happiness;  
the blissful company of holy angels and glorified   
saints! And all this during the countless ages of a   
blessed eternity!   
  
What tongue of men or angels can describe   
the millionth part of what is contained in the   
word **salvation!**

**A peculiar people**  
  
"But you are . . .  
a chosen generation,   
a royal priesthood,   
a holy nation,   
**a peculiar people**." 1Pe 2:9  
  
May we never forget that the suffering Son of God   
gave Himself to purify unto Himself **a peculiar people** . . .  
a people whose **thoughts** are peculiar, for their thoughts   
are the thoughts of God, as having the mind of Christ;   
a people whose **affections** are peculiar,   
for they are fixed on things above;   
a people whose **prayers** are peculiar, for they are wrought  
in their heart by the Spirit of grace and supplication;   
a people whose **sorrows** are peculiar,   
because they spring from a spiritual source;   
a people whose **joys** are peculiar, for they are joys   
which the stranger cannot understand;   
a people whose **hopes** are peculiar,   
as anchoring within the veil;   
a people whose **expectations** are peculiar, as not   
expecting to reap a crop of happiness in this marred   
world—but are looking for happiness in the kingdom   
of rest and peace in the bosom of God.   
  
They make it manifest that they are **a peculiar   
people** by . . .  
walking in the footsteps of the Lord the Lamb,  
taking up the cross,  
denying themselves, and  
living to the honor, praise, and glory of God.

**Softened, broke, and melted your heart**  
  
"I drew them with cords of human kindness,  
with ties of love." Hos 11:4  
  
When God draws His people near unto Himself,   
it is not done in a mechanical way. They are drawn,   
not with cords of iron, but with the cords of kindness;   
not as if God laid an iron arm upon His people to drag   
them to Himself—whether they wished to come or not.  
God does not so act in a way of mechanical force.   
  
We therefore read, "Your people shall be **made willing**   
in the day of Your power." **He touches their heart with   
His gracious finger**, and he communicates to their   
soul both faith and feeling. **He melts, softens, and   
humbles their heart** by a sense of His goodness and   
mercy—for it is His goodness, as experimentally felt   
and realized, which leads to repentance.   
  
If you have ever felt any secret and sacred drawing   
of your soul upward to heaven—it was not compulsion,   
not violence, not a mechanical constraint—but **an arm   
of pity and compassion let down into your very heart**,   
which, touching your inmost spirit, drew it up into the   
bosom of God.  
  
It was some view of His goodness, mercy, and love,   
with some dropping into your spirit of His pity and   
compassion towards you, which **softened, broke,   
and melted your heart**. You were not driven onward   
by being flogged and scourged, but blessedly drawn   
with the cords of kindness, which seemed to touch   
every tender feeling and enter into the very depths   
of your soul.

**Fixed and fastened by an Almighty hand.**  
  
Truth, as it stands in the naked word of God,   
is **lifeless and dead**—and as such, has no power   
to communicate what it has not in itself—that is,   
life and power to the hearts of God's people. It   
stands there in so many letters and syllables, as   
lifeless as the types by which they were printed.   
  
But **when the incarnate Word takes of the   
written word**, and speaks it home into the   
heart and conscience of a vessel of mercy,   
whether in letter or substance—then He endues   
it with divine life—and it enters into the soul,   
communicating to it a life that can never die.  
  
Eternal realities are then brought into the soul,   
**fixed and fastened by an Almighty hand.**

The conscience is made alive in the fear of God;   
and the soul is raised up from a death in sin, to   
a heavenly, new, and supernatural life.

**When we are reduced to poverty and beggary**  
  
How often we seem not to have any real religion,   
or enjoy any solid comfort! How often are our minds   
covered with deep darkness! How often does the   
Lord hide Himself, so that we cannot behold Him,   
nor get near to Him! What a painful path is this   
to walk in, but how profitable!   
  
**When we are reduced to poverty and beggary**,   
we learn to value Christ's glorious riches.  
  
The worse opinion we have of our own heart, and   
the more deceitful and desperately wicked that we   
find it—the more we put our trust in His faithfulness.   
  
The more black we are in our own esteem—the more  
beautiful and lovely does He appear in our eyes.   
  
As we sink—Jesus rises.   
  
As we become feeble—He puts forth his strength.   
  
As we come into danger—He brings deliverance.  
  
As we get into temptation—He breaks the snare.   
  
As we are shut up in darkness and obscurity;   
He causes the light of His countenance to shine.   
  
Now it is by being led in this way, and walking   
in these paths, that we come rightly to know who   
Jesus is; and to see and feel how suitable and   
precious such a Savior is to our undone souls!   
We are needy, He has in Himself all riches.   
  
We are hungry—He is the bread of life.   
  
We are thirsty—He says, "If any man thirst,   
let him come unto Me, and drink."   
  
We are naked—and He has clothing to bestow.   
  
We are fools—and He has wisdom to grant.   
  
We are lost, and He speaks—   
"Look unto Me, and be saved."   
  
Thus, so far from our misery shutting us out   
from God's mercy—it is the only requisite for it.  
  
So far from our guilt excluding His pardon,   
it is the only thing needful for it.  
  
So far from our helplessness ruining our souls,   
it is the needful preparation for the manifestation   
of His power in our weakness.  
  
We cannot heal our own wounds and sores. That is   
the very reason why He should stretch forth His arm.   
  
It is because there is no salvation in ourselves, or  
in any other creature, that He says, "Look unto Me,   
for I am God, and there is no other."

**Not a grain! Not an atom!**  
 **What am I?   
  
What are you?**  
  
Are we not filthy, polluted, and defiled?  
  
Do not we, more or less, daily feel  
altogether as an unclean thing?  
Is not every thought of our heart altogether vile?  
  
Does any holiness, any spirituality, any heavenly-  
mindedness, any purity, any resemblance to the   
divine image dwell in our hearts by nature?   
  
**Not a grain! Not an atom!**   
  
How then can I, a polluted sinner,   
ever see the face of a holy God?   
  
How can I, a worm of earth, corrupted within   
and without by indwelling and committed sin,   
ever hope to see a holy God without shrinking   
into destruction?  
  
When we view the pure and spotless holiness   
of Jesus imputed to His people, and view them . . .  
holy in Him,  
pure in Him,  
without spot in Him,   
how it does away with all the wrinkles of the   
creature, and makes them stand holy and   
spotless before God.

**They will come with weeping**  
  
"**They will come with weeping**; they will   
pray as I bring them back." Jer 31:9  
 **As they come, they weep. They mourn . . .**  
over their base backslidings,  
over the many evils they have committed,  
over the levity of mind which they have indulged,  
over the worldliness of spirit,  
over the—  
pride,   
presumption,   
hypocrisy,   
carnality,   
carelessness, and   
obstinacy of their heart.   
  
They go and weep with a broken heart and softened   
spirit—seeking the Lord their God—seeking the secret   
manifestations of His mercy, the visitations of His   
favor, the "lifting up of the light of His countenance"—   
seeking after a revelation of the love of Jesus—to know   
Him by a spiritual discovery of Himself.   
  
Being thus minded . . .  
they seek not to establish their own righteousness;  
they seek not the applause of the world;  
they seek not the good opinion of professors;  
they seek not the smiles of saints. But they . . .  
seek the Lord their God,  
seek His face day and night,  
seek His favor,  
seek His mercy,  
seek His grace,  
seek His love,  
seek His glory,  
seek the sweet visitations of His presence and power,  
seek Him until they find Him to be their covenant God,   
who heals all their backslidings.

**This is the saint's inheritance!**  
  
"Now if we are children, then we are heirs—**heirs of   
God** and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in   
His sufferings in order that we may also **share in   
His glory**." Rom 8:17  
  
This is the especial blessedness of being a child of God:  
that death, which puts a final extinguisher on all the   
hopes and happiness of all the unregenerate—gives him   
**the fulfillment of all his hopes and the consummation   
of all his happiness**—for it places him in possession of   
"an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that   
fades not away, reserved in heaven."   
  
In this present earthly life, we have sometimes sips   
and tastes of sonship, feeble indeed and interrupted;  
yet are they so far pledges of an inheritance to come.   
  
But this life is only an introduction to a better. In this   
life we are but children—but in the life to come, we shall   
be put into full possession of the eternal inheritance.   
  
And what is this? Nothing less than God Himself.   
"**Heirs of God!**" says the Apostle. God Himself is   
the inheritance of His people—yes, He Himself in   
all His glorious perfections . . .  
all the love of God,  
all the goodness of God,  
all the holiness of God,  
all His happiness, bliss, and blessedness,  
all His might, majesty, and glory, in  
all the blaze of one eternal, unclouded day!  
  
**This is the saint's inheritance!**  
  
Let us press on by faith and prayer to   
win this eternal and glorious crown!

**Savory food such as their soul loves**  
  
"For **My flesh is real food** and My blood is real drink."   
Joh 6:55  
  
**This food is specially for the elect . . .**  
blood shed for their sins, and for their sins only;   
righteousness brought in for them, and for them only;   
love bestowed upon them, and upon them only;   
promises revealed for their comfort, and for their comfort only;   
an eternal inheritance reserved in heaven for them, and for them only.   
 **The elect are the only people . . .**  
who hunger after it,  
who have an appetite for it,  
who have a mouth to feed upon it,  
who have a stomach to digest it.   
They are the only people whose eyes   
are really open to see what "food" is.   
All others feed upon shadows—they know nothing of   
the savory food of the gospel. "I have food to eat   
which you know not of." Jesus' food was . . .  
the hidden communications of God's love,  
the visitations of His Father's presence,  
the divine communion that He enjoyed with His Father.   
  
So, for the children of God, there is food in Christ;   
and this food the Lord gives them **a hunger after**.   
He not only sets before their eyes what the food is,   
but **He kindles inexpressible longings in their   
soul** to be fed with it.   
 **God's people cannot feed . . .**  
upon husks,  
nor upon ashes,  
nor upon chaff,  
nor upon the wind,  
nor upon grapes of gall and the bitter clusters of Gomorrah.   
  
**They must have real food**, "**savory food such as   
their soul loves**," that which God Himself communicates,   
and which His hand alone can bring down, and give unto   
them, so that they may receive it from Him as their soul-  
satisfying portion.  
  
"For **My flesh is real food** and My blood is real drink."

**A smoother way to glory?**  
  
"They encouraged them to continue in the faith,   
reminding them that **they MUST enter into the   
Kingdom of God through** **many tribulations**."   
Act 14:22   
  
The Lord has chosen that His people should pass   
through deep and cutting afflictions, for it is "through   
**many tribulations**" they are to enter the Kingdom of   
God above, and into the sweetness and power of the   
Kingdom of God below.   
  
**But every man will resent this doctrine**, except God   
has led him experimentally into it. **It is such a rough   
and rugged path**—it is so contrary to flesh and blood  
—it is so inexplicable to nature and reason—that man,   
proud, rebellious man, will never believe that he must   
"enter into the Kingdom of God through **many   
tribulations**."  
  
And this is the reason why so many find, or seek to   
find, **a smoother way to glory** than the Lord has  
appointed His saints to walk in. But shall the Head   
travel in one path—and the members in another?   
Shall the Bridegroom walk and wade through seas   
of sorrow—and the bride never so much as wet her   
feet with the water? Shall the Bridegroom be crucified   
in weakness and suffering—and there be no inward   
crucifixion for the dearly beloved of His heart?   
  
Shall the Head . . .  
suffer,  
grieve,  
agonize,  
groan,  
and die—  
and the members dance down a flowery road,   
without inward sorrow or outward suffering?  
  
But, perhaps, there are some who say in their heart,   
"I am well convinced of this—but **my coward flesh**   
shrinks from it. I know if I am to reach the Canaan   
above, I must pass through the appointed portion   
of tribulation. But my coward flesh shrinks back!"   
  
It does! it does! Who would willingly bring trials   
upon himself? Therefore the Lord does not leave   
these trials in **our** hands—but He Himself appoints   
a certain measure of tribulation for each of His   
people to pass through. They will come soon enough;   
you need not **anticipate** them; you need not **wish**   
for them. **God will bring them**—**in His own time   
and in His own way.**  
  
And what is more, God will not merely bring you   
**into** them, but God will bring you **through** them,   
and God will bring you **out of** them!  
It will be our mercy if enabled to ask the Lord . . .  
to bless us with faith and patience under tribulation;   
to give us strength to bear the storm;   
to lie as clay in His hands;  
to conform us to the image of His Son;  
to guide us through this valley of tears below;  
and eventually to take us to be with Him above!

**Should you then seek great   
things for yourself?**  
  
"**Should you then seek great things for   
yourself?** Seek them not." Jer 45:5  
  
**Ministers often seek . . .**  
great gifts,  
great eloquence,  
great congregations,  
great popularity.   
  
They are wrong in seeking these so-called great things.   
Let them rather seek real things, gracious things, things   
that will make their souls blessed here and hereafter.

**We stand upon slippery places!**   
  
**"The Lord keep you."** Num 6:24  
  
How we need the Lord to keep us!   
  
**We stand upon slippery places!**   
  
Snares and traps are laid for us in every direction.   
  
Every employment, every profession in life, from the   
highest to the lowest—has its special temptations.   
Snares are spread for the feet of the most illiterate   
as well as the most highly cultivated minds. Nor is   
there anyone, whatever his position in life may be, who   
has not a snare laid for him—and such a snare as will   
surely prove his downfall if God does not keep him.   
  
Well, then, may it be the desire of our soul,   
"The Lord keep me" . . .  
keep me in His providence, keep me by His grace;  
keep me by planting His fear deep in my soul, and   
maintaining that fear alive and effectual in my heart;   
keep me waking, keep me sleeping;  
keep me by night, keep me by day;  
keep me at home, keep me abroad;  
keep me with my family, keep me with my friends;  
keep me in the world, and keep me in the church.  
  
May the Lord keep me, according to His promise,   
every moment—keep me by His Spirit and grace   
with all the tenderness implied in His words,   
"O keep me as the apple of Your eye!"   
  
My friends, you can know . . .  
little of your own heart,  
little of Satan's devices,  
little of the snares spread for your feet,   
unless you feel how deeply you need this   
blessing—"The Lord keep you."   
  
And He will, for we read of the righteous, that they   
are kept "by the power of God through faith unto   
salvation;" and that "He will keep the feet of His saints."

**One grain of holiness?**  
  
Have I **one grain of holiness** in myself? Not one.   
  
Can all the men in the world, by all their united   
exertions, raise up **a grain of spiritual holiness**   
in their hearts? Not an atom, with all their efforts.   
  
If all the preachers in the world were to unite   
together for the purpose of working **a grain of  
holiness** in one man's soul, they might strive   
to all eternity—they could no more by their   
preaching create holiness, than by their   
preaching they could create a lump of gold.   
  
But Jesus imparts a measure of His own holiness   
to His people. He sends the Holy Spirit, to raise up   
holy desires. He communicates a heavenly, spiritual,   
and divine nature—which bathes in eternal things   
as its element—and enjoys spiritual things as sweet   
and precious. It may indeed be small in measure;   
and he that has it is often troubled because he has   
so little of it—yet he has enough to know what it is.   
  
Has not your soul, though you feel to be a defiled   
wretch, though every iniquity is at times working   
in your heart, though every worm of obscenity and   
corruption is too often trailing its filthy slime upon   
your carnal mind—has it not felt, does it not   
sometimes feel—a measure of holiness Godwards?   
  
Do you ever feel a breathing forth of your soul   
into the bosom of a holy God . . .  
heavenly desires,   
pure affections,  
singleness of eye,  
simplicity of purpose,  
a heart that longs to have the mind, image,   
and likeness of Jesus stamped upon it?  
  
This is a holiness such as the Lord of life and   
glory imparts out of his fullness to His poor and   
needy family.

**What is this hidden manna?**   
  
"To him who overcomes, I will give some of  
the **hidden manna** to eat." Rev 2:17  
  
**What is this hidden manna?**   
  
Is it not God's Word applied with power to the heart?   
  
What does the prophet Jeremiah say? "Your **Words**   
were found, and I did **eat** them; and Your Word was   
unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart."   
  
When the Lord is pleased . . .  
to drop a word into the heart from his own lips;  
to apply some promise;  
to open up some precious portion of his Word;  
to whisper softly some blessed Scripture into the heart;  
is not this manna?   
  
Whence did the manna flow? Was it cultivated by the   
hand of man? No—it fell from heaven. And is not this   
true of the Word of the Lord applied with power to the   
heart? It is not **our searching** the Scriptures, though  
it is good to search the Scriptures—but it is the Lord   
Himself being pleased to apply some precious portion   
of truth to our hearts—and when this takes place,   
it is "manna;" it is . . .  
sweet,  
refreshing,  
strengthening,  
comforting,  
encouraging;  
yes, it is angels' food—the very flesh and blood of   
the Lamb with which the Lord is pleased from time   
to time to feed and favor hungry souls.  
  
But, in the text it is called "hidden." Why "hidden"?   
Because hidden from the eyes of the wise and prudent.  
Hidden from the eyes of self-righteous pharisees;   
hidden from those who fight in their own strength,   
and seek to gain the victory by their own brawny arm;   
hidden from all but God's tried and tempted family;   
hidden from all but those who know the plague of   
their own hearts; hidden from all but those who have   
learned the secret of overcoming by the blood of the  
Lamb and by the word of His testimony.  
  
When the Lord leads us to sink down into weakness,   
and in weakness to find his strength made perfect—  
to fall down all guilty—and then to feel the application   
of atoning blood—this is manna.   
  
The children of Israel had to endure hunger in the   
wilderness before manna fell—and thus the Lord's   
people learn the value of the hidden manna—the   
sweet communications from above—by hungering   
and thirsting in a waste-howling wilderness.  
  
This is hidden from all eyes except those that are   
anointed by the Spirit to see it—and hidden from all   
hearts except those that are prepared to receive   
and feed upon it.  
  
"I am the living bread who came down from heaven.   
If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever."   
Joh 6:51

**Entangled, perplexed and distressed?**  
  
How many of the Lord's people are continually under   
bondage to evil! What power the **lusts of the flesh**   
have over some—how perpetually they are entangled   
with everything sensual and carnal! What power the   
**pride** of the heart has over another! And what strength   
**covetousness** exercises over a third! What power the   
**love of the world** and the things of time and sense   
exercise over a fourth!  **How then are they to overcome sin?**   
  
By making resolutions? By endeavoring to overcome it   
in their own strength? No! Sin will always break through   
man's strength. It will always be stronger than any   
resolution we can make not to be overcome by it.  
  
The Lord allows His people to be so long and often  **entangled, perplexed and distressed**, that they   
may learn this secret—which is hidden from all but   
God's living family—that **the strength of Christ is   
made perfect in their weakness.**   
  
Have not some of you had to learn this lesson very   
painfully? There was a time when you thought you   
would get better and better, holier and holier—that   
you would not only not walk in open sin as before,   
but would not be . . .  
entangled by temptation,  
overcome by besetting lusts,  
or cast down by hidden snares.   
  
There was a time when you thought you were going   
forward—attaining some more strength—some better   
wisdom than you believed you once possessed.   
  
How has it been with you?   
  
Have these expectations ever been realized?  
  
Have you ever attained these fond hopes?   
  
Has sin become weaker?   
  
Has the world become less alluring?   
  
Have your lusts become tamer?   
  
Has your temper become milder?   
  
Have the corruptions of your heart become feebler and feebler?   
  
If I can read the heart of **some poor tried, tempted   
soul** here present, he would say, "**No!** To my shame   
and sorrow, be it spoken, I find on the contrary that   
sin is stronger and stronger—that the evils of my   
heart are more and more powerful than ever I knew   
them in my life—and as to my own endeavors to   
overcome them, I find indeed that they are fainter   
and fainter, and weaker and weaker. This it is that   
casts me down. If I could have more strength against   
sin—if I could stand more boldly against Satan—if I   
could overcome my besetting lusts—live more to God's   
glory—and be holier and holier—then, then, I could have   
some comfort. But to feel myself so continually baffled,   
so perpetually disconcerted, so incessantly cast down   
by the workings of my corrupt nature—it is this, it is   
this that cuts so keenly—it is this, it is this that tries   
me so deeply!"  
  
My friend, you are on the high road to victory.   
This is the very way by which you are to overcome.   
When you feel . . .  
weaker and weaker,  
poorer and poorer,  
guiltier and guiltier,  
viler and viler,   
so that really through painful experience you are   
compelled to call yourself, not in the language of mock   
humility, but in the language of self abhorrence—the   
chief of sinners—then you are on the high road to victory.  
  
Then the blood of the Lamb is applied to the sinner's   
conscience, and the Word of God's testimony comes with   
power into his soul—it gives him the victory over those   
lusts with which he was before entangled—it brings him   
out of the world that had so allured him—and breaks to   
pieces the dominion of sin under which he had been so   
long laboring.

**A very different thing from lifeless,  
barren head knowledge**  
  
"We know also that the Son of God has come and   
has given us understanding, so that we may know  
Him who is true." 1Jn 5:20  
  
There is a difference between a gracious, enlightened   
understanding of the truth of God which springs out of   
the teaching of the Spirit—and what is commonly called   
"head knowledge." There is such a thing—and a most   
dangerous, delusive thing it is—as "mere head knowledge"  
and it is widely prevalent in the churches.  
  
You may say, "How am I to distinguish between mere   
head knowledge and this spiritual understanding?"   
  
I will tell you. When a special light is cast into your mind—  
when the Word is opened up in its spiritual, experimental   
meaning—when the Holy Spirit seals it with sweetness and   
power upon your heart—and you not only understand what   
you read but receive it in faith, feel its savor, and enjoy   
its blessedness. Is not this **a very different thing from   
lifeless, barren head knowledge?**

**Poor in spirit**  
  
"Blessed are the **poor in spirit**, for theirs  
is the kingdom of heaven." Mat 5:3  
  
None are really **poor in spirit**, but those whom   
the hand of God has stripped—whom He has   
brought down—and made to abhor themselves   
in dust and ashes—and to see and feel themselves   
destitute of everything good, holy, heavenly, and   
pleasing in His pure and heart searching eyes.  
  
The heart must be stripped and emptied, and laid   
bare effectually—by a work of grace that goes to   
the very bottom, and penetrates into the recesses   
of the soul—so as to detect all the corruption that  
lurks and festers within.  
  
The really "poor" man is one who has had everything   
taken from him—who has had not merely his dim views   
of a merciful God (such as natural men have) taken   
from him—not merely his legal righteousness stripped   
away—but all that kind of notional, traditional religion,   
which is so rife in the present day, taken from him also  
—and who has been brought in guilty before God, naked,   
in the dust, having nothing whereby to conciliate Him,   
or gain His favor.

**God's purpose**  
  
**"That no flesh should glory in His presence."**1Co 1:29  
  
Man may glory in himself—but God has forever   
trampled man's glory under foot. **God's purpose**   
**is to stain the pride of human glory.**

**Utter fools!**  
  
"Claiming to be wise, they became **utter fools** instead."  
Rom 1:22  
  
**What am I by nature? A fool!** All my wisdom, outside  
of Christ, is nothing but the height of foolishness—and   
all my knowledge nothing but the depth of ignorance!  
  
Left to ourselves we are **utter fools!** We have   
no wisdom whatever to direct our feet. We are . . .  
blind,  
ignorant,  
weak,  
helpless, and  
utterly unable to find our way to God.  
  
All **wisdom** which does not come down from the Father  
is folly. All **strength** not divinely wrought in the soul is  
weakness. All **knowledge** that does not spring from the   
Lord's own teaching in the conscience is the depth of   
ignorance.  
  
We must know the value of the **gem** before we can   
really prize it. When diamonds were first discovered   
in Brazil, nobody knew that they were diamonds. They   
were handed about as pretty, shining pebbles. But as   
soon it was discovered they were diamonds, they were   
eagerly sought, and their value rose a thousandfold.   
  
So spiritually. Until we can distinguish between the   
"pebble of man's teaching" and the "diamond of divine   
illumination" we shall neglect, we shall despise, we   
shall not value divine wisdom.

**The heart of God's child**  
  
There is much . . .  
presumption, pride,  
hypocrisy,  
deceit,  
delusion,  
formality,  
superstition,  
will-worship and   
self-righteousness   
to be purged out of **the heart of God's child**.  
  
But all these things . . .  
keep him low,  
mar his pride,  
crush his self righteousness,  
cut the locks of his presumption,  
stain his self-conceit,  
stop his boasting,  
preserve him from despising others,  
make him take the lowest room,  
teach him to esteem others better than himself,  
drive him to earnest prayer,  
fit him as an object of mercy,  
break to pieces his free-will, and  **lay him low at the feet of the Redeemer, as   
one to be saved by sovereign grace alone!**

**A spirit of delusion**  
  
**A spirit of delusion** seems to us widely prevalent . . .   
a carnal confidence,   
a dead assurance,   
a presumptuous claim,   
a daring mimicry of the spirit of adoption.  
  
Who that has eyes or heart does not see and   
feel the wide spread of this gigantic evil?  
  
No brokenness of heart,   
no tenderness of conscience,   
no spirituality of mind,   
no heavenly affections,   
no prayerfulness and watchfulness,   
no godly devotedness of life,   
no self denial and crucifixion,   
no humility or contrition,   
no separation from the world,   
no communion with the Lord of life and glory.  
  
In a word, none of the blessed graces and fruits  
of the Spirit attend this carnal confidence.   
  
On the contrary . . .  
levity,  
jesting,  
pride,  
covetousness,  
self-exaltation, and   
often gross self-indulgence  
are evidently stamped upon many, if   
not most, of these hardened professors.

**The husks which the swine eat**  
  
All forms, opinions, rites, ceremonies and notions   
to me are nothing—and worse than nothing. They   
are **the husks which the swine eat**—not the food   
of the living soul.   
  
To have the heart deeply penetrated with the fear   
of Jehovah—to be melted and filled with a sweet   
sense of Jesus' dying love—to have the affections   
warmed and drawn forth under the anointings of   
the Eternal Comforter—this is **the only religion   
that can suit and satisfy a regenerate soul!**

**Then they cried**  
  
"They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary   
way; they found no city to dwell in. Hungry and   
thirsty, their soul fainted in them. **Then they   
cried** unto the Lord in their trouble, and He   
delivered them out of their distresses."   
Psa 107:4-6  
  
Until they wandered in the wilderness;   
until they felt it to be a solitary way;  
until they found no city to dwell in;  
until hungry and thirsty their soul fainted in them;  
there was no cry.   
  
There might have been   
a prayer,  
a desire,  
a feeble wish, and  
now and then a sigh or a groan.   
  
But this was not enough. Something more was  
needed to draw forth loving-kindness out of the  
bosom of the compassionate Head of the Church.  
  
A cry was needed—a cry of distress, a cry of soul  
trouble, a cry forced out of their hearts by heavy  
burdens. A cry implies urgent need—a perishing   
without an answer to the cry. It is this solemn   
feeling in the heart that there is no other refuge   
but God.  
  
The Lord brings all His people here—to have no   
other refuge but Himself. Friends, counselors,   
acquaintance—these may sympathize, but they  
cannot afford relief. There is . . .  
no refuge,  
nor shelter,  
nor harbor,  
nor home   
into which they can fly, except the Lord.   
  
Thus troubles force us to deal with God in a   
personal manner. They chase away that half-  
hearted religion of which we have so much;   
and they drive out that notional experience   
and dry profession that we are so often   
satisfied with. They chase them away as   
a strong north wind chases away the mists;   
and they bring a man to this solemn spot—that   
he must have God to support him—and bring  
him out of his trouble.  
  
But what a mercy it is when there is a cry!   
  
And when the Lord sends a cry in the trouble,   
He is sure in his own time and way to send   
deliverance out of it.

**O what painful work it is!**   
  
"You also, like living stones, are being  
built into a spiritual house." 1Pe 2:5  
  
**God's people require . . .**  
many severe afflictions,  
many harassing temptations,  
and many powerful trials   
to hew them into any good shape, to chisel   
them into any conformity to Christ's image.  
  
For they are not like the passive marble under   
the hands of the sculptor, which will submit   
without murmuring, and indeed without feeling,   
to have this corner chipped off, and that jutting   
angle rounded by the chisel.  
  
But God's people are **living** stones, and therefore,  **they feel every stroke.** We are so tender skinned   
that we cannot bear a 'thread of trouble' to lie upon   
us—we shrink from even the touch of the chisel.   
  
To be hewed, then, and squared, and chiseled   
by the hand of God into such shapes and forms   
as please Him—**O what painful work it is!**   
  
**If the Lord, then, is at work upon our souls** . . .   
we have not had,   
we are not now having,   
we shall never have . . .  
one stroke too much,   
one stroke too little,   
one stroke in the wrong direction.  
But there shall be just sufficient to work in us   
that which is pleasing in God's sight—and to   
make us that which He would have us to be.   
  
What a great deal of trouble would we be spared   
if we could only **patiently submit to the Lord's   
afflicting stroke**—and know no will but His.

**We get no better, but rather worse**  
  
"Accepted in the Beloved." Eph 1:6  
  
We are ever looking for something in SELF to   
make ourselves acceptable to God—and are   
often sadly cast down and discouraged when   
we cannot find . . .  
that holiness,   
that obedience,   
that calm submission to the will of God,   
that serenity of soul,   
that spirituality and heavenly mindedness,  
which we believe to be acceptable in His sight.   
  
Our crooked tempers,   
our fretful peevish minds,   
our rebellious thoughts,   
our coldness,   
our barrenness,   
our alienation from good,   
our headlong proneness to evil,   
with the daily feeling that **we get no better,  
but rather worse**—make us think that **God   
views us just as we view ourselves**. We  
seem to lose sight of our acceptance in Christ,   
and get into the miserable dregs of SELF. **We   
are so vile, and only get worse as we get   
older.**  
Now the more we get into these dregs of SELF,   
and the more we keep looking at the dreadful   
scenes of wreck and ruin which our heart presents   
to daily view—the farther do we get from the grace   
of the gospel—and the more do we lose sight of   
the only ground of our acceptance with God.  
  
It is "in the Beloved" alone, that we   
are accepted—and not for any . . .  
good words,   
good works,  
good thoughts,  
good hearts, or  
good intentions  
of our own.  
  
And a saving knowledge of our acceptance "in   
the Beloved," independent of everything in us   
either good or bad, is a firm foundation for our   
faith and hope—and will keep us from sinking   
altogether into despair.

**Blundering and stumbling on in darkness**  
  
After the Lord has quickened our souls, for a   
time **we often go blundering on**, not knowing   
there is a Jesus.   
  
We think that the way of life is to . . .  
keep God's commandments,  
obey the law,  
cleanse ourselves from sin,  
reform our lives,  
cultivate universal holiness in thought, word,   
and action—and so we go—**blundering and   
stumbling on in darkness**—and all the while   
never get a single step forward.

But when the Lord has allowed us to weary ourselves  
to find the door, and let us sink lower and lower into  
the pit of guilt and ruin, from feeling that all our attempts  
to extricate ourselves have only plunged us deeper and  
deeper—and when the Spirit of God opens up to the  
understanding and brings into the soul some spiritual  
discovery of Jesus, and thus makes known that there  
is a Savior, a Mediator, and a way of escape—this is the  
grand turning point in our lives, the first opening in the  
valley of Achor (trouble) of the door of hope.

**When you are in the wilderness**  
  
"Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring   
her into the **wilderness**, and speak comfortably   
unto her." Hos 2:14  
  
**When you are in the wilderness**, you have . . .  
no friend,  
no creature help,  
no worldly comfort—  
these have all abandoned you.   
  
God has led you into the wilderness to bereave you   
of these earthly ties, of these 'creature refuges and   
vain hopes', that He may Himself speak to your soul.   
  
If, then, you are separated from the world by being   
brought into the wilderness—if you are passing through   
trials and afflictions—if you are exercised with a variety   
of temptations—and are brought into that spot where   
the creature yields neither help nor hope—then you are   
made to see and feel that nothing but God's voice   
speaking with power to your soul can give you any   
solid grounds of rest or peace.   
  
But is not this profitable? It may be painful—it **is** painful—  
but it is profitable, because by it we learn to look to the   
Lord and the Lord alone—and this must ever be a blessed   
lesson to learn for every child of God.

**O what crowds of pitiable objects**  
  
"Let us then approach the throne of grace with   
confidence, so that we may receive mercy and   
find grace to help us in our time of need."   
Heb 4:16  
  
What heart can conceive or tongue recount the   
daily, hourly triumphs of the Lord Jesus Christ's   
all-conquering grace?   
  
We see scarcely a millionth part of what He, as a   
King on his throne, is daily doing. What a crowd of   
needy petitioners every moment surrounds His throne!  
What urgent needs and woes to answer;   
what cutting griefs and sorrows to assuage;   
what broken hearts to bind up;   
what wounded consciences to heal;  
what countless prayers to hear;   
what earnest petitions to grant;   
what stubborn foes to subdue;   
what guilty fears to quell!   
  
What grace,   
what kindness,   
what patience,   
what compassion,   
what mercy,   
what love,   
what power,  
what authority,  
does this Almighty Sovereign display!  
  
No circumstance is too trifling;   
no petitioner too insignificant;   
no case too hard;   
no difficulty too great;   
no seeker too importunate;   
no beggar too ragged;   
no bankrupt too penniless;   
no debtor too insolvent;  
for Him not to notice and not to relieve.   
  
Sitting on His throne of grace . . .  
His **all-seeing eye** views all,  
His **almighty hand** grasps all,  
and His **loving heart** embraces all whom the  
Father chose—whom He himself redeemed by   
His blood—and whom the blessed Spirit has   
quickened into life by His invincible power.   
  
The hopeless, the helpless;   
the outcasts whom no man cares for;   
the tossed with tempest and not comforted;  
the ready to perish;   
the mourners in Zion;   
the bereaved widow;   
the wailing orphan;   
the sick in body;   
and still more sick in heart;   
the racked with hourly pain;   
the fevered consumptive;   
the wrestler with death's last struggle.  
  
**O what crowds of pitiable objects**   
surround His throne—and all needing . . .  
a look from His eye,   
a word from His lips,  
a smile from His face,  
a touch from His hand!   
  
O could we but see what His grace **is**—what His   
grace **has**—what His grace **does**—and could we   
but feel more what it is doing in and for ourselves,   
we would have more exalted views of the reign of   
grace now exercised on high by Zion's enthroned King!

**Trouble, sorrow, and affliction**  
  
"And He led them forth by **the right way**,   
that they might go to a city of habitation."  
Psa 107:7  
  
Those very times when God's people think   
they are faring ill, may be the seasons when   
they are really faring well. For instance, when   
their souls are bowed down with trouble, it   
often seems to them that they are faring ill.   
God's hand appears to be gone out against   
them. Yet perhaps they never fare better than  
when under these circumstances of **trouble,  
sorrow, and affliction**.  
These things wean them from the world.   
  
If their heart and affections were going out   
after idols—they instrumentally bring them back.   
  
If they were hewing out broken cisterns   
—they dash them all to pieces.   
  
If they were setting up, and bowing down to   
idols in the chambers of imagery, affliction   
and trouble smite them to pieces before their  
eyes—take away their gods—and leave them   
no refuge but the Lord God of hosts.   
  
So that when a child of God thinks he is faring very   
ill, because burdened with sorrows, temptations,   
and afflictions—he is never faring so well. The darkest   
clouds in due time will break, the most puzzling   
enigmas will sooner or later be unriddled by the   
blessed Spirit interpreting them—and the darkest   
providences cleared up—and we shall see that God   
is in them all—leading and guiding us by **the right   
way**, that we may go to a city of habitation.

**If you are at home in the world**  
  
"We are here for only a moment, **sojourners and   
strangers in the land** as our ancestors were   
before us. Our days on earth are like a shadow,   
gone so soon without a trace." 1Ch 29:15  
  
If you possess the faith of Abraham, Isaac, and   
Jacob, you, like them, confess that you are a stranger;  
and your confession springs out of a believing heart   
and a sincere experience.   
  
You feel yourself a stranger in this ungodly world.  
  
It is not your element.   
  
It is not your home.   
  
You are in it during God's appointed time,   
but **you wander up and down this world . . .**  
a stranger to its company,  
a stranger to its maxims,  
a stranger to its fashions,  
a stranger to its principles,  
a stranger to its motives,  
a stranger to its lusts,   
a stranger to its inclinations—and all in which   
this world moves as in its native element.   
  
Grace has separated you by God's sovereign power,  
that though you are **in** the world, you are not **of** it.   
  
I can tell you plainly **if you are at home in the   
world**—if the things of time and sense are your   
element—if you feel one with . . .  
the company of the world,   
the maxims of the world,   
the fashions of the world, and   
the principles of the world,   
grace has not reached your heart—the faith   
of God's elect does not dwell in your bosom.   
  
**The first effect of grace is to separate.**   
  
It was so in the case of Abraham. He was called   
by grace to leave the land of his fathers, and go   
out into a land that God would show him. And so   
God's own word to His people is now, "Come out   
from among them, and be separate, says the Lord,   
and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive   
you, and will be a Father unto you, and you shall   
be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."   
  
Separation, separation, separation from the world;  
is the grand distinguishing mark of vital godliness.   
  
There may be indeed separation of **body** where there   
is no separation of **heart**. But what I mean is . . .  
separation of **heart**,  
separation of **principle**,  
separation of **affection**,  
separation of **spirit**.   
And if grace has touched your heart, and you are   
a partaker of the faith of God's elect—you are a   
stranger in the world—and will make it manifest   
by your life and conduct that you are such.

**From a burning hell**—**to a blissful heaven!**  
  
"I consider that our present sufferings are  
**not worth comparing** with the glory that  
will be revealed in us." Rom 8:18  
  
**What is to be compared** with the salvation of the  
soul? What are—riches, honors, health, long life?   
What are all the pleasures which the world can   
offer, sin promise, or the flesh enjoy? What is   
all that men call good or great? What is everything   
which the eye has seen, or the ear heard, or has   
entered into the carnal heart of man—put side by   
side with being saved in the Lord Jesus Christ   
with an everlasting salvation?   
  
For consider **what we are saved FROM**,   
as well as **what we are saved UNTO**.   
  
**From a burning hell**—**to a blissful heaven!**  
  
**From endless wrath**—**to eternal glory!**  
  
From the dreadful company of devils and damned   
spirits, mutually tormenting and tormented—to

the blessed companionship of the glorified saints,   
all perfectly conformed in body and soul to the image   
of Christ, with thousands and tens of thousands of   
holy angels—and, above all, to seeing the glorious   
Son of God as he is, in all the perfection of His beauty,   
and all the ravishments of His presence and love.   
  
To be done forever with . . .  
all the sorrows, troubles, and afflictions of this life;  
all the pains and aches of the present clay tabernacle;  
all the darkness, bondage, and misery of the body of sin and death.  
  
To be perfectly holy in body and soul, being in both   
without spot, or blemish, or any such thing, and ever   
to enjoy uninterrupted communion with God!

**Our own wisdom, righteousness, and strength**  
  
"Do not deceive yourselves. If any one of   
you thinks he is wise by the standards of   
this age, **he should become a "fool"** so   
that he may become wise." 1Co 3:18  
  
The fruit and effect of divine teaching is—to   
cut in pieces, and root up all our **fleshly** . . .  
wisdom,  
strength, and  
righteousness.   
  
God never means to patch a new piece upon   
an old garment. All our wisdom, our strength,   
our righteousness must be torn to pieces!  
It must all be plucked up by the roots—that   
a new wisdom, a new strength, and a new  
righteousness may arise upon its ruins.  
  
But until the Lord is pleased to teach us—we   
never can part with our own righteousness,   
never give up our own wisdom, never abandon   
our own strength. These things are a part and   
parcel of ourselves—so ingrained within us—so   
innate in us—so growing with our growth—that   
we cannot willingly part with an atom of them   
until the Lord Himself breaks them up, and   
plucks them away.   
  
Then, as He brings into our souls some spiritual   
knowledge of our own dreadful corruptions and   
horrible wickedness—**our righteousness** crumbles   
away at the divine touch.  
  
As He leads us to see and feel our ignorance and   
folly in a thousand instances—and how unable we   
are to understand anything aright but by divine   
teaching—**our wisdom** fades away.  
  
As He shows us our inability to resist temptation   
and overcome sin, by any exertion of our own— **our strength** gradually departs—and we become   
like Samson, when his locks were cut off.   
  
Upon the ruins, then, of **our own wisdom,   
righteousness, and strength**, does God build   
up Christ's wisdom, Christ's righteousness, and   
Christ's strength.  
  
But only so far as we are favored with this special  
teaching are we brought to pass a solemn sentence   
of condemnation upon our own wisdom, strength,   
and righteousness—and sincerely seek after the Lord's.

**Oh! sweet grace, blessed grace!**  
  
"For it is by **grace** you have been saved."   
Eph 2:8  
  
We are saved by **grace** . . .  
free grace,  
rich grace,  
sovereign grace,  
distinguishing grace—  
without one atom of works,   
without one grain of creature merit,   
without anything of the flesh.  
  
**Oh! sweet grace, blessed grace!**  
  
Oh! what a help—what a strength—what   
a rest for a poor toiling, striving, laboring   
soul—to find that grace has done all the   
work—to feel that grace has triumphed in   
the cross of Christ—to find that . . .  
nothing is required, nothing is needed,  
nothing is to be done!

**Dying?**  
  
"As **dying**, and, behold, we live."   
2Co 6:9  
  
Though we die, and die daily—yet, behold,   
we live. And in a sense, the more we die,   
the more we live.   
  
The more we die to self,   
the more we die to sin.   
  
The more we die to pride and self-righteousness,   
the more we die to creature strength.   
  
The more we die to sinful nature,   
the more we live to grace.   
  
This runs all the way through the   
life and experience of a Christian.   
  
Nature must die,   
that grace may live.   
  
The weeds must be plucked up,   
that the crop may grow.   
  
The flesh must be starved,   
that the spirit may be fed.   
  
The old man must be put off,   
that the new man may be put on.   
  
The deeds of the body must be mortified,   
that the soul may live unto God.   
  
As then we die—we live.   
  
The more we die to our own strength,   
the more we live to Christ's strength.   
  
The more we die to creature hope,   
the more we live to a good hope through grace.   
  
The more we die to our own righteousness,   
the more we live to Christ's righteousness.   
  
The more we die to the world,   
the more we live to and for heaven.   
  
This is the grand mystery—that the Christian   
is always **dying**, yet always living—and the   
more he dies, the more he lives.   
  
The death of the flesh,   
is the life of the spirit.   
  
The death of sin,   
is the life of righteousness.   
  
The death of the creature,   
is the very life of God in the soul.  
  
"As **dying**, and, behold, we live."   
2 Corinthians 6:9

**You were bought with a price!**  
  
"**You were bought with a price!**" 1Co 6:20  
  
How deep,   
how dreadful,   
of what alarming magnitude,   
of how black a dye,   
of how ingrained a stamp— **must sin be**, to need such an atonement,   
no less than the blood of the Son of God,   
to put it away!  
  
What a slave to sin and Satan,   
what a captive to the power of lust,   
how deeply sunk,   
how awfully degraded,   
how utterly lost and undone, must guilty   
man be—to need a sacrifice like this!   
  
Have you ever felt your bondage to sin, Satan,   
and the world? Have you ever—groaned, cried,   
grieved, sorrowed, and lamented under your   
miserable captivity to the power of sin?   
  
Has the iron ever entered into your soul? Have   
you ever clanked your fetters, and as you did so,   
and tried to burst them—they seemed to bind   
round about you with a weight scarcely endurable?   
  
You were slaves of sin and Satan. You were   
shut up in the dark cell, where all was gloom   
and despondency. There was little hope in your   
soul of ever being saved.   
  
But there was an entrance of gospel light into your   
dungeon—there was a coming out of the house of   
bondage! "**You were bought with a price!**"

**Which is better?**  
  
"You are not your own." 1Co 6:19  
  
Remember that **you must belong to someone.**   
  
If God is not your master—the devil will be.  
  
If grace does not rule—sin will reign.  
  
If Christ is not your all in all—the world will be.   
  
We must have a master of one kind or another.  
  
**Which is better** . . .  
a bounteous benevolent Benefactor;  
a merciful, loving, and tender Parent;  
a kind, forgiving Father and Friend;   
a tender-hearted, compassionate Redeemer?  **or**a cruel devil,  
a miserable world, and   
a wicked, vile, abominable heart?  
  
**Which is better** . . .  
to live under the sweet constraints of the   
dying love of a dear Redeemer—under . . .  
gospel influences,  
gospel principles,  
gospel promises, and  
gospel encouragements?  **or**to live with sin in our heart, binding us in   
iron chains to the judgment of the great day?   
  
Even taking the 'present life'—there is more real   
pleasure, satisfaction, and solid happiness . . .  
in half an hour with God,  
in reading his Word with a believing heart,  
in finding access to His sacred presence,  
in knowing something of His favor and mercy—  
than in . . .  
all the delights of sin,  
all the lusts of the flesh,  
all the pride of life, and  
all the amusements that the world has ever   
devised to kill time and cheat self—thinking, by   
a deathbed repentance, at last to cheat the devil.

**Conflicts, trials, painful exercises,   
sharp sorrows, and deep temptations**  
  
"The Lord tries the righteous." Psa 11:5  
  
To keep water fresh, it must be perpetually   
running. And **to keep the life of God up in   
the soul**, there must be continual trials.   
  
This is the reason why the Lord's people have so many . . .  
**conflicts,  
trials,  
painful exercises,  
sharp sorrows,  
and deep temptations**—to keep them alive unto God—to bring them   
out of, and to keep them out of that slothful,   
sluggish, wretched state of carnal security.  
  
The Lord, therefore, "tries the righteous."   
He will not allow His people . . .  
to be at ease in Zion;   
to be settled on their lees, and   
get into a wretched Moabitish state.   
  
He therefore sends upon them afflictions,   
tribulations, and trials—and allows Satan   
to tempt and harass them.

**Personal, spiritual, experimental   
knowledge of Jesus**  
It is our dim, scanty, and imperfect knowledge of   
the Lord Jesus Christ in His eternal love—and in   
His grace and glory—which leaves us so often cold,   
lifeless, and dead in our affections towards Him.  
  
If there were more blessed revelations to our soul   
of the Person and work, grace and glory, beauty and   
blessedness of the Lord Jesus Christ—it is impossible   
but that we would more and more warmly and tenderly   
fall in love with Him—for He is the most glorious object   
that the eyes of faith can see!  
  
He fills heaven with the resplendent beams of His   
glorious majesty—and has ravished the hearts of   
thousands of His dear family upon earth by the   
manifestations of His bleeding, dying love. Just in   
proportion to our **personal, spiritual, experimental   
knowledge of Him**, will be our love to Him.

**I have loved you with an everlasting love**  
  
The Lord has appeared of old unto me, saying,   
"Yes, **I have loved you with an everlasting love**;  
therefore with loving kindness have I drawn you."  
Jer 31:3  
  
There can be no new thought in the mind of GOD.  
  
New thoughts, new feelings, new plans,   
new resolutions continually occur to OUR   
mind—for ours is but a . . .poor,  
fallen,  
fickle,  
changeable nature.   
  
But God has no new—thoughts, feelings, plans or   
resolutions. For if He had, He would be a 'changeable'  
Being—not one great, eternal, unchangeable 'I Am'.   
All His thoughts, therefore, all His plans, all His ways   
are like Himself . . .  
eternal,  
infinite,  
unchanging,  
unchangeable.   
  
The love of Christ to His Church is also—eternal,   
unchanging, unchangeable. And why? Because   
He loves as Deity.   
  
O what a mercy it is for those who have any gracious,  
experimental knowledge of the love of Christ—to believe   
it is from everlasting to everlasting—that no incidents of   
time, no storms of sin or Satan, can ever change or alter   
that eternal love—but that it remains now and will   
remain the same to all eternity!

**Help from the sanctuary**  
"May the Lord answer you when you are in   
distress—may the name of the God of Jacob   
protect you. May he send you **help from the   
sanctuary** and grant you support from Zion."   
Psa 20:1-2  
  
When the soul has to pass through the trying hour   
of temptation, it needs **help from the sanctuary**.   
All other help leaves the soul just where it found it.   
  
Help is sent from the sanctuary because   
his name has been from all eternity . . .  
registered in the Lamb's book of life,  
engraved upon the palms of His hands,  
borne on His shoulder,  
and worn on His heart.   
  
Communications of life and grace from the sanctuary  
produce spirituality and heavenly-mindedness. The   
**breath of heaven** in his soul . . .  
draws his affections upward,  
weans him from earth, and   
makes him a pilgrim and a sojourner here below,   
"looking for a city which has foundations, whose   
builder and maker is God."

**Holy wrestling**  
  
Wherever the Lord brings trials upon the soul,   
He pours out upon it the spirit of grace and   
supplication.   
  
If the child of God has a **burden**;  
if he is laboring under a **strong temptation**;  
if his soul is passing through some **pressing trial**;  
he is not satisfied with merely going through a   
'form of prayer'. There is at such times and  
seasons, a **holy wrestling** . . .  
there are fervent desires;   
there are unceasing groans;   
there is a laboring to enter into rest;   
there is a struggling after deliverance;   
there is a crying unto the Lord—until He   
appears and manifests Himself in the soul.

**A disciple of Jesus**  
  
**A disciple of Jesus** is one who is admitted by   
the Lord Jesus into His school—whom He Himself   
condescends personally to instruct—and who   
therefore learns of Him to be meek and lowly   
of heart.   
  
**A disciple of Jesus** is one who sits meekly at   
the Redeemer's feet—receiving into his heart   
the gracious words which fall from His lips.   
  
But a true and sincere disciple not only listens to   
his Master's instructions, but acts as He bids. So   
**a disciple of Jesus** is one who copies his Master's   
example—and is conformed to his Master's image.   
  
**A disciple of Jesus** is also characterized by the love   
which he bears to his Master—he is one who treasures   
up the words of Christ in his heart—ponders over His   
precious promises—and delights in His glorious Person,   
love, and blood.   
  
**A disciple of Jesus** is one who bears some reflection   
to the image of his heavenly Master—he carries it   
about with him wherever he goes—that men may   
take knowledge of him, that he has been with Jesus.  
The true disciple shines before men with some   
sparkles of the glory of the Son of God.   
  
To have some of these divine features stamped upon   
the heart, lip, and life—is to be **a disciple of Jesus**.   
  
To be much with Jesus is to be made like unto Jesus—  
to sit at Jesus' feet is to drink in Jesus' words—to lean   
upon Jesus' breast is to feel the warm heart of Jesus   
pulsating with love—and to feel this pulsation, causes   
the heart of the disciple to beat in tender and   
affectionate unison—to look up to Jesus, is to see a   
face more marred than the sons of men; yet a face   
beaming with heavenly beauty, dignity, and glory.   
  
To be **a disciple of Jesus**, is to copy His example—  
to do the things pleasing in His sight—and to avoid   
the things which He abhors.   
  
To be **a disciple of Jesus**, is to be as . . .  
meek as He was;   
humble as He was;   
lowly as He was;   
self-denying as He was;   
separate from the world as He was;   
living a life of communion with God—   
as He lived when He walked here below.   
  
To take a worm of the earth and make him **a   
disciple of Jesus** is the greatest privilege God   
can bestow upon man! To select an obstinate,   
ungodly, perverse rebel, and place him in the   
school of Christ and at the feet of Jesus—is the   
highest favor God can bestow upon any child of   
the dust.  
  
How unsurpassingly great must be that kindness   
whereby the Lord condescends to bestow His grace   
on an enemy—and to soften and meeken him by   
His Spirit—and thus cause him to grow up into the   
image and likeness of His own dear Son. Compared   
with this high privilege—all earthly honors, titles and   
robes sink into utter insignificance.

**Sovereign, supreme disposal**  
  
"And God placed all things under His feet and   
appointed Him to be head over everything,"   
Eph 1:22  
  
How vast—how numerous—how complicated are   
the various events and circumstances which attend   
the Christian here below, as he travels onward to   
his heavenly home!   
  
But if all things are put under Jesus' feet—there   
cannot be a single circumstance over which He   
has not supreme control. Everything in providence   
and everything in grace are alike subject to His   
disposal. There is not . . .  
a trial,  
a temptation,  
an affliction of body or soul,  
a loss,  
a cross,  
a painful bereavement,  
a vexation,   
a grief,  
a disappointment,   
a case, state or condition,   
which is not put under Jesus' feet.   
  
**He has sovereign, supreme disposal** **over all   
events and circumstances.** As possessed of   
infinite **knowledge** He sees them—as possessed   
of infinite **wisdom** He can manage them—and as   
possessed of infinite **power** He can dispose and   
direct them for our good and His own glory.   
  
How much trouble and anxiety would we save   
ourselves, could we firmly believe, realize, and   
act on this!   
  
If we could see by the eye of faith that . . .  
every foe and every fear,  
every difficulty and perplexity,  
every trying or painful circumstance,  
every looked-for or unlooked-for event,  
every source of care, whether at present or   
in prospect—are all put under His feet—at His   
sovereign disposal—what a load of anxiety and   
care would be often taken off our shoulders!

**You must not love one of   
these glittering baubles**  
**"Do not love the world or anything in   
the world."** 1Jn 2:15  
  
This is a very wide sentence. It stretches forth   
a hand of vast grasp. It places us, as it were,   
upon a **high mountain**, and it says to us,   
"Look around you—there is not one of these   
things which you must love."   
  
It takes us, again, to the **streets of a crowded   
city**—it shows us shop windows filled with objects   
of beauty and ornament—it points us to all the   
wealth and grandeur of the rich and noble, and   
everything that the human heart admires and   
loves. And having thus set before us, it says,  
"None of these things are for you. **You must not   
love one of these glittering baubles**—you must  
not touch one of them, or scarcely look at them,   
lest, as with Achan, the golden wedge and the   
Babylonish garment should tempt you to take   
them and hide them in your tent."   
  
The precept takes us through the **world** as a   
mother takes a child through a bazaar—with   
playthings and ornaments on every side—and   
says, "You must not touch one of these things."   
  
In some such similar way the precept would, as   
it were, take us through the world—and when we   
had looked at all its playthings and its ornaments,   
it would sound in our ears—"Don't touch any one   
of them; they are not yours—not for you to enjoy,   
not for you even to covet!"   
  
Can anything less than this be intended by those   
words which should be ever sounding in the ears   
of the children of God—"Do not love the world or   
anything in the world"?

**One unmingled scene of   
happiness and pleasure**  
"In My Father's house are many mansions;   
if it were not so, I would have told you. I   
go to prepare a place for you." Joh 14:2  
  
O that we could lift our eyes to those blessed   
abodes—those mansions of heavenly bliss—   
where no sorrow intrudes,   
where sin is unknown,   
where tears are wiped from off all faces,   
where there is . . .  
no languishing body,  
no wasting sickness,  
no pining soul,  
no doubt,   
no fear,   
no darkness,  
no distress—   
but **one unmingled scene of happiness and   
pleasure**—and the whole soul and body are   
engaged in singing the praises of the Lamb!   
  
And what crowns the whole—there is the   
eternal enjoyment of those pleasures which   
are at the right hand of God forevermore!   
  
But how lost are we in the contemplation of   
these things—and though our imagination may   
seem to stretch itself beyond the utmost   
conception of the mind, into the countless   
ages of a never-ending eternity, yet are we   
baffled with the thought—though faith   
embraces the blessed truth.   
  
But in that happy land, the immortal soul and   
the immortal body will combine their powers   
and faculties to enjoy to the uttermost all   
that God has prepared for those who love Him.

**The rod was dipped in love**  
  
"I will bear the indignation of the Lord,   
because I have sinned against Him."   
Mic 7:9  
  
It is a view of our sins against God that  
enables us to bear the indignation of the   
Lord against us and them.   
  
As long as we are left to a spirit of pride and   
self-righteousness, we murmur at the Lord's   
dealings when His hand lies heavy upon us.   
  
But let us only truly feelwhat we rightly deserve  
—that will silence at once all murmuring. You may   
murmur and rebel sometimes at your hard lot in  
**providence**. But if you feelwhat you deserve—it   
will make you water with 'tears of repentance'  
the hardest cross.

So in **grace**, if you feel the weight of your sins,   
and mourn and sigh because you have sinned   
against God, you can lift up your hands sometimes   
with holy wonder at God's patient mercy that He   
has borne with you so long—that He has not smitten   
you to the earth, or sent your guilty soul to hell.   
  
You will see, also, that the heaviest strokes were   
but fatherly chastenings—that **the rod was dipped   
in love**—and that it was for your good and His glory   
that it was laid on you.   
  
When this sense of merited indignation comes into   
the soul, then meekness and submission come with   
it, and it can say with the prophet—"I will bear the   
indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned   
against Him."   
  
**You would not escape the rod if you might.**

**You can trust no minister really and fully.**  
  
"Grace and **truth** came by Jesus Christ." Joh 1:17  
  
**The way to learn truth** is to be much in   
prayer to the Lord Jesus Christ. Beg of Him to   
teach you Himself—for He is the best teacher.   
The words which He speaks, they "are spirit   
and life." What He writes upon our hearts is   
written in characters which will "stand every   
storm and live at last."   
  
We forget what we learn from 'man'—but   
we never forget what we learn from Jesus.   
  
'Men' may deceive—Christ cannot.  
  
**You can trust no minister really and fully.**   
  
Though you may receive truth from his lips,   
it is always mixed with human infirmity. But   
what you get from the lips of Jesus—you get   
in all its purity and power.   
  
It comes warm from Him—it comes cold from 'men'.   
  
It drops like the rain and distills like the dew from   
His mouth—it comes only second-hand from men.   
  
If I preach to you the truth, I preach indeed as the   
Lord enables me to speak. **But it is He who must   
speak with power to your souls to do you any   
real good.** Look then away from me—look beyond   
me—to Him who alone can teach us both.   
  
By looking to Jesus in the inmost feelings of your   
soul, you will draw living truth from out of His bosom   
into your own—from His heart into your heart—and thus   
will come feelingly and experimentally to know the   
blessedness of His own declaration—"I am the truth."

**Buried in the grave of   
carnality and worldliness**  
  
"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ,   
set your hearts on things above, where Christ   
is seated at the right hand of God." Col 3:1  
How many there are even of those who desire   
to fear God who are kept down by the **world**,   
and to whom it has not lost its attractive power.  
  
They are held fast, at least for a time, by worldly   
business—or entangled by worldly people or worldly   
engagements . . .  
their partners in business or their partners in life;  
their carnal relatives or their worldly children;  
their numerous connections or their social habits;  
their strong passions or their deep rooted prejudices;   
all bind and fetter them down to earth.   
  
There they grovel and lie amid "the smoke, and stir   
of this dim spot which men call earth;" and so bound   
are they with the cords of their sins, that they scarcely   
seek deliverance from them—or ever desire to rise   
beyond the mists and fogs of this dim spot into a   
purer air—so as to breathe a heavenly atmosphere, and   
rise up with Jesus from the grave of their corruptions.   
  
But they shall never be **buried in the grave of carnality   
and worldliness.**

**A solitary drop of this holy anointing oil**  
  
"As for you, the **anointing** you received from   
Him remains in you, and you do not need   
anyone to teach you. But as His **anointing**   
teaches you about all things and as that   
anointing is real, not counterfeit . . ."   
1Jn 2:27  
 **Have you ever had a solitary drop of this   
holy anointing oil fall upon your heart?**   
  
One drop, if it be but a drop, will sanctify you   
forever to the service of God. There was not   
much of the holy anointing oil used for the   
service of the tabernacle, when we consider the   
size and quantity of what had to be consecrated.   
When he went through the sacred work, he   
touched one vessel after another with **a drop**of oil—for **one drop** sanctified the vessel to   
the service of the tabernacle.   
  
There was **no repetition** of the consecration   
needed—it abode. So if you ever had a drop of   
God's love shed abroad in your heart—a drop of   
the anointing to teach you the truth as it is in   
Jesus—a drop to penetrate, to soften, to heal,   
to feed—and give light, life, and power to your   
soul—you have the unction from the Holy One—

you know all things which are for your salvation,   
and by that same **holy oil** you have been sanctified   
and made fit for an eternal inheritance.

**'Practical atheists', we daily   
prove ourselves to be.**  
We profess to believe in an All-mighty, All-present,   
All-seeing God. But we would be highly offended   
if a person said to us, "You do not **really** believe   
that God sees everything—that He is everywhere   
present—that He is an Almighty Jehovah." We   
would almost think that he was taking us for   
an atheist! **And yet** **'practical atheists', we   
daily prove ourselves to be.**  
For instance, we profess to believe that **God sees   
everything.** And yet we are plotting and planning   
as though He saw nothing.   
  
We profess to know that **God can do everything.**   
And yet we are always cutting out schemes, and   
carving out contrivances, as though He were like   
the gods of the heathen, looking on and taking   
no notice.   
  
We profess to believe that **God is everywhere   
present** to relieve every difficulty and bring His   
people out of every trial. And yet when we get  
into the difficulty and into the trial—we speak,   
think, and act, as though there were no such   
omnipresent God, who knows the circumstances   
of our case, and can stretch forth His hand to   
bring us out of it.  
  
Thus the Lord is obliged to thrust us into trials   
and afflictions, because **we are such blind fools**,   
that we cannot learn what a God we have to deal   
with—until we come experimentally into those spots   
of difficulty and trial, out of which none but such a   
God can deliver us.  
  
This, then, is one reason why the Lord often plunges   
His people so deeply into a sense of **sin**. It is to show   
them what a wonderful salvation from the guilt, filth,  
and power of sin, there is in the Lord Jesus Christ.   
  
For the same reason, too, they walk in such scenes   
of **temptation**. It is in order to show them what a   
wonder-working God He is, in bringing them out.   
  
This too is the reason why many of them are so   
**harassed and plagued**. It is that they may not   
live and act as though there were . . .  
no God to go to,  
no Almighty friend to consult,  
no kind Jesus to rest their weary heads upon.  
It is in order to teach them experimentally and   
inwardly those lessons of grace and truth which   
they never would know until the Lord, as it were,   
thus compels them to learn—and actually forces   
them to believe what they profess to believe.  
  
Such pains is he obliged to take with us—**such poor   
scholars, such dull creatures we are.** No child at

a school ever gave his master a thousandth part of   
the trouble that we have given the Lord to teach us.  
  
In order, then, to teach us what a merciful and   
compassionate God He is—in order to open up the   
heights, and depths, and lengths, and breadths of   
His love—He is compelled to treat, at times, His   
people very roughly—and handle them very sharply.  
He is obliged to make very great use of His rod,  
because He sees that "foolishness is so bound up   
in the hearts" of His children—that nothing but the  
repeated "rod of correction will ever drive it far   
from them."

**Dead in sin**  
  
"As for you, you were **dead in** trespasses   
and **sins**." Eph 2:1  
  
To be **dead in sin** is to have . . .  
no present part or lot with God;  
no knowledge of Him;  
no faith, no trust, no hope in Him;  
no sense of His presence;  
no reverence of His awesome Majesty;   
no desire after Him or inclination toward Him;   
no trembling at His word;  
no longing for His grace;  
no care or concern for His glory.   
  
To be **dead in sin** is to be as a beast before Him,   
intent like a brute on satisfying the cravings of lust,  
or the movements of mere animal passion—without   
any thought or concern what shall be the outcome,   
and to be bent upon carrying out into action every   
selfish purpose, **as if we were . . .**  
self creators,  
our own judge,   
our own lord,   
and our own God.   
  
O what a terrible state is it to be thus **dead in sin**,   
and not to know it—not to feel it—to be in no way   
sensible of its present danger and certain end—unless   
delivered from it by a mighty act of sovereign power!   
  
It is this lack of all sense and feeling which makes   
the death of the soul to be but the prelude to that   
second death which stretches through a boundless   
eternity.

**Continual salvation?**  
  
"I cried unto You—**Save me**, and I shall   
keep Your testimonies." Psa 119:146  
  
If you know anything for yourself, inwardly   
and experimentally of . . .  
the evils of your heart,  
the power of sin,  
the strength of temptation,  
the subtlety of your unwearied foe,  
and that daily conflict between nature and   
grace, the flesh and the spirit, which is the   
peculiar mark of the living family of heaven;   
you will find and feel **your need of salvation   
as a daily reality.** There is **present salvation**—  
an inward, experimental, and **continual salvation**   
communicated out of the fullness of Christ as   
a risen Mediator.   
  
You need to be daily and almost hourly   
saved from the . . .  
guilt,   
filth,   
power,   
love, and   
practice   
of indwelling sin.  
  
"I cried unto You—**Save me**, and I shall   
keep Your testimonies." Psa 119:146

**The fatal mistake of thousands**  
  
**The fatal mistake of thousands** is to offer   
unto God the fruits of the **flesh**—instead of   
the fruits of the **Spirit**.   
  
Fleshly holiness,   
fleshly exertions, fleshly prayers,   
fleshly duties,   
fleshly religious forms,   
fleshly zeal—  
these are what men consider good works,   
and present them as such to God.   
  
But well may He "who is of purer eyes than to  
behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity", say   
to all such fleshly workers, "If you offer the **blind**   
for sacrifice, is it not evil? And if you offer the   
**crippled** and the **diseased**, is it not evil?"   
  
All that the flesh can do is evil, for "every   
imagination of man's heart is only evil continually;"   
and to present **the fruits of this filthy heart** to the  
Lord of hosts, is "to offer defiled food upon His altar."   
  
A broken heart,   
a contrite spirit,   
a tender conscience,   
a filial fear of God,   
a desire to please Him,   
a dread to offend the great God of heaven,   
a sense of the evil of sin,   
a desire to be delivered from sin's dominion,   
a mourning over our repeated backslidings,   
grief at being so often entangled in our lusts and passions,   
an acquaintance with our helplessness and weakness,   
simplicity and godly sincerity,   
a hanging upon grace for daily supplies,   
watching the hand of Providence,   
a singleness of eye to the glory of God,  
—these are a few of the fruits of the Spirit.

**The great secret of vital godliness**  
  
**The great secret of vital godliness** is to   
be nothing—that Christ may be all in all.   
  
Every stripping, sifting, and emptying—every trial,   
exercise and temptation that the soul passes through,   
has but one object—to beat out of man's heart that   
cursed spirit of independence which the devil breathed   
into him when he said, "You shall be as gods".   
  
A man must well near be bled to death before   
this venom can be drained out of his veins!

**The filthy holes and puddles   
in which it grovels**  
  
In the first awakenings of the soul, we do not usually   
know much, nor feel much, of our fallen sinful nature.   
We feel more the guilt of sin 'committed' than of sin   
'indwelling'.  
  
The way in which SIN sometimes seems to sleep,   
and at other times to awake up with renewed strength—  
its active, irritable, impatient, restless nature,   
the many shapes and colors it wears,   
**the filthy holes and puddles in which it grovels**,   
the corners into which it creeps,   
its deceitfulness,  
its hypocrisy,  
its craft,  
its deceptive attraction,  
its intense selfishness,  
its utter recklessness,  
its desperate madness,  
and insatiable greediness—are   
**secrets, painful secrets, only   
learned by bitter experience.**

**If the devil ever feels joy**  
  
**If the devil ever feels joy**—it is in making souls miserable.   
  
The **cries** of the damned are his music.   
  
Their **curses** and **blasphemies** are his songs of triumph.   
Their **anguish** and **despair** are his wretched feast.

**Do not fear.**  
  
Say to those who are afraid, "Be strong, and **do   
not fear**, for your God is coming to destroy your   
enemies. He is coming to save you." Isa 35:4  
  
"**Do not fear.**" "Ah! but Lord," the soul says, "I do   
fear. I fear myself more than anybody. I fear . . .  
my base, wicked heart,  
my strong lusts and passions,  
my numerous inward enemies,  
the snares of Satan,  
and the temptations of the world.  
I do fear. I cannot help but fear."  
  
Still the Lord says, "Do not fear."  
  
Here is a child trembling before a large mastiff   
dog; but the father says, "Do not fear, he will   
not hurt you, only keep close to me."  
  
Who is that dog but Satan, that huge mastiff,   
whose jaws are reeking with blood? If the Lord   
says, "Do not fear," why need we fear him?   
He is a chained enemy.   
  
But how the timid soul needs the divine "Fear nots!"   
For without Him, it is all weakness—with Him, all strength;   
without Him, all trembling—with Him, all boldness.   
  
Say to those who are afraid, "Be strong, and **do   
not fear**, for your God is coming to destroy your   
enemies. He is coming to save you." Isa 35:4

**The desire of our soul**  
  
"**The desire of our soul** is to Your Name, and  
to the remembrance of You." Isa 26:8  
  
How sweet and expressive is the phrase, "**The desire  
of our soul**!" How it seems to carry our feelings with it!   
How it seems to describe the longings and utterings of   
a soul into which God has breathed the spirit of grace   
and mercy!   
  
"**The desire of our soul**"—  
the breathing of our heart,  
the longing of our inmost being,  
the cry, the sigh, the panting of our new nature,  
the—  
heavings,  
gaspings,   
lookings,  
longings,  
pantings,  
hungerings,  
thirstings, and   
ventings forth of the new man of grace;  
all are expressed in those sweet and blessed   
words—"**The desire of our soul**."   
  
And what a mercy it is, that there should ever be   
in us "the desire" of a living soul—that though the   
righteous dealings of God are painful and severe,   
running contrary to everything nature loves—yet   
that with all these, there should be dropped into   
the heart that mercy, love, and grace—which draw   
forth the desire of the soul toward the Name of God.   
  
This is expressed in the words that follow, "My   
soul yearns for You in the night—in the morning   
my spirit longs for You!" Isa 26:9.   
  
**Is your soul longing after the Lord Jesus Christ?**   
  
Is it ever, in the night season, panting after the   
manifestation of His presence? hungering and   
thirsting after the dropping of some word from His   
lips—some sweet whisper of His love to your soul?  
  
These are marks of saving grace.   
The carnal, the unregenerate, the ungodly,   
have no such desires and feelings as these!

**O self! Self!**

Oh, to be kept from myself—my . . .  
vile,  
proud,  
lustful,  
hypocritical,  
worldly,  
covetous,  
presumptuous,  
obscene self.

**O self! Self!**Your desperate wickedness,  
your depravity,  
your love of sin,  
your abominable pollutions,  
your monstrous heart wickedness,  
your wretched deadness, hardness,  
blindness, and indifference.  
  
You are a treacherous villain,  
and, I fear, always will be such!

**What are all the gilded toys of time?**  
**What are all the gilded toys of time** compared   
with the solemn, weighty realities of eternity!   
  
But, alas! what wretches are we when left to . . .  
sin,   
self, and   
Satan!   
  
How unable to withstand the faintest breath of temptation!   
  
How bent upon backsliding!   
  
Who can fathom the depths of the human heart?   
  
**Oh, what but grace, superabounding grace,   
can either suit or save such wretches?  
  
  
  
  
That dear, idolized creature**  
"I have been **crucified** with Christ.   
Nevertheless I **live**." Gal 2:20  
  
The crucifixion of **self** is indispensable to following Christ.  
  
What is so dear to a man as himself?   
  
Yet this **beloved self** is to be crucified.   
  
Whether it be . . .  
**proud** self,   
or **ambitious** self,   
or **selfish** self,  
or **covetous** self,   
or, what is harder still, **religious** self;  
**that dear, idolized creature**, which has  
been the subject of so much . . .  
fondling,  
petting,  
pampering,  
nursing–   
this **fondly loved self** has to be taken out of   
our bosom by the hand of God, and nailed to   
Christ's cross! The same grace which pardons   
sin also subdues it!  
  
To be crucified with Christ! To have everything   
that the flesh loves and idolizes put to death!   
**How can a man survive such a process?**  
  
"Nevertheless I **live!**"  
  
As the world, sin, and self are crucified, subdued,   
and subjugated by the power of the cross, the life  
of God springs up with new vigor in the soul.  
  
Here, then, is **the great secret of vital godliness:**  
that the more that sin and self, and the world are   
mortified, the more do holiness and spirituality of   
mind, heavenly affections and gracious desires   
spring up and flourish in the soul.   
  
O! blessed **death!** O! still more blessed **life!**  
  
"I have been **crucified** with Christ.   
Nevertheless I **live**." Galatians 2:20  
  
 **Unquenched, unquenchable!**  
  
"**Many waters cannot quench love; neither   
can floods drown it.**" Son 8:7  
  
The bride uses a figure which shall express the   
insuperable strength of divine love against all   
opposition; and she therefore compares it to   
a fire which burns and burns unquenched and   
unquenchable, whatever be the amount of water   
poured upon it. Thus the figure expresses the   
flame of holy love which burned in the heart of   
the Redeemer as unquenchable by any opposition   
made to it.   
  
How soon is **earthly** love cooled by opposition! A   
little ingratitude, a few hard speeches, cold words   
or even cold looks, seem often almost sufficient to   
quench love that once shone warm and bright. And   
how often, too, even without these cold waters thrown   
upon it, does it appear as if ready to die out by itself.   
  
But the love of Christ was unquenchable by all those   
waters.Not all the ingratitude, unbelief, or coldness   
of His people could quench **His eternal love to them!**  
  
He knew what the Church was in herself,   
and ever would be . . .   
how cold and wandering her affections,   
how roving her desires,   
how backsliding her heart!   
  
But all these waters could not extinguish His love!   
  
It still burnt as a holy flame in His bosom,   
**unquenched, unquenchable!**  
  
"**Many waters cannot quench love; neither   
can floods drown it.**" Son 8:7

**He can crawl like a serpent,   
and he can roar like a lion!**  
  
"So that Satan will not outsmart us. For we are   
very familiar with **his evil schemes**." 2Co 2:11  
  
Satan well knows both how to **allure** and how to  
**attack**; for **he can crawl like a serpent, and he   
can roar like a lion!** He has **snares** whereby he   
entangles, and **fiery darts** whereby he impales.  
  
Most men are easily led captive by him at his will,  
ensnared without the least difficulty in the traps   
that he lays for their feet; for they are as ready   
to be caught as he is to catch them! Why would   
Satan need to roar against them as a lion, if he  
can wind himself around them and bite them as   
a serpent?

**If you want to see what sin really is**  
  
To cast the **sinning angels** out of heaven;   
to banish **Adam** from Paradise;   
to destroy the **old world** by a flood;   
to burn **Sodom and Gomorrah** with fire from heaven–  
these **examples of God's displeasure against sin** were   
not sufficient to express His condemnation of it. He   
would therefore take another way of making it manifest.   
  
And what was this?   
  
By sending His own Son out of His bosom, and offering   
Him as a sacrifice for sin upon the tree at Calvary, He   
would make it manifest how He abhorred sin, and how   
His righteous character must forever condemn it.   
  
See here the **love of God to poor guilty man** in not   
sparing His own Son; and yet the hatred of God against   
sin, in condemning it in the death of Jesus.  
  
It is almost as if God said, "**If you want to see what   
sin really is**, you cannot see it in the depths of hell. I   
will show you sin in blacker colors still– you shall see   
it in the sufferings of My dear Son; in His agonies of   
body and soul; and in what He as a holy, innocent   
Lamb endured under My wrath, when He consented   
to take the sinner's place."  
  
What wondrous **wisdom**,   
what depths of **love**,   
what treasures of **mercy**,   
what heights of **grace**were thus revealed and brought to light in God's   
unsparing condemnation of sin, and yet in His   
full and free pardon of the sinner!  
  
If you have ever had a view by faith of the suffering   
Son of God in the garden and upon the cross; if you   
have ever seen the wrath of God due to you, falling   
upon the head of the God-Man; and viewed a bleeding,   
agonizing Immanuel; then you have seen and felt in   
the depths of your conscience **what a dreadful thing   
sin is.** Then the broken-hearted child of God looks   
unto Him whom he has pierced, and mourns and grieves  
bitterly for Him, as for a firstborn son who has died.  
  
Under this sight he feels what a dreadful thing sin is.  
  
"Oh," he says, "did God afflict His dear Son? Did   
Jesus, the darling of God, endure all these sufferings   
and sorrows to save **my soul** from the bottomless pit?   
O, can I ever hate sin enough? Can I ever grieve and   
mourn over it enough? Can my stony heart ever be   
dissolved into contrition enough, when by faith I see   
the agonies, and hear the groans of the suffering,   
bleeding Lamb of God?"  
  
Christians hate their sins. They hate that sinful, that   
dreadfully sinful flesh of theirs which has so often,   
which has so continually, betrayed them into sin.   
And thus they join with God in passing condemnation   
upon the whole of their flesh; upon all its actings and   
workings; upon all its thoughts and words and deeds;   
and hate it as the prolific parent of that sin which   
crucified Christ, and torments and plagues them.  
  
  
  
  
**The hard-hearted, cold-blooded,   
wise-headed professor**   
  
We are surrounded with **snares**.   
  
**Temptations** lie spread every moment in our path.  
  
These snares and these temptations are so suitable  
to the lusts of our flesh, that we would certainly fall   
into them, and be overcome by them, but for the   
restraining providence or the preserving grace of God.   
The Christian sees this; the Christian feels this.   
  
**The hard-hearted, cold-blooded, wise-headed   
professor sees no snares**. He is entangled in   
them, he falls by them, and not repenting of his   
sins or forsaking them, he makes utter shipwreck   
concerning the faith.   
  
**The child of God . . .**  
sees the snare,   
feels the temptation,   
knows the evil of his heart,   
and is conscious that if God does not   
hold him up, he shall stumble and fall.   
  
As then a burnt child dreads the fire, so he   
dreads the consequence of being left for a   
moment to himself; and the more is he   
afraid that he shall fall.   
  
If his eyes are more widely opened to see . . .  
the purity of God,  
the blessedness of Christ,  
the efficacy of atoning blood,  
and the beauties of holiness,   
the more also does he see the evil of sin, the dreadful   
consequences of being entangled therein. And not only   
so, but his own **helplessness** and **weakness** and **inability**to stand against temptation in his own strength.  
  
And all these feelings combine to raise up a more   
earnest cry, "**Hold me up, and I shall be safe!**"

A stable, a hovel, a hedge, any unadorned corner  
  
This is what the Sovereign Lord says: "Although   
I sent them far away among the nations and   
scattered them among the countries, yet **I will   
be to them as a little sanctuary** in the countries   
where they have gone." Eze 11:16  
  
Every place in which the Lord manifests Himself,   
is a sanctuary to a child of God.   
  
**Jesus is now our sanctuary**, for He is "the true   
place of worship that was built by the Lord and   
not by human hands." We see the power and   
glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.  
  
Every place is a sanctuary, where God manifests   
Himself in power and glory to the soul. Moses,   
doubtless, had often passed by the bush which   
grew in Horeb; it was but a common thorn bush,   
in no way distinguished from the other bushes   
of the thicket. But on one solemn occasion it was   
all "in a flame of fire," for "the angel of the Lord   
appeared unto him in a flame of fire" out of the   
midst; and though it burned with fire, it was not   
consumed. God being in the bush, the ground   
round about was holy, and Moses was bidden to   
take off his shoes from his feet. Was not this  
a sanctuary to Moses? It was, for a holy God was   
there! Thus **wherever God manifests Himself,   
that becomes a sanctuary to a believing soul.**   
  
We don't need places made holy by the ceremonies   
of **man**; but **places made holy by the presence of   
God!**  
  
Then **a stable, a hovel, a hedge, any unadorned   
corner** may be, and is a sanctuary, when God fills   
your heart with His sacred presence, and causes   
every holy feeling and gracious affection to spring   
up in your soul.  
  
  
  
  
Poor, miserable, paltry works of a polluted worm!  
  
"We are all infected and impure with sin. When we   
proudly display **our righteous deeds**, we find they  
**are but filthy rags**. Like autumn leaves, we wither  
and fall. And our sins, like the wind, sweep us away."   
Isa 64:6  
  
We once thought that we could gain heaven by   
our own righteousness. We strictly attended to   
our religious duties, and sought by these and   
various other means to recommend ourselves   
to the favor of God, and induce Him to reward   
us with heaven for our sincere attempts to obey   
His commandments.   
  
And by these religious performances we thought we   
would surely be able to make a ladder whereby we   
could climb up to heaven. This was our **tower of   
Babel**, whose top was to reach unto heaven, and   
by mounting which, we thought to scale the stars.  
  
But the same Lord who stopped the further building   
of the tower of Babel, by confounding their speech   
and scattering them abroad on the face of the earth;   
began to confound our speech, so that we could not   
pray, or talk, or boast as before; and to **scatter all   
our religion like the chaff** of the threshing floor. Our   
mouths were stopped; we became guilty before God;  
and our bricks and mortar became **a pile of confusion!**   
  
When, then, the Lord was pleased to discover to our   
souls by faith, **His** being, majesty, greatness, holiness,   
and purity; and thus gave us a corresponding sense of  
**our** filthiness and folly; then **all our creature religion   
and natural piety** which we once counted as gain, we   
began to see was but loss; that our very religious duties   
and observances, so far from being **for** us, were actually   
**against** us; and instead of pleading for us before God as   
so many deeds of righteousness, were so polluted and   
defiled by sin perpetually mixed with them, that **our   
very prayers were enough to sink us into hell**, had   
we no other iniquities to answer for in heart, lip or life.  
  
But when we had a view by faith of the Person, work,  
love, and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, then we began   
more plainly and clearly to see, with **what religious toys   
we had been so long amusing ourselves**, and what is   
far worse, **mocking God by them**.   
  
We had been secretly despising . . .   
Jesus and His sufferings,  
Jesus and His death,  
Jesus and His righteousness,   
and setting up the **poor, miserable, paltry   
works of a polluted worm** in the place of   
the finished work of the Son of God.   
  
  
  
**Mere toys and baubles**  
  
True religion must be everything or nothing with us.   
In religion, indifference is ruin; neglect is destruction.   
  
Of all losses, the loss of the **soul** is the only one that   
is utterly irreparable and irremediable. You may lose   
**property**, but you may recover the whole or a portion   
of it; you may lose **health**, but you may be restored   
to a larger measure of bodily strength than before   
your illness; you may lose **friends**, but you may obtain   
new ones, and those more sincere and valuable than   
any whom you have lost. But if you lose your **soul**,   
what is to make up for that loss?  
  
Do you ever feel what a tremendous stake heaven   
or hell is? Have you ever felt that **to gain heaven** is   
to gain everything that can make the soul eternally   
happy; and **to lose heaven** is not only to lose   
eternal bliss, but to sink down into . . .   
unfathomable,  
everlasting,  
unutterable woe?   
  
It is this believing sight and pressing sense of eternal   
things; it is this weighty, at times overpowering, feeling   
that they carry in their bosom an immortal soul, which   
often makes the children of God **view the things of   
time and sense as . . .**  
**mere toys and baubles**,  
trifles lighter than vanity,  
and pursuits empty as air,  
and gives them to feel that the things of eternity   
are **the only solid, enduring realities.  
  
  
  
  
Heavenly dew**  
  
"My words descend like **dew**." Deu 32:2  
  
The dew falls imperceptibly. No man can see it fall.   
Yet its **effects** are visible in the morning. So it is with   
the blessing of God upon His Word. It penetrates the   
heart without noise; it sinks deep into the conscience   
without anything visible going on. And as the dew   
opens the pores of the earth and refreshes the ground   
after the heat of a burning day, making vegetation lift   
up its drooping head, so it is with the blessing of God   
resting upon the soul.   
  
**Heavenly dew** comes imperceptibly, falls quietly, and is   
manifested chiefly by its **effects**, as softening, opening,   
penetrating, and secretly causing every grace of the Spirit   
to lift up its drooping head.  
  
Whenever the Lord may have been pleased to bless our   
souls, either in hearing, in reading, or in private meditation,  
have not these been some of the effects? Silent, quiet,   
imperceptible, yet producing an evident impression . . .   
softening the heart when hard,  
refreshing it when dry,  
melting it when obdurate,  
secretly keeping the soul alive, so that it is neither withers   
up by the burning sun of temptation, nor dies for lack of grace.   
  
"May God give you the dew of heaven." Gen 27:28  
  
  
  
 **Coming up from the wilderness**  
  
"**Who is this coming up from the wilderness,  
leaning upon her Beloved?**" Son 8:5  
  
To come up from the wilderness, is to come up out   
of OURSELVES; for we are ourselves the wilderness.   
It is **our wilderness heart** that makes the world   
what it is to us . . .  
our own barren frames;   
our own bewildered minds;   
our own worthlessness and inability;  
our own lack of spiritual fruitfulness;  
our own trials, temptations, and exercises;  
our own hungering and thirsting after righteousness.  
  
In a word, **it is what passes in our own bosom   
that makes the world to us a dreary desert.**   
  
Carnal people find the world no wilderness. It is an   
Eden to them! Or at least they try hard to make it so.   
They seek all their pleasure from, and build all their   
happiness upon it. Nor do they dream of any other   
harvest of joy and delight, but what may be repaid   
in this 'happy valley', where youth, health, and good   
spirits are ever imagining new scenes of gratification.  
  
But the child of grace, exercised with a thousand   
difficulties, passing through many temporal and   
spiritual sorrows, and inwardly grieved with his own   
lack of heavenly fruitfulness, finds the wilderness   
within.   
  
But he still comes up out of it, and this he does   
by looking upward with believing eyes to Him who   
alone can bring him out.   
  
He comes up out of his own **righteousness**, and   
shelters himself under Christ's righteousness.  
  
He comes up out of his own **strength**,   
and trusts to Christ's strength.  
  
He comes up out of his own **wisdom**,   
and hangs upon Jesus' wisdom.  
  
He comes up out of his own tempted, tried,   
bewildered, and perplexed condition, to find rest   
and peace in the finished work of the Son of God.  
  
And thus he comes up out of **the wilderness of   
self**, not actually, but experimentally. Every desire   
of his soul to be delivered from his 'wilderness  
sickening sight' that he has of sin and of himself   
as a sinner. Every aspiration after Jesus, every   
longing look, earnest sigh, piteous cry, or laboring   
groan, all are a **coming up from the wilderness**.   
  
His turning his back upon an ungodly world; renouncing   
its pleasures, its honors, its pride, and its ambition;   
seeking communion with Jesus as his chief delight;   
and accounting all things but loss and rubbish for   
the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus his Lord   
as revealed to his soul by the power of God; this,  
also, is **coming up from the wilderness**.  
  
  
  
  
**When we gaze upon the lifeless corpse**  
  
**From the cradle to the coffin, affliction and sorrow are  
the appointed lot of man.** He comes into the world with   
a wailing cry, and he often leaves it with an agonizing   
groan! Rightly is this earth called "a valley of tears," for   
it is wet with them in infancy, youth, manhood, and old   
age. In every land, in every climate, scenes of misery   
and wretchedness everywhere meet the eye, besides   
those deeper griefs and heart-rending sorrows which lie   
concealed from all observation. So that we may well say   
of **the life of man** that, like Ezekiel's scroll, it is "written   
with lamentations, and mourning and woe."   
  
**But this is not all. The scene does not end here!**   
  
We see up to death, but we do not see beyond death.   
  
To see a man die without Christ is like standing   
at a distance, and seeing a man fall from a lofty   
cliff—we see him fall, but we do not see the crash   
on the rocks below.   
  
So we see an unsaved man die, but **when we gaze   
upon the lifeless corpse**, we do not see how his soul   
falls with a mighty crash upon the rock of God's eternal   
justice! **When his temporal trials come to a close, his   
eternal sorrows only begin!** After weeks or months of

sickness and pain, the pale, cold face may lie in calm   
repose under the coffin lid; when the soul is only just   
entering upon an eternity of woe!  
  
But is it all thus dark and gloomy both in life and death?   
Is heaven always hung with a canopy of black? Are there   
no beams of light, no rays of gladness, that shine through   
these **dark clouds of affliction, misery, and woe** that are   
spread over the human race?  
  
Yes! there is one point in this dark scene out of which  
beams of light and rays of glory shine! "God did not   
appoint us to suffer wrath, but to receive salvation   
through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1Th 5:9  
  
  
  
  
There, on the other side, is my solitary soul  
  
"For what is a man **profited**, if he shall gains the  
whole world, and **loses** his own soul? Or what can  
a man give in exchange for his soul?" Mat 16:26  
  
**Here is my scale of profit and loss.**  
  
I have a soul to be saved or lost.  
  
What then shall I give in exchange for my soul?   
  
What am I profited if I gain the   
whole world and lose my soul?   
  
This deep conviction of a soul to be saved   
or lost lies at the root of all our religion.   
  
**Here, on one side, is the WORLD and all . . .**  
its profits   
its pleasures,  
its charms,  
its smiles,  
its winning ways,  
its comforts,  
its luxuries,  
its honors,   
to gain which is the grand struggle of human life.  
  
**There, on the other side, is my solitary SOUL**,  
to live after death, forever and ever, when the   
world and all its pleasures and profits will sink   
under the wrath of the Almighty.  
  
And this dear soul of mine, my very self, my  
only self, my all, must be lost or saved.   
  
  
  
  
Even your own relatives think you are almost insane  
  
"The Spirit of truth. **The world** cannot receive Him,   
because it **neither sees Him nor knows Him**."   
Joh 14:17  
  
**The world**—that is, the world dead in sin, and the   
world dead in profession—men destitute of the life   
and power of God—**must have something that it can**   
**see**. And, as heavenly things can only be seen by   
heavenly eyes, they cannot receive the things which   
are invisible.   
  
Now this explains why **a religion that presents itself   
with a degree of beauty and grandeur to the natural   
eye will always be received by the world**; while a . . .  
spiritual,  
internal,  
heartfelt and  
experimental   
religion will always be rejected.  
  
**The world can receive a religion that consists of . . .**  
forms,   
rites, and   
ceremonies.   
  
These are things **seen**.  
  
Beautiful buildings,  
painted windows,  
pealing organs,  
melodious choirs,  
the pomp and parade of an earthly priesthood,  
and a whole apparatus of 'religious ceremony',   
carry with them something that the natural eye can   
see and admire. The world receives all this 'external   
religion' because it is suitable to the natural mind   
and intelligible to the reasoning faculties.  
  
But the . . .  
quiet,   
inward,   
experimental,   
divine religion,  
which presents no attractions to the outward eye, but   
is wrought in the heart by a divine operation—the world   
cannot receive this—because it presents nothing that   
the natural eye can rest upon with pleasure, or is   
adapted to gratify their general idea of what religion   
is or should be.  
  
Do not marvel, then, that worldly professors despise a   
religion wrought in the soul by the power of God. **Do not   
be surprised if even your own relatives think you are   
almost insane**, when you speak of the consolations of   
the Spirit, or of the teachings of God in your soul. They   
cannot receive these things, for they have no experience   
of them; and being such as are altogether opposed to   
the carnal mind, they reject them with enmity and scorn.  
  
  
  
  
**Make straight paths for your feet.**  
  
"**Make straight paths for your feet.**" Heb 12:13  
  
Surrounded as we are with a crooked generation,   
professing and profane, whose ways we are but too   
apt to learn; beset on every hand by temptations . . .  
to turn aside into some crooked path,  
to feed our pride,  
to indulge our lusts,   
to gratify our covetousness;  
blinded and seduced sometimes by the god of this world;   
hardened at other times by the deceitfulness of sin; here   
misled by the example, and there bewitched by the flattery   
of some friend or companion; at one time confused and   
bewildered in our judgment of right and wrong; at another   
time entangled, half resisting, half complying, in some   
snare of the wicked one; what a struggle have some of us   
had to **make straight paths for our feet**; and what pain   
and grief that we should ever have made crooked ones.   
  
"But as for me, my feet had almost slipped;  
I had nearly lost my foothold." Psa 73:2  
  
When I said, "My foot is slipping," Your love,   
O Lord, supported me. Psa 94:18  
  
"He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the   
mud and mire; He set my feet on a rock and   
gave me a firm place to stand." Psa 40:2  
  
"Hold me up, and I shall be safe!" Psa 119:117  
  
"I guide you in the way of wisdom and **lead  
you along straight paths**." Pro 4:11  
  
  
  
  
**Have nothing to do with them.**  
  
"They mingled among the pagans and adopted   
their evil customs. They worshiped their idols,   
and this led to their downfall." Psa 106:35-36  
  
The 'carnal professors' of the day see nothing   
wrong, nothing amiss, nothing inconsistent in   
their conduct or spirit, though they are **sunk in . . .  
worldliness,   
carnality, or   
covetousness.**  
But where there is divine life, where the blessed   
Spirit moves upon the heart with His sacred   
operations and secret influences, there will be   
light to see, and a conscience to feel, what is . . .  
wrong,  
sinful,  
inconsistent,  
and improper.  
  
It its but too evident that we cannot be mixed up   
with the professors of the day without drinking, in   
some measure, into their spirit and being more or   
less influenced by their example.  
  
We can scarcely escape the influence of those with  
whom we come much and frequently into contact.   
If they are **dead**, they will often benumb us with   
their corpse-like coldness. If they are **light and  
trifling**, they will often entangle us in their carnal   
levity. If they are **worldly and covetous**, they   
may afford us a shelter and an excuse for our   
own worldliness and covetousness.   
  
Abhor that loose profession, that ready   
compliance with everything which feeds the . . .  
pride,  
worldliness,   
covetousness,  
and lusts of our depraved nature,   
which so stamps the present day with some   
of its most perilous and dreadful characters.  
  
"Having a form of godliness but denying its power.  
**Have nothing to do with them.**" 2 Timothy 3:5  
  
  
  
  
**The foulest filth under the cleanest cloak**  
  
"Take heed unto **yourselves!**" Act 20:28  
  
There are few Christians who have not ever found   
SELF to be their **greatest enemy**. The pride, unbelief,   
hardness, and impenitence of a man's own heart; the   
deceitfulness, hypocrisy, and wickedness of his own   
fallen nature; the lusts and passions, filth and folly of   
his own carnal mind; will not only ever be his **greatest   
burden**, but will ever prove his **most dreaded foe!**   
  
Enemies we shall have from outside, and we may   
at times keenly feel their bitter speeches and cruel   
words and actions. **But no enemy can injure us like   
ourselves!** In five minutes a man may do himself   
more real harm, than all his enemies united could   
do to injure him in fifty years!   
  
To yourself you can be **the most insidious   
enemy** and **the greatest foe!**  
  
In all its forms, SELF in its inmost  
spirit is still a . . .  
**deceitful,  
subtle,  
restless,  
proud, and  
impatient   
creature**; masking its real character in a   
thousand ways, and concealing its destructive   
designs by countless devices.  
  
**We have but to look on the professing church to find . . .**  
the highest **pride** under the lowest humility,  
the greatest **ignorance** under the vainest self-conceit,  
the basest **treachery** under the warmest profession,  
the vilest **sensuality** under the most heavenly piety,  
and **the foulest filth under the cleanest cloak**.  
  
"Take heed unto **yourselves!**" Act 20:28  
  
  
  
  
**Familiarity with sacred things**  
  
"Take heed unto **yourselves!**" Act 20:28  
  
This was Paul's public warning to the elders of   
the church at Ephesus. It was Paul's private   
warning to his friend and disciple, his beloved  
son, Timothy. And do not all who write or speak   
in the name of the Lord need the same warning?   
  
**Familiarity with sacred things** has a natural   
tendency to harden the conscience, where   
grace does not soften and make it tender.   
  
Men may preach and pray until both become a   
mere mechanical habit; and they may talk about   
Christ and His sufferings until they feel as little   
touched by them as a 'tragic actor' on the stage,  
of the sorrows which he impersonates.   
  
Well, then, may the Holy Spirit sound this note of   
warning, as with trumpet voice, in the ears of the   
servants of Christ. "Take heed unto yourselves!"

**Pride, self-conceit, and self-exaltation**

**Pride, self-conceit, and self-exaltation**, are both   
the **chief temptations**, and the **main besetting sins**,   
of those who occupy any public position in the church.  
  
Therefore, where these sins are not mortified by the   
Spirit, and subdued by His grace; instead of being, as   
they should be, the **humblest** of men; they are, with  
rare exceptions, the **proudest**.  
  
Did we bear in constant remembrance our slips, falls,   
and grievous backslidings; and had we, with all this,   
a believing sight of the holiness and purity of God,   
of the sufferings and sorrows of His dear Son, and   
what it cost Him to redeem us from the lowest hell;  
we would be, we must be clothed with humility; and   
would, under feelings of the deepest self-abasement,   
take the lowest place among the family of God, as   
the chief of sinners, and less than the least of all  
the saints.  
  
This should be the feeling of every child of God.  
  
Until this pride is in some measure crucified,  
until we hate it, and hate ourselves for it, the   
glory of God will not be our main object.  
  
  
  
  
**What? Will He forgive us all sins?**  
  
"He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins,  
and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."  
1Jn 1:9  
  
**What? Will He forgive us all sins?**   
  
Every sin that we have committed?   
  
Do we not sin with every breath that we draw?   
  
Is not every **lustful desire** sin?   
And is not every **proud thought** sin?   
And is not every **wicked imagination** sin?   
And is not every **unkind suspicion** sin?   
Every act of **unbelief** sin?   
And every working of a depraved nature sin?  
  
We committed sin when we sucked our mother's   
breast! We committed sin as soon as we were   
able to stammer out a word. And as we grew in   
body, we grew in sinfulness.  
  
**Will He forgive . . .**  
sins of thought,   
sins of look,   
sins of action,   
sins of omission,   
sins of commission,   
sins in infancy,   
sins in childhood,   
sins in youth,   
sins in old age?   
  
**Will He forgive . . .**  
all the base lusts,   
all the filthy workings,   
all the vile actions,   
all the pride,   
all the hypocrisy,   
all the covetousness,   
all the envy, hatred, and malice,   
all the aboundings of inward iniquity?  
  
"The blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin."  
1Jn 1:7  
  
  
  
  
**This sacred anointing**  
  
"But you have an **anointing** from the Holy One."   
1Jn 2:20  
  
Wherever the **anointing** of the Holy One touches   
a man's heart it spreads itself, widening and   
extending its operations. It thus communicates   
divine gifts and graces wherever it comes. It . . .  
bestows and draws out faith,   
gives repentance and godly sorrow,   
causes secret self-loathing, and  
separation from the world,   
draws the affections upwards,  
makes sin hated, and   
Jesus and His salvation loved.   
  
Wherever the **anointing** of the Holy Spirit touches   
a man's heart it diffuses itself through his whole   
soul, and makes him wholly a new creature. It . . .  
gives new **motives**,  
communicates new **feelings**,  
enlarges and melts the **heart**, and  
spiritualizes and draws the **affections** upwards.  
  
Without **this sacred anointing** . . .  
all our religion is a bubble,   
all our profession a lie, and  
all our hopes will end in despair.  
  
O what a mercy to have one drop of this heavenly  **anointing**! To enjoy one heavenly feeling! To taste   
the least measure of Christ's love shed abroad in the   
heart! What an unspeakable mercy to have one touch,   
one glimpse, one glance, one communication out of   
the fullness of Him who fills all in all!  
  
By this **anointing** from the Holy One, the   
children of God are supported under . . .  
afflictions,   
perplexities,   
and sorrows.   
  
By this **anointing** from the Holy One,   
they see the hand of God . . .  
in every **chastisement**,  
in every **providence**,  
in every **trial**,  
in every **grief**, and  
in every **burden**.   
  
By this **anointing** from the Holy One they can   
bear chastisement with meekness; and put   
their mouth in the dust, humbling themselves   
under the mighty hand of God.   
  
Every good word,   
every good work,   
every gracious thought,   
every holy desire,   
every spiritual feeling   
do we owe to this one thing:   
the **anointing** of the Holy One.   
  
"But you have an **anointing** from the Holy One."   
1 John 2:20

**What makes the children of God so strange?**   
  
"To God's elect, **strangers in the world**." 1Pe 1:1  
  
**Strangers!**   
  
**What makes the children of God so strange?**   
  
The grace of God which calls them out of this wretched   
world. Every man who carries the grace of God in his   
bosom is necessarily, as regards the world, a stranger   
in **heart**, as well as in **profession**, and **life**.   
  
As **Abraham** was a stranger in the land of Canaan;   
as **Joseph** was a stranger in the palace of Pharaoh;   
as **Moses** was a stranger in the land of Egypt;   
as **Daniel** was a stranger in the court of Babylon;  
so **every child of God** is separated by grace,   
to be a stranger in this ungodly world.   
  
And if indeed we are to come out from it and to   
be separate, the world must be as much a strange  
place to us; for **we are strangers to . . .**  
its views,   
its thoughts,   
its desires,   
its prospects,   
its anticipations,  
in our daily walk,  
in our speech,  
in our mind,   
in our spirit,   
in our judgment,   
in our affections.  
  
We will be strangers from . . .  
the world's **company**,   
the world's **maxims**,   
the world's **fashions**,   
the world's **spirit**.  
  
"They confessed that they were **strangers**and pilgrims on the earth." Heb 11:13

**By His wounds we are healed**  
  
Sin has thoroughly diseased us,   
and poisoned our very blood.   
  
Sin has diseased our **understanding**, so   
as to disable it from receiving the truth.   
  
Sin has diseased our **conscience**, so as to make it   
dull and heavy, and undiscerning of right and wrong.   
  
Sin has diseased our **imagination**, polluting it   
with every idle, foolish, and licentious fancy.   
  
Sin has diseased our **memory**, making it swift to   
retain what is evil, slow to retain what is good.   
  
Sin has diseased our **affections**, perverting   
them from all that is heavenly and holy, and   
fixing them on all that is earthly and vile.  
  
"But He was pierced for our transgressions, He   
was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment   
that brought us peace was upon Him, and **by   
His wounds we are healed**." Isa 53:5

**Strangle and suffocate it!**  
  
"O Israel, **you have destroyed yourself!**  
But in Me is your help." Hos 13:9  
  
Is not this a true charge? Does not your conscience   
agree with it, as a well founded accusation? Have you   
not willingly with your eyes open, run into some sin,   
which, **but for God's mercy and upholding hand**,   
would have proved your certain destruction? Have you   
not stood upon the very brink of some deep pit, down   
into which one more step would have plunged you?  
  
As you realize the evils of your heart, you see what   
a marvel it is, that grace is kept alive in your bosom!   
You see yourself surrounded on every side with that   
which would inevitably destroy it—but for the mighty  
power of God!   
  
You look back and wonder how the life of God in your   
soul has been preserved so many years. Sometimes you   
have been sunk into such carnality. You have felt such   
emptiness of all good, and such proneness to all evil,  
that you wonder how you have not been swallowed up,   
overcome, and carried away into the pit of destruction!  
  
David said, "I am as a wonder to many." But you can   
say, "**I am a wonder to myself!**" The world, the devil,   
and your own evil heart, have been for years all aiming   
to destroy the precious life of God in your soul—all   
stretching out their hands to **strangle and suffocate it!**  
  
And yet, in His mysterious wisdom, unspeakable grace,   
and tender compassion, He has kept the holy principle   
alive in your soul.   
  
O, the mystery of redeeming love!   
  
**O, the blessedness of preserving grace!** We   
have been preserved, upheld, and kept by the   
power of God through faith unto salvation!  
  
"O Lord, You have kept me alive, that I should  
not go down to the pit!" Psa 30:3  
  
"He has preserved our lives and kept our  
feet from slipping!" Psa 66:9  
  
"Hold me up, and I shall be safe!" Psa 119:117

**They will never perish!**  
  
"For God has reserved a priceless inheritance for   
His children. It is kept in heaven for you, pure and   
undefiled, beyond the reach of change and decay!  **And God, in His mighty power, will protect you   
until you receive this salvation.**" 1Pe 1:4-5   
  
The elect are preserved in Christ, BEFORE they are   
called by grace. **They are kept by the power of   
God from perishing in their unregeneracy.**   
  
Have not you been almost miraculously **preserved** in the   
midst of dangers, and escaped when others perished by   
your side—or been raised up as it were, from the very   
brink of destruction and the very borders of the grave?   
  
Besides some striking escapes from what are called   
'accidents', three times in my life—once in infancy, once   
in boyhood, and once in manhood, I have been raised   
up from the borders of the grave, when almost everyone   
who surrounded my bed thought I would not survive the   
violence of the attack.   
  
Were not these instances of being **kept** by the power   
of God? **I could not die until God had manifested His   
purposes of electing grace and mercy to my soul.**  
  
  
But the elect are also kept by the mighty power of God   
AFTER they are called by grace; for they are in the hollow   
of His hand, and are kept as the apple of His eye.   
  
I will not say they are kept from **all** sins. Yet I will   
say that they are kept from **damning** sins. They are   
kept especially from three things . . .  
from the dominion of **sin**,   
from daring and final **presumption**,   
from lasting and damnable **error**.   
  
They are never drowned in the sins and evils of the   
present life so as to be swallowed up in them—for   
**it is impossible that they can ever be lost!**  
  
They are therefore preserved in hours of temptation,   
for they are guarded by all the power of Omnipotence,   
shielded by the unceasing care and watchfulness of   
Him who can neither slumber nor sleep.   
  
Looking back through a long vista of years, can **you** not   
see how the hand of God has been with you—how He has   
held you up, and brought you through many a storm, and   
preserved you under powerful temptations? How gently   
He sometimes drew you on, or sometimes kept you back?   
  
"I give them eternal life, and **they will never perish!**   
No one can snatch them out of My hand!" Joh 10:28  
  
Having **chosen** us, God **begets** us with His word,   
**regenerates** us by a divine influence, and makes   
us **new creatures** by the power and influence of   
the Holy Spirit.

**All things!**  
  
"You crowned Him with glory and honor and put   
**all things** under His feet. In putting **all things**   
under Him, God left nothing that is not subject  
to Him." Heb 2:7-8  
  
See the sovereign supremacy of Jesus!  
  
There may be circumstances in your earthly lot   
which at this moment are peculiarly trying. You look   
around and wonder how this or that circumstance will   
terminate. At present it looks very dark—clouds and   
mists hang over it, and you fear lest these clouds   
may break, not in showers upon your head, but burst   
forth in the lightning flash and the thunder stroke!  
  
But **all things** are put in subjection under Christ's feet!  
That which you dread cannot take place except by His   
sovereign will—nor can it move any further except by   
His supreme disposal. Then make yourself quiet. He will   
not allow you to be harmed. That frowning providence  
shall only execute His sovereign purposes, and it shall   
be among those **all things** which, according to His   
promise, shall work together for your good.  
  
**None of our trials come upon us by chance!** They are   
all appointed in weight and measure—are all designed   
to fulfill a certain end. And however painful they may   
at present be, yet they are intended for your good.   
  
**When the trial comes upon you**, what a help it would   
be for you if you could view it thus, "This trial is sent for   
my good. It does not spring out of the dust. The Lord   
Himself is the supreme disposer of it. It is very painful   
to bear; but let me believe that He has appointed me   
this peculiar trial, along with every other circumstance.   
He will bring about His own will therein, and either   
remove the trial, or give me patience under it, and   
submission to it."   
  
You may be afflicted by **sickness**. It is not by chance   
that such or such sickness visits your body—that the Lord   
sees fit to afflict head, heart, chest, liver, hand, foot, or   
any other part of your body. **All things** are put in subjection   
under Him, and He has not exempted sickness and disease!  
Whatever you suffer in bodily disease, He appoints and   
arranges it for your good. Be resigned to His holy and   
almighty will.  
  
All your **afflictions** are put under the feet of Jesus! You may   
think at times how harshly you are dealt with—mourning, it   
may be, under family bereavements, sorrowing after the loss   
of your 'household treasures'—a beloved husband, wife, or   
child. But O that you could bear in mind that **all your   
afflictions**, be they what they may, are put under the feet   
of Jesus, so that, so to speak, not one can crawl from under   
His feet but by His permission—and, **like** **scolded hounds**, they   
crawl again beneath them at a word of command from His lips!  
  
Let us then hold fast this truth, for on it depends so   
much of our comfort.

**Without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish!**  
  
"Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her. He did   
this to present her to Himself as a **glorious** church **without   
a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish!** Instead, she will   
be holy and without fault." Eph 5:25, Eph 5:27  
  
**What are we ourselves as viewed by our own eyes?**  
**Full of spots, wrinkles, and blemishes!** And What do we   
see in ourselves every day, but **sin and filth and folly?**   
What evil is there in the world that is not in us, and in   
our hearts? It is true others cannot read our hearts. But   
we read them; yes, are every day, and sometimes all the   
day reading them. And what do we read there? Like   
Ezekiel's scroll, it is "written within and without;" and   
we may well add, if we rightly read what is there written,   
we have every reason to say it is "full of lamentations,   
and mourning, and woe." Eze 2:10  
  
For I am sure that there is nothing that we see there   
every day and every hour, but would cover us with   
shame and confusion of face, and make us blush to   
lift up our eyes before God, or almost to appear in   
the presence of our fellow man!   
  
But neither others, nor we ourselves, now see what   
the church one day will be, and what she ever was in   
the eyes of Jesus! He could look through all the sins   
and sorrows of this intermediate period, and fix His   
eye upon the bridal day—the day when before   
assembled angels, in the courts of heaven, in the   
realms of eternal bliss, He would present her to   
Himself a glorious church, **without a spot or wrinkle   
or any other blemish**, but holy, and without fault.  
  
**O what a day will that be**, when the Son of God   
shall openly wed His espoused bride; when there   
shall be heard in heaven, "what sounded like a   
great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and   
like loud peals of thunder, shouting—Hallelujah!   
For our Lord God Almighty reigns! Let us rejoice and   
be glad and give Him glory! For **the wedding of the   
Lamb has come**, and His bride has made herself ready."   
Rev 19:6-7

**Bitten by this serpent's tooth**  
No man has ever sounded the depths of the fall.   
  
The children of God have indeed discoveries of the   
evil of sin. And they have such views at times of   
the desperate wickedness and awful depravity of   
human nature, that they seem as if filled with   
unspeakable horror at the hideous enormity of   
the corruption that works in their carnal mind.   
  
But no man has ever seen, as no man ever can see,   
in this time-state, what sin is to its full extent, and   
as it will be hereafter developed in the depths of hell.   
  
We may indeed in our own experience see something   
of its **commencement**; but we can form little idea of   
its **progress**, and still less of its **termination**. For sin   
has this peculiar feature attending it, that **it ever   
spreads and spreads until it involves everything   
that it touches in utter ruin.**   
  
We may compare it in this point of view to the   
venom-fang of a serpent. There are serpents of   
so venomous a kind, as for instance the Cobra   
de Capello, or hooded snake, that the introduction   
of the minutest portion of venom from their poison   
tooth will in a few hours convert all the fluids of   
the body into a mass of putrefaction. A man shall   
be in perfect health one hour, and **bitten by this   
serpent's tooth** shall in the next, be a loathsome   
mass of rottenness and corruption. **Such is sin.**  
The introduction of sin into the nature of Adam at   
the fall was like the introduction of poison from the   
fang of a deadly serpent into the human body. It at   
once penetrated into his soul and body, and filled   
both with death and corruption.  
  
Or, to use a more scriptural figure, sin may be   
compared to the disease of **leprosy**, which usually   
began with a "bright spot," or "rising in the skin",   
scarcely perceptible, and yet spread and spread   
until it enveloped every member, and the whole   
body becoming a mass of putrefying hideous   
corruption.  
  
Or sin may be compared to a **cancer**, which begins   
perhaps with a little lump causing a slight itching,   
but goes on feeding upon the part which it attacks,   
until the patient dies worn out with pain and suffering.   
  
Now if sin be . . .  
this **venom fang,**this **spreading leprosy,**this **loathsome cancer**;   
if its destructive power be so great that, unless   
arrested and healed, it will destroy body and soul   
alike in hell, the remedy for it, if remedy there be,   
must be as great as the malady. Thus if there be . . .  
a cure for sin,  
a remedy for the fall,  
a deliverance from the wrath to come,   
it must be at least as full and as complete   
as the ruin which sin has entailed upon us.  
  
The man who has slight, superficial views and feelings   
of **sin** will have equally slight and superficial views of   
the **atonement** made for sin. The groans of Christ will   
never sound in his ears as the dolorous groans of an   
agonizing Lord; the sufferings of Christ will never be   
opened up to his soul as the sorrows of Immanuel, God   
with us; the death of Christ will never be viewed by him,   
as the blood shedding of the darling Son of God. While   
he has such slight, superficial views of the **malady**, his   
views of the **remedy** will be equally slight and superficial.   
  
As we are led down into a spiritual knowledge of **self**and **sin**, so we are led up into a gracious knowledge   
of the Lord Jesus Christ.  
  
By suffering all the penalties of our sin, Jesus redeems   
us from the lowest hell and raises us up to the highest   
heaven—empowering poor worms of earth to soar above   
the skies and live forever in the presence of Him who   
is a consuming fire!  
  
"And she will have a son, and you are to name Him   
Jesus, for **He will save His people from their sins**."   
Mat 1:21

**Like a weed upon a dung-heap!**  
  
**"I hate pride and arrogance!"** Pro 8:13  
  
Our hearts are desperately proud.  
  
If there is one sin which God hates more than   
another, and more sets Himself against, it is   
the sin of **pride**.   
  
**Like a weed upon a dung-heap**, pride grows  
more profusely in some soils, especially when   
well fertilized by . . .  
rank,  
riches,  
praise,  
flattery,  
our own ignorance,  
and the ignorance of others.  
  
We all inherit pride from our fallen ancestor   
**Adam**, who got it from **Satan**, that "king over   
all the children of pride."   
  
Those, perhaps, who think they possess the   
least pride, and view themselves with wonderful   
self-admiration as the humblest of mortals, may   
have more pride than those who feel and confess   
it. It may only be more deeply hidden in the dark   
recesses of their carnal mind.   
  
As God then sees all hearts, and knows every   
movement of pride, whether we see it or not,   
**His purpose is to humble us!**  
  
When I look back upon my life, and see . . .  
all my **sins**,  
all my **follies**,  
all my **slips**,  
all my **falls**,   
my conscience testifies of the many things   
I have thought, said, and done, which . . .  
grieve my soul,  
make me hang my head before God,  
put my mouth in the dust, and  
confess my sins unto Him.  
  
When I contrast my own exceeding   
sinfulness with . . .  
God's greatness,  
God's majesty,  
God's holiness, and  
God's purity . . .  
I fall down, humbly and meekly before Him,  
I put my mouth in the dust,  
I acknowledge I am vile.  
  
"I am nothing but dust and ashes." (Abraham)  
  
"Behold, I am vile!" (Job)  
  
"Woe to me! I am ruined!" (Isaiah)  
  
"I am a sinful man!" (Peter)

**He alone can rescue me**  
  
"My eyes are always looking to the Lord for  
help, for **He alone can rescue me** from the  
traps of my enemies." Psa 25:15

"Oh, please help us against our enemies,  
for all human help is useless." Psa 60:11  
  
What a mighty God we have to deal with!   
  
And what would suit our case but a mighty God?   
  
Have we not mighty **sins**?   
  
Have we not mighty **trials**?   
  
Have we not mighty **temptations**?  
  
Have we not mighty foes and mighty **fears**?   
  
And who is to deliver us from all this mighty army,  
except the mighty God? It is not a 'little God' (if I may   
use the expression) that will do for God's people. They   
need a 'mighty God', because they are in circumstances   
where none but a mighty God can intervene in their behalf.   
  
And it is well worth our notice that the Lord puts His   
people purposely into circumstances where they may   
avail themselves, so to speak, of His omnipotent power,   
and thus know from living personal experience, that He   
is a mighty God, not in mere doctrine and theory, but   
a mighty God in their special and particular behalf.   
  
Why, if you did not feelingly and experimentally know . . .  
your mighty sins,   
your mighty trials,  
your mighty temptations,  
your mighty fears,  
you would not need a mighty God.   
  
O how this brings together the strength of God and   
the weakness of man! How it unites poor helpless   
creatures with the Majesty of heaven! How it conveys  
to feeble, worthless worms the very might of the  
Omnipotent Jehovah!  
  
This sense of . . .  
our weakness and His power,   
our misery and His mercy,   
our ruin and His recovery,   
the aboundings of our sin and   
the super-aboundings of His grace;  
a feeling sense of these opposite yet harmonious   
things, brings us to have personal, experimental   
dealings with God. And it is in these personal   
dealings with God that the life of all religion consists.

"The Lord hears His people when they call to Him for help.  
He rescues them from all their troubles." Psa 34:17

**The Lord sometimes flogs His children home!**  
  
"**As chastened, yet not killed**." 2Co 6:9  
  
The Lord does not see fit to lay the same chastisements   
upon all His people. **He has rods of different sizes and   
different descriptions**; though all are felt to be rods   
when God brings them upon the back.  
  
The Lord chastises with one hand, and upholds with the   
other. In your spiritual experience, you may have passed  
under **many chastising strokes.** And when they fell upon   
you, they seemed to come as a killing sentence from God's   
lips. You feared your **illness** might end in death. Under your   
**bereavement**, you felt as if you could never hold up your  
head again. You thought your **providential losses** might   
prove to be your earthly ruin. Your **family afflictions**   
seemed to be so heavy, as to be radically incurable.   
  
All these were **killing strokes**. But though chastened,  
you were not killed. You lost no divine life thereby;   
but you lost much that **pleased the flesh**; much that   
**gratified the creature**; much that looked well for   
days of prosperity, but would not abide the storm.   
  
But you lost nothing that was for your real good.   
  
If you lost bodily health; you gained spiritual health.   
  
If you lost a dear husband or child; God filled up the   
void in your heart by making Christ more precious.   
  
If you had troubles in your family; the Lord made it up   
by giving more manifestations of His love and grace.   
  
Your very losses in providence were for your good;   
for God either made them up, or what you lost in   
providence He doubled in grace.   
  
So that though chastened; **you are not killed!**  
  
Has anything that has happened to you quenched   
or extinguished the life of God in your soul?   
  
As the dross and tin were more separated; has not   
the gold shone more brightly? Have you not held   
spiritual things with a tighter grasp? **When God   
chastens His people, it is not to kill them; it is . . .**  
to make them partakers of His holiness,   
to revive their drooping graces,  
to make them more sincere, upright and tender in conscience,   
to make them more separate from the world,  
to make them seek more His glory,  
to make them have a more single eye to His praise,  
to make them live more a life of faith.   
  
Here is the blessedness—that **when God chastises   
His people**, it is not for their injury, but for their profit;   
not for their destruction, but for their salvation; not to   
treat them with the unkindness of an enemy, but with   
the love of a friend!  
  
Look at the afflictions, chastenings and grievous sorrows  
that you have passed through. **Have they been . . .**  
friends to you, or enemies?  
instruments of helping you, or hindrances?  
ladders whereby you have climbed up to heaven,   
or steps whereby you have descended into hell?  
means of taking you nearer to Christ, or means   
of carrying you more into the world?   
  
If you know anything of God's chastening, you will   
say, "Every stroke has brought me nearer to God!   
**He has flogged me home!**" As a father will seize   
his truant boy out of a horde of other children and   
flog him home, so **the Lord sometimes flogs His   
children home!** Every stroke laid upon their back   
brings them a step nearer to their home in the  
mansions above!  
  
In your own experience, you know that **God's   
chastenings have not killed you**. But rather they   
have been the means of reviving and keeping   
alive the work of grace upon your heart!  
  
"**As chastened, yet not killed**." 2Co 6:9

He may talk like an angel, and live like a devil.  
  
There is "a knowledge of the things of God" which a   
man may possess without a personal experience of   
the new birth—without any divine operation upon his   
soul whatever, or any participation of the grace of God.  
  
>From reading the scriptures and hearing the Gospel  
preached, many attain to **a carnal, intellectual,   
barren head knowledge of the truth;** who, as to   
any **experimental, vital, saving acquaintance**   
with it, are still in the very gall of bitterness and   
the bond of iniquity.   
  
A man may have the 'knowledge of an **apostle**'   
and the 'worldliness of a **Demas**'.  
  
He may be clear in **head**, and rotten in **heart**.  
  
**He may talk like an angel, and live like a devil.**  
  
He may understand all mysteries and all knowledge,   
and be nothing but a hypocrite and an impostor.   
  
In our day such characters abound in the churches.   
  
But distinct from this "head knowledge", as distinct   
from it as heaven from hell, there is a most blessed   
"spiritual knowledge" of the things of God, with   
which the people of God are favored.  
  
"Then **He opened their minds** so they could  
understand the Scriptures." Luk 24:45

**This idol-making, idol-loving world**  
  
'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians.   
You know how I brought you to Myself and  
carried you on eagle's wings." Exo 19:4  
  
The idea here, is of snatching His people out of   
Egypt as an eagle would snatch her young away   
from the hands of the spoiler of her nest, and bear   
them away and aloft on her outstretched wings.   
  
Deliverance . . .  
from **idolatry**,  
from **bondage**,  
from a state of **degradation** and **abject slavery**,   
is the leading idea of bringing His people out of Egypt.   
  
So, spiritually, the Lord bears us out of a worse Egypt, by  
His Almighty power. Has He given you some deliverance   
from the **world** and the spirit of it, and brought you to   
Himself by the power of His grace? Has He carried you   
up out of **sin** . . .  
its open commission,  
its secret practice,  
its inward indulgence,   
and broken in some measure the love and the power of it?   
  
Has He carried you not only out of the grosser iniquities of   
Egypt, but its more 'refined and acceptable sins', such as . . .  
creature idolatry,  
religious lip-service,  
self-righteousness, and  
mocking God by superstition, tradition, and vain ceremony?  
  
Has He carried you, as on eagles' wings, out of all   
the **idols** of Egypt? For Egypt was a land teeming   
with idolatry, and therefore an apt emblem of **this   
idol-making, idol-loving world**.  
  
"I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of   
Egypt, so that you would no longer be **slaves** to   
the Egyptians." Lev 26:13  
  
"Praise be to the Lord, for He has **saved** you from   
the Egyptians and from Pharaoh. He has **rescued**   
His people from the power of Egypt!" Exo 18:10

**Accomplished actors**  
  
"The **pulpit** has its **accomplished**   
**actors**, as well as the **playhouse!**"  
  
  
  
  
He has given me a cup of deep sorrow to drink  
  
**"He has filled me with bitterness. He has given me  
a cup of deep sorrow to drink."** Lam 3:15  
  
The Lord's people have many hard lessons which they   
have to learn in the 'school of Christ'. **Each one has to   
carry a daily cross**, and are burdened and pressed down   
under its weight. This daily cross may and does differ in   
individuals. But every child of God has his own cross,   
which **laid upon his shoulders by an invincible hand**, he   
has, for the most part, to carry down to the very grave.   
  
Thus, some of God's people are afflicted in **body** from   
the very time the Lord begins His work of grace upon   
their heart. Or if exempt from disease, are shattered   
in nerve, depressed in spirits, and weighed down by   
lassitude and languor, often harder to bear than   
disease itself.  
  
Some are tied to **ungodly partners**, meeting   
with opposition and persecution at every step.  
  
Others have nothing but **trouble in their family**,   
either from the invasion of death into their circle,   
or what sometimes is worse than death—disgrace,   
shame, and ungodliness.   
  
Others have little else but one continual series   
of losses and crosses in their circumstances,   
wave after wave rolling over their heads.  
  
**O, view the family of God toiling homeward . . .**  
some dragging along an afflicted body;  
others a wounded spirit;  
others carrying upon their shoulders dying children;  
others with scarcely a rag to their back or a crust in their hand;  
footsore,  
fearful in heart,  
trembling at a rustling leaf,  
a deep river to pass, and  
a furious enemy in sight.  
  
"Even though the fig trees have no blossoms, and there  
are no grapes on the vine; even though the olive crop  
fails, and the fields lie empty and barren; even though  
the flocks die in the fields, and the cattle barns are empty,  
yet I will rejoice in the Lord! I will be joyful in the God of  
my salvation. **The Sovereign Lord is my strength!**"  
Hab 3:17-19  
  
  
  
  
**Were we left wholly in its hands!**  
  
"No **temptation** has seized you except what  
is common to man." 1Co 10:13  
  
There is **not a single sin ever perpetrated by man**   
which does not lie deeply hidden in the recesses of   
**our** fallen nature! But these sins do not stir into   
activity until temptation draws them forth.   
  
Temptationis to the corruptions of the heart, what   
fire is to stubble. Sin lies quiet in our carnal mind   
until temptation comes to set it on fire.   
  
Temptation is to our corrupt nature, what the spark   
is to gunpowder. Have you not found this sad truth:   
how easily by temptation are the corruptions of our   
wretched heart set on fire, and burst into every kind   
of daring and dreadful iniquity?  
  
**In temptation,** **we learn what sin is . . .**  
its dreadful nature,  
its aggravated character,  
its fearful workings,  
its mad, its desperate upheavings against God,   
and **what we are or would be,**   
**were we left wholly in its hands!**  
  
"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into  
temptation." Mat 26:41  
  
"Hold me up, and I shall be safe!" Psa 119:117  
  
  
  
  
**Romantic dreams of pleasure and earthly joy?**  
  
"**The things on earth will be shaken**, so that only  
eternal things will be left." Heb 12:27  
  
**Man is always seeking happiness in some shape or   
other, in the things of this world.** He does not see or   
feel that outside of God, happiness is impossible; and   
that to seek it in 'the creature' is to add sin to sin. But   
look at this vain attempt in a variety of instances.  
  
Look at **people young in life**. What romantic prospects   
dance before their eyes! "What dreams of love and home   
by flowery streams!" But what a rude shock do these 'dreams   
of earthly happiness' usually experience! This is true of most,  
if not all, who build their hopes of happiness on 'the creature'.   
But particularly so in the case of the family of God. How  
jealous is He of all such schemes of earthly bliss—and how,  
sooner or later, He shatters them all by His mighty hand!  
  
Look, for instance, at **health**, that indispensable element of   
all earthly happiness! What a rude shock many of the dear   
family of God have experienced in their earthly tabernacle,   
even in their youthful days, by accident or disease, so as to   
mar all earthly happiness almost before the race of life was   
begun!  
  
Look again at **wedded happiness**—that "perpetual fountain  
of domestic sweets"—how bitter a drop often falls from the  
hands of God into that honeyed cup! Why does that mourning  
**widow** sigh? Why does her heart swell, and her eye run over?  
What does that scalding drop on her cheek mean?  
  
How many a blooming **daughter** has faded away in consumption  
before a mother's eye! How many a fine strong **son** has been  
cut down by an accident—or sudden illness has borne him away   
to the cold grave, in the very pride and prospect of life!  
  
But apart from these elements of shattered and broken  
creature happiness, what **disappointment**, what **vexation,**what **sorrow** and **care** we find in everything we put our   
hands to! Even with health and home unbroken, wife and   
child untouched by death's cold hand, there is **sin and   
misery enough in a man's own bosom** to fill his heart  
with continual sorrow!  
  
Thus wisely and mercifully, **all our attempts to grasp   
earthly happiness** fail and come to nothing.  
Child of grace, do not murmur at the hand of the Lord which   
has broken your 'dreams of creature happiness'. God does not   
intend that you should have your heaven here on earth, nor   
live after the fashion of this world. It is **a kind hand, though a   
rough one**, which blasts all your schemes of creature happiness,   
which breaks your body into pieces with sickness, blights all your   
prospects of wealth, and fame, and reputation, and ambition,   
and pours bitter gall into each honeyed cup.  
  
**Why** does the Lord brake all your earthly schemes   
of human happiness? **Why** does He blight all . . .  
your prospects,  
your plans of ambition and of success in life,  
your **romantic dreams of pleasure and earthly joy?**   
  
That they may all be removed out of your hearts' affections;   
and give you happiness which shall endure forever and ever!  
  
"Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot   
be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God   
acceptably with reverence and awe." Heb 12:28  
  
  
  
**The love of the truth**  
  
"They perish because they did not receive **the love of  
the truth**, that they might be saved." 2Th 2:10  
  
There is a receiving of 'the truth', and a receiving of   
'the **love** of the truth'. These two things widely differ.   
  
To receive the truth will not necessarily save; for many   
who receive the truth, never receive 'the **love** of the truth'.   
  
Professors by thousands receive the truth into their   
judgment, and adopt the plan of salvation as their creed;   
but are neither saved nor sanctified thereby. But to receive   
'the **love** of the truth' by Jesus being made sweet and   
precious to the soul, is to receive salvation itself.   
  
"Yes, He is very precious to you who believe." 1Pe 2:7  
  
  
  
  
**These "lovers" of ours**  
"I will run after **my lovers** and sell myself to   
them for food and drink, for clothing of wool   
and linen, and for olive oil." Hos 2:5  
  
Here is the opening up of what we are by nature,   
what our carnal mind is ever bent upon, what we   
do or are capable of doing, except as held back by   
the **watchful providence** and **unceasing grace**   
and **goodness** of the Lord.   
  
**These "lovers" of ours** are our old sins and former   
lusts which still crave for gratification. To these   
sometimes the carnal mind looks back and says,   
"**Where are my lovers** that gave me my food and   
drink? Where are those former delights that so   
pleased my vile passions, and so gratified my   
base desires?"   
  
These lovers, then, are . . .  
the lust of the flesh,   
the lust of the eyes,   
and the pride of life;  
all which, **unless subdued by sovereign grace**,   
still work in our depraved nature, and seek to   
regain their former sway.  
  
But the Lord, for the most part, mercifully interposes,   
nor will He usually let His children **do** what they gladly   
would do; or **be** what they gladly would be. He says,   
"therefore I will block your path with thornbushes; I   
will wall you in so that your cannot find your way."   
(Hos 2:6)   
  
The Lord, in His providence or in His grace, prevents   
our carnal mind from carrying out its base desires;   
hedges up our way with thorns—by which we may   
spiritually understand prickings of conscience, stings   
of remorse, pangs of penitence—which are so many   
thorny and briery hedges that fence up the way of   
transgression, and thus prevent our carnal mind from   
breaking forth into its old paths, and going after these   
former lovers to renew its ungodly alliance with them.   
  
A hedge of thorns being set up by the grace of God,   
our soul is unable to break through this strong fence,   
because the moment that it seeks to get through it,  
or over it, every part of it presents a pricking brier or   
a sharp and strong thorn, which wounds and pierces   
our conscience.   
  
What infinite **mercy**, what surpassing **grace**, are hereby   
manifested! Were our conscience not made thus tender   
so as to feel the pricking brier, we can hardly tell what   
might be the fearful consequence, or into what a miserable   
abyss of sin and transgression our soul would fall.   
  
But **these lacerating briers** produce remorse of soul   
before God; for finding, as the Lord speaks, "that   
when she runs after her lovers, she won't be able   
to catch up with them. She will search for them but   
not find them," there comes a longing in her mind   
for purer pleasures and **holier delights than her   
adulterous lovers could give her**. And thus a change  
in her feelings is produced, a revolution in her desires.   
"Then she will say, I will go back to my Husband as   
at first, for then I was better off than now."   
  
The idea is of an adulterous wife contrasting   
the innocent enjoyments of her first wedded   
love—with the state of misery into which she   
had been betrayed by base seducers.   
  
And thus the soul spiritually contrasts its former   
enjoyment of the Lord's presence and power—with   
its present state of darkness and desertion. "Where,"   
she would say, "are my former delights, my first joys,   
and the sweetness I had in days now passed, in knowing,   
serving, and worshiping the Lord? Ah! He was a kind and  
loving husband to me in those days. I will return to Him   
if He will graciously permit me, for it was better with me   
when I could walk in the light of His countenance, than   
since I have been seeking for my lovers, and reaping   
nothing but guilt, death, and condemnation."  
  
  
  
  
**It is in these storms**  
"When **the storm** has swept by, the wicked are gone;  
but the righteous stand firm forever." Pro 10:25  
  
The very **storms** through which the believer passes,   
will only strengthen him to take a firmer hold of Christ.   
  
As the same wind that blows down the shallow-rooted   
tree, only establishes the deep-rooted tree—so the   
same **storms** which uproot the 'shallow professor',   
only establish the 'true believer' more firmly in Christ.  
  
Though **these storms** may shake off some of his 'leaves',   
or break off some of the 'rotten boughs' at the end of the   
branch, they do not uproot the believer's faith, but rather   
strengthen it.   
  
**It is in these storms that he learns . . .**  
more of his own weakness, and of Christ's strength;  
more of his own misery, and of Christ's mercy;  
more of his own sinfulness, and of superabounding grace;  
more of his own poverty, and of Christ's riches;  
more of his own desert of hell, and of his own title to heaven.   
  
**It is in these storms** that the same blessed Spirit who  
began the work carries it on; and goes on to engrave   
the image of Christ in deeper characters upon his heart;   
and to teach him more and more experimentally the   
truth as it is in Jesus.  
  
"Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy!  
I look to You for protection.  
I will hide beneath the shadow of Your wings  
until **this violent storm** is past." Psa 57:1

**His secret power and influence**  
  
"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent  
Me **draws** him." Joh 6:44  
  
"I have loved you, My people, with an everlasting love.  
With unfailing love I have **drawn** you to Myself."   
Jer 31:3  
  
None can really come to Jesus by faith, unless this  **drawing power** is put forth.  
  
The Holy Spirit—that gracious and blessed Teacher, acts   
upon the soul by **His secret power and influence**, puts   
'cords of love' and 'bands of mercy' around the heart, and   
by the **attractive influence** that He puts forth, **draws** the   
soul to Jesus' feet; and in due time reveals Him as the   
chief among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely one.  
  
As the Spirit reveals and manifests these precious   
things of Christ to the soul, He raises up a living faith   
whereby Jesus is sought unto, looked unto, laid hold of,   
and is brought into the heart with a divine power, there   
to be enshrined in its warmest and tenderest affections.  
  
All through its Christian pilgrimage, this blessed Spirit   
goes on to deepen His work in the soul, and to discover   
more and more of the suitability, beauty, and blessedness  
of the Lord Jesus, as He draws the soul more and more   
unto Him. There is no maintaining of the light, life, and   
power of God in our souls, except as we are daily coming   
unto Jesus as the living stone, and **continually living   
upon Him** as the bread of life.  
  
  
  
  
**Every kind of sin**  
  
**"He gave Himself to redeem us from   
every kind of sin."** Tit 2:14  
  
Sins of **heart**.   
  
Sins of **lip**.  
  
Sins of **life**.   
  
There are **five things as regards sin**, from   
which our blessed Lord came to redeem us . . .  
its guilt,  
its filth,  
its power,  
its love,  
its practice.   
  
By His death, He redeemed us from sin's **guilt**.  
  
By the washing of regeneration,   
He delivers us from sin's **filth**.  
  
By the power of His resurrection,   
He liberates us from sin's **dominion**.  
  
By revealing His beauty,   
He frees us from sin's **love**.  
  
By making the conscience tender in His fear,  
He preserves us from sin's **practice**.  
  
"The blood of Jesus purifies us from **all sin**."   
1 John 1:7  
  
  
  
  
**If your flesh had its full swing?**"The old sinful nature loves to do evil, which is just   
opposite from what the Holy Spirit desires. And the   
Spirit gives us desires that are opposite from what  
the sinful nature desires. These two forces are  
constantly fighting each other, so that **you cannot   
do the things that you would do**." Gal 5:17  
  
At times, we can hardly tell **how we are kept from evil.**   
  
There is in those who fear God, **a spiritual principle**   
which holds them up, and keeps them back from the   
ways of sin and death in which the flesh would walk.   
This inner principle of grace and godly fear has, in   
thousands of instances, preserved the feet of the saints,   
and **kept them from doing things that would have . . .**  
ruined their reputation,  
blighted their character,  
brought reproach upon the cause of God, and  
the greatest grief and distress into their own conscience!  
  
They **cannot** do the EVIL things that they would do.   
  
The **flesh** is always lusting towards evil, but **grace**is a counteracting principle to repress and subdue it.   
Grace does not wholly overcome the evil lustings of  
the flesh, but it can prevent those lustings from being  
carried out into open action. For the Spirit fights  
against the flesh, and will not let it altogether reign   
and rule, nor have its own will and way unchecked.   
  
What a mercy lies couched here! **For what would   
you be, if your flesh had its full swing?**What **evil** is there which you would not do?  
  
What **crime** which you would not commit?  
  
What **slip** which you would not make?  
  
What open and horrid **fall** which you would not be   
guilty of—**unless you were upheld by Almighty   
power**—and the flesh curbed and checked from   
running its destructive course?   
  
We can never praise God sufficiently for His **restraining   
grace**—for **what would we be without it?**   
  
"Hold me up, and I shall be safe!" Psa 119:117

**A coward's castle**  
  
A pastor has no right to turn the pulpit into **a   
coward's castle**, and from there attack those   
in the congregation, whom he is afraid to meet   
face to face privately.  
  
It is cruelly unfair to attack an individual who  
cannot defend himself—to hold him up, as if on   
the horns of the pulpit, before the congregation,   
(who generally know pretty well who is meant),   
and to condemn him without hearing his side,   
with the pastor being the only judge and jury.

**Some beloved idol?**  
  
"**Because the whole land is filled with idols, and the  
people are madly in love with them.**" Jer 50:38  
  
Have we not all in our various ways,   
**set up some beloved idol** . . .  
something which **engaged our affections**,   
something which **occupied our thoughts**,   
something to which we **devoted all the energies of our minds**,   
something for which we were **willing to labor** night and day?   
  
Be it **money**,   
be it **power**,   
be it **esteem of men**,   
be it **respectability**,   
be it **worldly comfort**,   
be it **literary knowledge**,   
there was **a secret setting up of SELF in one or   
more of its various forms, and a bowing down   
to it as an idol.**   
  
The man of business makes **money** his god.   
  
The man of pleasure makes the **lust of the flesh** his god.   
  
The proud man makes **his adored SELF** his god.   
  
The Pharisee makes **self-righteousness** his god.   
  
The Arminian makes **free-will** his god.  
  
The Calvinist makes **dry doctrine** his god.  
  
All in one way or other, however they may differ   
in the object of their idolatrous worship, agree in   
this: that they give a preference in their esteem   
and affection to their peculiar idol, above the one   
true God.  
  
"**Idols will be utterly abolished and destroyed.**"   
Isa 2:18  
  
There is, then, a time to break down these   
idols which our fallen nature has set up.  
  
And have not we experienced some measure of   
this breaking down, both externally and internally?  
  
Have not our idols been in a measure smashed   
before our eyes, our prospects in life cut up and   
destroyed, our airy visions of earthly happiness   
and our romantic paradises dissolved into thin air,   
our creature-hopes dashed, our youthful affections  
blighted, and the objects from which we had fondly  
hoped to reap an enduring harvest of delight  
removed from our eyes?   
  
And likewise, as to **our religion** . . .  
our good opinion of ourselves,  
our piety and holiness,   
our wisdom and our knowledge,  
our understanding and our abilities,  
our consistency and uprightness;  
have they not all been broken down, and  
made a heap of ruins before our eyes?  
  
  
  
**That monstrous creature within us!**  
  
"**I abhor the pride of Jacob.**" Amo 6:8  
  
O cursed **pride**, that is ever lifting up its head in our   
hearts! Pride would even pull down God that it might   
sit upon His throne. Pride would trample under foot   
the holiest things to exalt itself!  
  
Pride is **that monstrous creature within us**, of such  
ravenous and indiscriminate gluttony, that the more  
it devours, the more it craves!  
  
Pride is that **chameleon** which assumes every color;   
that **actor** which can play every part; and yet which   
is faithful to no one object or purpose, but **to exalt   
and glorify self!**  
  
"I will put an end to the pride of the mighty." "God  
will bring down their pride." (Eze 7:24, Isa 25:11)  
 **God means to kill man's pride!** And oh, what cutting  
weapons the Lord will sometimes make use of to kill   
a man's pride!   
  
How He will bring him sometimes into the depths   
of temporal poverty, that He may make a stab at   
his **worldly pride!**  
  
How He will bring to light the iniquities of his youth,   
that He may mortify his **self-righteous pride!**  
  
How He will allow sin to break forth, if not openly,   
yet so powerfully within, that piercing convictions   
shall kill his **spiritual pride!**And what deep discoveries of internal corruption will   
the Lord sometimes employ, to dig down to the root,   
and cut off the core of **that poisonous tree, pride!**  
  
The Searcher of hearts dissects and anatomizes **this  
inbred evil**, cuts down to it through the quivering and  
bleeding flesh, and pursues with His keen knife its  
multiplied windings and ramifications.  
  
"The day is coming when **your pride will be brought   
low** and the Lord alone will be exalted." Isa 2:11  
  
"The arrogance of all people will be brought low.  
**Their pride will lie in the dust**. The Lord alone  
will be exalted!" Isa 2:17  
  
"The Lord Almighty has done it to **destroy your pride**   
and show His contempt for all human greatness."  
Isa 23:9  
  
  
  
**Salvation**  
  
And they were shouting with a mighty shout,   
"**Salvation** comes from our God on the throne   
and from the Lamb!" Rev 7:10  
  
The sweetest song that heaven ever proclaimed,   
the most blessed note that ever melted the soul,   
is **salvation**.  **Saved FROM . . .**  
death and hell;   
the worm which never dies;   
the fire which is never quenched;   
the sulphurous flames of the bottomless pit;  
the companionship of tormenting fiends and  
all the foul wretches under which earth has groaned;  
blaspheming God in unutterable woe;  
an eternity of misery without end or hope!   
  
**Saved INTO . . .**  
heaven;   
the sight of Jesus as He is;  
perfect holiness and happiness;  
the blissful company of holy angels and glorified saints;  
and all this during the countless ages of a blessed eternity!  
  
What tongue of men or angels can describe the  
millionth part of what is contained in the word **salvation**?

**The soul's natural element**  
  
Before the soul can know anything about salvation,  
it must learn deeply and experimentally the nature  
of sin, and of itself, as stained and polluted by sin.  
  
It is proud, and needs to be humbled.  
  
It is careless, and needs to be awakened.  
  
It is alive, and needs to be killed.  
  
It is full, and requires to be emptied.  
  
It is whole, and needs to be wounded.  
  
It is clothed, and requires to be stripped.   
  
**The soul is, by nature . . .**  
self-righteous;  
self-seeking;   
buried deep in worldliness and carnality;   
utterly blind and ignorant;   
filled with . . .  
presumption,   
arrogance,   
conceit   
and enmity;  
hateful to all that is heavenly and spiritual.   
  
**Sin, in all its various forms, is   
the soul's natural element.**   
  
Some of the features of the unregenerate   
nature of man are . . .  
covetousness,   
lust,   
worldly pleasure,   
desire of the praise of men,   
an insatiable thirst after self-advancement,   
a complete abandonment to all that can please   
and gratify every new desire of the heart,   
an utter contempt and abhorrence of everything that   
restrains or defeats its mad pursuit of what it loves.  
  
Education,   
moral restraints,   
or the force of habit,   
may restrain the outbreaking of inward corruption,   
and dam back the mighty stream of indwelling sin,   
so that it shall not burst all its bounds, and desolate   
the land. But no moral check can alter human nature.   
  
A chained tiger is a tiger still.   
  
"The Ethiopian cannot change his   
skin, nor the leopard his spots."   
  
To make man the direct contrary of what  
he originally is; **to make him . . .**  
love God instead of hating Him;  
fear God, instead of mocking Him;  
obey God, instead of rebelling against Him;  
to do this mighty work, and to effect this wonderful   
change, requires the implantation of a new nature   
by the immediate hand of God Himself.   
  
Natural light,   
natural love,   
natural faith,   
natural obedience,   
in a word, **all natural religion,   
is here useless and ineffectual.**   
  
  
  
  
**Godly sorrow**  
  
**Godly sorrow** springs from a view of a suffering   
Savior, and manifests itself by . . .  
hatred of self,  
abhorrence of sin,  
groaning over our backslidings,  
grief of soul for being so often entangled by our lusts and passions,  
**and is accompanied by . . .**  
softness,   
meltings of heart,   
flowings of love to the Redeemer,  
indignation against ourselves,  
and earnest desires never to sin more.  
  
  
  
 **But our coward flesh shrinks from them!**  
"I have refined you but not in the way silver   
is refined. Rather, **I have refined you in** **the  
furnace of suffering.**" Isa 48:10  
 **What benefit is there in afflictions?**   
  
Does God send them without an object in view?   
  
Do they come merely, as the men of the world think,  
**by chance?** No! There is benefit intended by them.   
  
The branch cannot bear fruit unless it be pruned.  
  
The love of sin cannot be cast out; the soul cannot   
be meekened, humbled, softened, and made contrite;  
the world cannot be embittered; the things of time   
and sense cannot be stripped of their false hue and   
their magic appearance—**except through affliction.**  
  
Our greatest **blessings** usually spring from our greatest   
**afflictions**—they prepare the heart to receive them; they   
empty the vessel of the poisonous ingredients which   
have filled it, and fit it to receive gospel wine and milk.  
  
To be without . . .  
these afflictions,  
these griefs,  
these trials,  
these temptations,   
is to write ourselves destitute of grace.  **But our coward flesh shrinks from them!**  
We are willing to walk to heaven; but not to walk   
there in God's way. Though we see in the Scripture  
that **the path to glory is a rough and rugged way**;   
yet when our feet are planted in **that painful and   
trying path**, we shrink back; our coward flesh refuses   
to walk in that road.   
  
God therefore, as a sovereign, brings those afflictions   
upon us which He sees most fit for our profit and His   
glory, without ever consulting us, without ever allowing   
us a choice in the matter.   
  
And He will generally cause our afflictions to come from   
the most unexpected source, and in a way most cutting   
to our feelings—in the way that of all others we would   
least have chosen—and yet in a way which of all others,  
**is most for our profit.**  
  
God deals with us like a surgeon dealing with a   
diseased organ. **How painful the operation!   
  
How deep the knife cuts!**   
  
How long it may be before the wound is healed!   
  
Yet every stroke of the knife is indispensable!  
A skillful and faithful surgeon would not do his   
duty if he did not dissect it to the very bottom.   
  
As pain before healing is necessary, and must be   
produced by the knife; so spiritually, we must be   
wounded and cut in our souls, **as long, and as   
deeply as God sees needful**, that in His own   
time we may receive the consolation.  
  
Do the afflictions we pass through humble us?   
  
Do they deaden the love of the world in our hearts?  
  
Do they purge out hypocrisy?   
  
Do they bring us more earnestly to the throne of grace?  
  
Do they discover to us sins that we have not before seen?  
  
Do they penetrate into our very hearts?   
  
Do they lay bare the corrupt fountain that we carry within us?   
  
Do they search and test us before a heart-searching God?   
  
Do they meeken and soften our spirit?   
  
"I have refined you but not in the way silver   
is refined. Rather, **I have refined you in** **the  
furnace of suffering.**" Isa 48:10

The filthy holes and puddles in which it grovels  
  
"**The human heart** is most deceitful and desperately  
wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?" Jer 17:9  
  
The sin of our fallen nature is a very **mysterious** thing.   
We read of "the mystery of iniquity". Sin has **depths**   
which no human plumbline ever fathomed, and **lengths**   
which no mortal measuring line ever yet measured out.   
  
Thus the way in which sin sometimes seems to sleep;  
and at other times to awake with renewed strength;  
its active, irritable, impatient, restless nature;  
the many shapes and colors it wears;  
**the filthy holes and puddles in which it grovels**;  
the corners into which it creeps;  
its deceitfulness;  
its hypocrisy;  
its craftiness;  
its persuasiveness;  
its intense selfishness;  
its utter recklessness;  
its desperate madness;  
its insatiable greediness;  
are secrets, painful secrets,   
only learned by bitter experience.  
  
"**The human heart** is most deceitful and desperately  
wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?" Jer 17:9

**The Lord's secret power in our souls?**  
  
"**He gives power** to those who are tired and worn  
out; and **increases strength** to the weak." Isa 40:29  
  
The Lord's people are often in the state that they have   
no might. All their power seems exhausted, and their   
strength completely drained away; sin appears to have   
gotten the mastery over them; and they feel as if they   
had neither will nor ability to run the race set before   
them, or persevere in the way of the Lord.  
  
Now what has kept us to this day? Some of you have   
made a profession ten, twenty, thirty, or forty years.   
  
**What has kept us?**   
  
When powerful temptations were spread for our feet,   
what preserved us from falling headlong into them?   
  
When we felt the workings of strong lusts, what kept  
us from being altogether carried captive by them?   
  
When we look at the **difficulties** of the way, the   
**perplexities** which our souls have had to grapple with,   
the **persecutions** and hard blows from sinners and   
saints that we have had to encounter—what has still   
kept in us a desire to fear God, and a heart in some   
measure tender before Him?   
  
**When we view the . . .**  
infidelity,  
unbelief,  
carnality,  
worldly-mindedness,  
hypocrisy,  
pride, and  
presumption of our fallen nature,   
**what has kept us still . . .**  
believing,  
hoping,  
loving,  
longing,  
and looking to the Lord?   
  
**When we think of our . . .**  
deadness,  
coldness,  
torpidity,  
rebelliousness,  
perverseness,  
love to evil,  
aversion to good, and  
all the abounding corruptions of our nature,   
what has kept us from giving up the very profession   
of religion, and swimming down the powerful current   
that has so long and so often threatened to sweep   
us utterly from the Lord? **Is it not the putting forth   
of** **the Lord's secret power in our souls?**   
  
Can we not look back, and recall to mind our first   
religious companions; those with whom we started   
in the race; those whom we perhaps envied for their   
greater piety, zeal, holiness, and earnestness; and   
with which we painfully contrasted our own sluggishness   
and carnality; admiring them, and condemning ourselves?   
  
**Where are they all, or the greater part of them?**   
Some have embraced soul-destroying errors; others   
are buried in a worldly religious system; and others   
are wrapped up in delusion and fleshly confidence.  
  
Thus, while most have fallen into the snares of the devil;   
God, by putting forth **His secret power in the hearts of His   
fainting ones**, keeps His fear alive in their souls; holds up   
their goings in His paths that their footsteps slip not; brings   
them out of all their temptations and troubles; delivers them   
from every evil work; and preserves them unto His heavenly   
kingdom. **He thus secures the salvation of His people by   
His own free grace.**  
  
**How sweet and precious it is . . .**  
to have our strength renewed;  
to have fresh grace brought into the heart;  
to feel the mysterious sensations of renovated life;  
to feel the everlasting arms supporting the soul . . .  
fighting our battles for us,   
subduing our enemies,   
overcoming our lusts,   
breaking our snares, and   
delivering us out of our temptations!

**God's house?**  
  
In the New Testament Scriptures, we find mention   
made in several places of "the house of the God."   
The New Testament never, in any one instance,  
means, by "the house of God," any material building.   
  
It has come to pass, through the traditions  
received from the fathers, that . . .   
buildings erected by man,  
collections of bricks and mortar,  
piles of squared and cemented stones,   
are often called "the house of God."   
  
In ancient Popish times they invested a consecrated   
building with the title of "**God's house**", thus endeavoring   
to make it appear as though it were a holy place in which   
God specially dwelt. They thus drew off the minds of the   
people from any internal communion with God, and   
possessed them with the idea that He was only to be   
found in some holy spot, consecrated and sanctified   
by rites and ceremonies.   
  
The same leaven of the Pharisees has infected the   
Church of England; and thus she calls her consecrated   
buildings, her piles of stone and cement, "churches,"   
and "houses of God."   
  
And even those who profess a purer faith, who dissent   
from her unscriptural forms, have learned to adopt the   
same carnal language, and even they, through a   
misunderstanding of what "the house of God" really   
is, will call such a building as we are assembled in   
this morning, "the house of God."   
  
How frequently does the expression drop from the  
pulpit, and how continually is it heard at the prayer  
meeting, "coming up to the house of God," as though   
any building now erected by human hands could be   
called the house of the living God.   
  
It arises from a misunderstanding of the Scriptures,   
and is much fostered by that priestcraft which is in   
the human heart, inciting us to believe that God is   
to be found only in certain buildings set apart for   
His service.

When the Holy Spirit preaches the gospel  
  
We often know the **theory** of the gospel,  
before we know the **experience** of the gospel.   
  
We often receive the doctrines of grace into   
our **judgment**, before we receive the grace of   
the doctrines into our **soul**.  
  
**We therefore need to be . . .**  
brought down,  
humbled,  
tried,  
stripped of every prop;  
**that the gospel may be to us . . .**  
more than a sound,  
more than a name,  
more than a theory,  
more than a doctrine,  
more than a system,  
more than a creed;  
**that it may be . . .**  
soul enjoyment,  
soul blessing,  
and soul salvation.   
  
**When the Holy Spirit preaches the gospel**   
to the poor in spirit, the humbled, stripped,   
and tried—it is a gospel of glad tidings indeed   
to the sinner's broken heart.

**We get entangled with some idol**  
  
Wherever the grace of God is, it constrains its   
partaker to desire to live to His honor and glory.   
  
But he soon finds the difficulty of so doing.   
Such is . . .  
the weakness of the **flesh**,  
the power of **sin**,  
the subtlety of **Satan**,  
the strength of **temptation**, and  
the **snares** spread on every side for our feet,   
that we can neither **do** what we want, nor **be**   
what we want. Before we are well aware, **we   
get entangled with some idol**, or drawn aside   
into some indulgence of the flesh, which brings   
darkness into the mind, and may cut us out  
some bitter work for the rest of our days.  
  
But we thus learn not only the weakness of the   
flesh, but where and in whom all our strength lies.   
  
And as the **grace of the Lord Jesus**, in its suitability,   
in its sufficiency and its super-aboundings, becomes   
manifested in and by the weakness of the flesh; a   
sense of His wondrous love and care in so bearing   
with us, in so pitying our case, and manifesting mercy   
where we might justly expect wrath, constrains us   
with a holy obligation to walk in His fear and to live   
to His praise.

**The sins and slips of the saints?**  
The Scriptures faithfully record   
**the falls of believers . . .**  
the drunkenness of Noah,  
the incest of Lot,  
the unbelief of Abraham,  
the peevishness of Moses,  
the adultery of David,  
the idolatry of Solomon,  
the pride of Hezekiah,  
the cowardice of Mark and  
the cursing and swearing of Peter.  
  
But why has the Holy Spirit left on record   
**the sins and slips of the saints?**   
  
First, that it might teach us that they were   
saved by grace as poor, lost, and ruined sinners;   
in the same way as we hope to be saved.   
  
Secondly, that their **slips and falls** might be   
so many beacons and warnings, to guard the   
people of God against being overtaken by   
the same sins; as the apostle speaks, "All   
these events happened to them as examples   
for us. They were written down to warn us."  
  
And thirdly, that the people of God, should   
they be overtaken by sin, might not be cast   
into despair; but that from seeing recorded   
in the Scripture the **slips and failings** of the   
saints of old, they might be lifted up from   
their despondency, and brought once more   
to hope in the Lord.

**Cain, Esau, Saul, Ahab, Judas**  
"**Godly sorrow** brings repentance that   
leads to salvation and leaves no regret,   
but **worldly sorrow** brings death."   
2Co 7:10  
  
These **two kinds of repentance** are to be carefully   
distinguished from each other; though they are often   
sadly confounded. **Cain, Esau, Saul, Ahab, Judas,** **all   
repented.** But their repentance was the remorse of   
natural conscience, not the godly sorrow of a broken   
heart and a contrite spirit. They trembled before God   
as an angry Judge, but were not melted into contrition   
before Him as a forgiving Father.   
  
They neither hated their sins nor forsook them.   
  
They neither loved holiness nor sought it.   
  
**Cain** went out from the presence of the Lord.   
  
**Esau** plotted Jacob's death.   
  
**Saul** consulted the witch of Endor.   
  
**Ahab** put honest Micaiah into prison.  
  
**Judas** hanged himself.  
  
How different from this forced and false repentance   
of a reprobate, is the repentance of a child of God;  
that true repentance for sin, that godly sorrow, that   
holy mourning which flows from the Spirit's gracious   
operations!   
  
**Godly sorrow** does not spring from a sense of the   
wrath of God in a broken law, but from His mercy   
in a blessed gospel; from a view by faith of the   
sufferings of Christ in the garden and on the cross;   
from a manifestation of pardoning love; and is always   
attended with self-loathing and self-abhorrence; with   
deep and unreserved confession of sin and forsaking   
it; with most hearty, sincere and earnest petitions to   
be kept from all evil; and a holy longing to live to the   
praise and glory of God.

**Here, and here alone**  
  
**Standing then at the cross of our adorable Lord**,   
**we may see . . .**  
the law thoroughly fulfilled,  
its curse fully endured,  
its penalties wholly removed,  
sin eternally put away,  
the justice of God amply satisfied,  
all His perfections gloriously harmonized,  
reconciliation completely effected,  
redemption graciously accomplished,  
and the church everlastingly saved.   
  
**Here, and here alone**, we see **sin** in its blackest   
colors, and **holiness** in its most attractive beauties.   
  
**Here, and here alone**, we see the **love of God**   
in its tenderest form, and the **anger of God** in   
its deepest expression.   
  
**Here, and here alone**, we see the eternal and   
unalterable displeasure of the Almighty against sin,   
and the rigid demands of His inflexible justice, and   
yet the tender compassion and boundless love of   
His heart to the election of grace.   
  
**Here, and here alone**, are obtained pardon and peace.  
  
**Here, and here alone**, penitential grief and   
godly sorrow flow from heart and eyes.  
  
**Here, and here alone**, is . . .  
sin subdued and mortified,  
holiness communicated,  
death vanquished,  
Satan put to flight, and  
happiness and heaven begun in the soul.  
  
What **a holy meeting-place** for repenting sinners   
and a sin-pardoning God! What **a healing-place**   
for guilty, yet repenting and returning backsliders!   
What **a door of hope** in the valley of Achor for the   
self-condemned and self-abhorred! What **a safe   
spot** for seeking souls! And what **a blessed   
resorting-place** for the whole family of grace   
in this valley of grief and sorrow.

**Experimental knowledge**  
  
"Now this is eternal life: that they may know  
You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ,  
whom You have sent." Joh 17:3  
  
An **experimental knowledge** of Christ in   
the soul, is **the only relief for sin's . . .**  
poverty,  
guilt,   
leprosy,  
bankruptcy,  
and damnation.  
  
This is the true way of preaching Christ crucified;  
not the mere doctrine of the Cross, but a crucified   
Jesus **experimentally known** to the soul.  
  
I am deeply conscious of my own . . .  
baseness,  
ignorance,  
blindness  
and folly.   
But my malady is too deeply rooted to be healed by   
dry doctrines and speculative theological opinions.  
  
The blood of the Lamb, spiritually and supernaturally  
sprinkled and applied, is **the only healing balm for a  
sin-sick soul.**  
  
  
  
  
**Friend, can you understand my riddle?**  
  
I find that **sin** has such power over me, that  
though I call on the Lord again and again for   
deliverance, I seem to be as weak as ever   
when temptation comes.  
  
**If a window were placed in my bosom**,   
what filth and vileness would be seen by all.  
  
"O you hideous monster **sin**,  
What a curse, have you brought in!"  
  
I love it; I hate it.  
  
I want to be delivered from the power of it;  
and yet am not satisfied without drinking  
down its poisoned sweets.  
  
Sin is my hourly companion; and my daily curse.  
  
Sin is the breath of my mouth; and the cause of my groans.  
  
Sin is my incentive to prayer; and my hinderer of it.  
  
Sin made my Savior suffer; and makes my Savior precious.  
  
Sin spoils every pleasure; and adds a sting to every pain.  
  
Sin fits a soul for heaven; and ripens a soul for hell.  
  
**Friend, can you understand my riddle?**  
  
Is your heart, as my heart?  
  
Alas! Alas! We feel sin's power daily and hourly.   
We sigh and groan at times, to be delivered from   
the giant strength of our corruptions, which seem   
to carry us captive at their will. Though sin is a   
sweet morsel to our carnal mind, it grieves our soul.  
  
I am sure I must be **a monument of grace and mercy**,  
if saved from the guilt, curse, and power of sin!

**My greatest enemy?**  
  
I have ever found **myself** to be **my greatest   
enemy**. I never had a foe that troubled me so   
much as **my own heart**; nor has any one ever   
wrought me half the mischief or given me half   
the plague that I have felt and known within.  
And it is a daily sense of this which makes me   
dread **myself** more than anybody that walks   
upon the face of the earth!  
  
Keep a watchful eye upon every inward foe;   
and if you fight, fight against the enemy that   
lurks and works in your own breast!

**There are many devices in a man's heart**  
"**There are many devices in a man's heart**;   
**nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that   
shall stand.**" Pro 19:21.  
  
**The devices of our heart** are generally to find some   
easy, smooth, flowery path. Whatever benefits we   
have derived from **affliction**, whatever mercies we   
have experienced in **tribulation**, the flesh hates and   
shrinks from such a path with complete abhorrence.   
  
And, therefore, there is always **a secret   
devising in a man's heart . . .**  
to escape the cross,  
to avoid affliction, and  
to walk in some flowery meadow,   
away from the rough road which cuts   
his feet, and wearies his limbs.  
  
Another "device in a man's heart" is, that he shall   
have worldly prosperity; that his children shall grow   
up around him, and when they grow up, he shall be   
able to provide for them in a way which shall be best   
suited to their station in life; that they shall enjoy   
health and strength and success; and that there shall   
not be any cutting affliction in his family, or fiery trial   
to pass through.   
  
Now these devices the Lord frustrates. What grief,   
what affliction, what trouble, is the Lord continually   
bringing into some families! Their dearest objects of   
affection removed from them, at the very moment   
when they seemed clasped nearest around their hearts!   
  
And those who are spared, perhaps, growing up in such   
a searedness of conscience and hardness of heart, and,   
perhaps, profligacy of life, that even their very presence   
is often a burden to their parents instead of a blessing;   
and the very children who should be their comfort,   
become thorns and briars in their sides!   
  
Oh, how the Lord overturns and brings to nothing the   
"devices of a man's heart" **to make a paradise here  
upon earth.**  
  
When a man is brought to the right spot, and is in a   
right mind to trace out the Lord's dealings with him from   
the first, he sees it was **a kind hand** which "blasted his   
gourds, and laid them low;" it was **a kind hand** that swept   
away his worldly prospects; which reduced him to natural   
as well as to spiritual poverty; which led him into exercises,   
trials, sorrows, griefs, and tribulations; because, in those   
trials he has found the Lord, more or less, experimentally   
precious.  
  
"**There are many devices in a man's heart**."   
  
Now you have all your devices; that busy workshop is   
continually putting out some new pattern; some new   
fashion is continually starting forth from the depths of   
that ingenious manufactory which you carry about with   
you; and you are wanting this, and expecting that, and   
building up airy castles, and looking for that which shall   
never come to pass; for "**there are many devices in a   
man's heart**; **nevertheless the counsel of the Lord,   
that shall stand.**"   
  
And so far as you are children of God, that counsel is   
a counsel of **wisdom** and mercy. The purposes of God's   
heart are purposes of **love** and **affection** toward you,   
and therefore you may bless and praise God, that   
whatever be the devices of your hearts against God's   
counsel, they shall be frustrated, that He may do His   
will and fulfill all His good pleasure.   
  
  
  
**All are more or less deeply infected with it**  
  
"**Are you seeking great things for yourself?**  
**Don't do it!**" Jer 45:5  
  
As we are led aside by the powerful workings   
of our corrupt nature, **we are often seeking   
great things for ourselves.**  
  
Riches,  
worldly comforts,  
respectability,  
to be honored, admired, and esteemed by men,  
are the objects most passionately sought after   
by the world. And so far as the children of God   
are under the influence of a worldly principle,   
do they secretly desire similar things.  
  
Nor does this ambition depend upon station in life.   
**All are more or less deeply infected with it**, until   
delivered by the grace of God. The poorest man   
in these towns has a secret desire in his soul after   
"great things," and a secret plotting in his mind   
how he may obtain them.  
  
But the Lord is determined that His people shall   
not have great things. **He has purposed to pour   
contempt upon all the pride of man.** He therefore  
nips all their hopes in the bud, crushes their   
flattering prospects, and makes them for the most   
part, poor, needy, and despised in this world.  
  
Whatever schemes or projects the Lord's people may   
devise that they may prosper and get on in the world,   
He rarely allows their plans to thrive. He knows well   
to what consequences it would lead; that this ivy   
creeping round the stem would, as it were, suffocate   
and strangle the tree.   
  
**The more that worldly goods increase . . .**  
the more the heart is fixed upon them,   
the more the affections are set upon idols,  
the more is the heart drawn away from the Lord.  
He will not allow His people to have their portion   
here below. He has in store for them a better city,   
that is a heavenly one, and therefore will not allow   
them to build and plant below the skies.  
  
A child of God may be secretly aiming at great   
things, such as respectability, bettering his   
condition in life, rising step by step in the scale   
of society. But the Lord will usually . . .  
disappoint these plans,  
defeat these projects,  
wither these gourds,  
and blight these prospects.   
  
He may reduce him to poverty, as He did Job; smite   
him with sickness, as He did Lazarus and Hezekiah;   
take away wife and children, as in the case of Ezekiel   
and Jacob; or He may bring trouble and distress into   
his mind by shooting an arrow out of **His unerring   
bow** into the conscience.  
  
God has a certain purpose to effect by bringing this   
trouble, and that is to pull him down from "seeking   
great things." **For what is the secret root of this   
ambition? Is it not the pride of the heart?** When   
the Lord, then, would lay this ambition low, He   
makes a blow at the root. He strips away fancied   
hopes, and breaks down rotten props, the great   
things (so through ignorance esteemed) sought   
for previously, and perhaps obtained, fall to pieces.  
  
"**Are you seeking great things for yourself?  
Don't do it!**" Jer 45:5  
  
  
  
**Ministers are often desirous of . . .**  
  
"**Are you seeking great things for yourself?**  
**Don't do it!**" Jer 45:5  
  
**Ministers are often desirous of . . .**  
a greater gift in preaching,  
a readier utterance,  
a more abundant variety,  
a more striking delivery than they possess.   
And this, not for the glory of God, but for the   
glory of the creature. Not that praise may be   
given God, but that pride, cursed pride, may   
be gratified; that they may be admired by men.  
  
**My desire and aim is . . .**  
not to deceive souls by flattery;  
not to please any party;  
not to minister to any man's pride or presumption;  
but simply and sincerely, with an eye to God's glory,   
with His fear working in my heart, to speak to the   
edification of His people.   
  
A minister who stands up with any other motives,   
and aiming at any other ends than the glory of God,   
and the edification of His people, bears no scriptural   
marks that he has been sent into the vineyard by   
God Himself.  
  
  
  
  
**Have we nothing to give to Christ?**   
  
**Have we nothing to give to Christ?**   
  
Yes!  
Our sins,   
our sorrows,   
our burdens,   
our trials, and above all   
the salvation and sanctification of our souls.  
  
**And what has He to give us?** What? Why . . .  
everything worth having!  
everything worth a moment's anxious thought!  
everything for time and eternity!  
  
  
  
**O self! Self!**  
Oh, to be kept from myself; my . . .  
vile,  
proud,  
lustful,  
hypocritical,  
worldly,  
covetous,  
presumptuous,  
obscene self.   
  
**O self! Self!**   
Your desperate wickedness,   
your depravity,   
your love of sin,   
your abominable pollutions,  
your monstrous heart wickedness,  
your wretched deadness, hardness,  
blindness, and indifference.  
  
**You are a treacherous villain**,  
and, I fear, always will be such!  
  
  
  
**Continual salvation?**  
  
"I cried unto You; **save me**, and I shall   
keep Your testimonies." Psa 119:146  
  
If you know anything for yourself,   
inwardly and experimentally of . . .  
the evils of your heart,  
the power of sin,  
the strength of temptation,  
the subtlety of your unwearied foe,  
and that daily conflict between nature and   
grace, the flesh and the spirit, which is the   
peculiar mark of the living family of heaven;   
you will find and feel **your need of salvation   
as a daily reality.** There is **present salvation**:   
an inward, experimental, and **continual salvation**   
communicated out of the fullness of Christ as   
a risen Mediator.   
  
You need to be daily and almost   
hourly saved from the . . .  
guilt,   
filth,   
power,   
love, and   
practice   
of indwelling sin.  
  
"I cried unto You; **save me**, and I shall   
keep Your testimonies." Psalm 119:146

**Have we not leaned upon a thousand things?**   
  
"Who is this that comes up from the wilderness,  
**leaning upon her Beloved**?" Son 8:5  
  
**Have we not leaned upon a thousand things?**   
And what have they proved? Broken reeds that   
have run into our hands, and pierced us!   
  
Our own strength and resolutions; the world and   
the church; sinners and saints; friends and enemies;  
have they not all proved, more or less, broken reeds?   
The more we have leaned upon them, like a man   
leaning upon a sword, the more have they pierced   
our souls!  
  
**The Lord Himself has to wean us . . .**  
from leaning on the **world**,  
from leaning on **friends**,  
from leaning on **enemies**,  
from leaning on **self**,   
in order to bring us to lean upon Himself.   
  
And every prop He will remove, sooner or later,   
that we may lean wholly and solely upon Him.  
  
  
  
**Superabounding grace**  
  
"But where sin abounded, grace did much   
more abound." Rom 5:20  
  
What are all the gilded toys of time compared   
with the solemn, weighty realities of eternity!   
  
But, alas! what wretches are we when left to   
sin, self, and Satan! How unable to withstand   
the faintest breath of temptation! How bent   
upon backsliding!   
  
Who can fathom the depths of the human heart?   
  
Oh, what but grace, **superabounding grace**,   
can either suit or save such wretches?  
  
"But where sin abounded, grace did much   
more abound." Romans 5:20  
  
  
  
**Job's religion**  
  
"Oh that I knew where I might find Him!" Job 23:3  
  
What a mere shallow pretense to vital godliness  
satisfies most ministers, most hearers, and most   
congregations!  
  
**But there was a reality in Job's religion.**   
  
It was not of a flimsy, notional, superficial nature.   
It was not merely a sound Calvinistic creed, and   
nothing more. It was not a religion of theory and   
speculation, nor a well-compacted system of   
doctrines and duties. There was something deeper,   
something more divine in Job's religion than any   
such mere pretense, delusion, imitation, or hypocrisy.  
  
And if our religion be of the right kind, there will be  
something deeper in it, something more powerful,  
spiritual, and supernatural, than notions and doctrines,   
theories and speculations, merely passing to and fro   
in our minds, however scriptural and correct.  
  
**There will be a divine reality in it**, if God the Spirit be   
the author of it. And there will be no trifling with the   
solemn things of God, and with our own immortal souls.  
  
 **The heart of God's child**  
  
  
**There is much . . .**  
presumption,  
pride,  
hypocrisy,  
deceit,  
delusion,  
formality,  
superstition and   
self-righteousness   
to be purged out of **the heart of God's child**.  
  
**But all these things . . .**  
keep him low,  
mar his pride,  
crush his self-righteousness,  
cut the locks of his presumption,  
stain his self conceit,  
stop his boasting,  
preserve him from despising others,  
make him take the lowest room,  
teach him to esteem others better than himself,  
drive him to earnest prayer,  
fit him as an object of mercy,  
break to pieces his free will, and  **lay him low at the feet of the Redeemer, as   
one to be saved by sovereign grace alone!  
  
  
  
  
The way in which the Spirit of God works**  
As pride rises, it must be broken down.   
  
As self-righteousness starts up, it must be brought low.   
  
As the wisdom of the creature exalts itself against   
the wisdom of God, it must be laid prostrate.  
  
**The way in which the Spirit of God works** is to lay  
the creature low, by bringing it into nothingness,   
and crushing it into self-abasement and self-loathing,   
so as to press out of it everything on which the   
creature can depend.   
  
Like a surgeon, who will run his lancet into the abscess,   
and let out the gory matter, in order to effect a thorough   
cure; so the Spirit of the Lord thrusting His sharp sword   
into the heart, lets out the inward corruption, and never   
heals the wound until He has thoroughly probed it.   
  
And when He has laid bare the heart, He heals it by   
pouring in the balmy blood of Jesus, as that which,   
by its application, cleanses from all sin.  
  
  
  
  
**The world passes away, and the lust thereof**  
"**The world passes away, and the lust thereof**."  
1Jn 2:17  
  
The world and all that is in it comes to an end.   
**Where** are the great bulk of the men and women   
who fifty, sixty, or seventy years ago trod London   
streets? **Where are they** who rode about in their   
gay carriages, gave their splendid entertainments,   
decked themselves with feathers and jewels, and   
enjoyed all the pleasures of life?   
 **Where are they?**The grave holds their bodies, and hell holds their souls.   
  
"The world passes away." It is like a pageant, or a   
gay and splendid procession, which passes before   
the eye for a few minutes, then turns the corner of   
the street, and is lost to view. It is now to you who   
had looked upon it just as if it were not, and is gone   
to amuse other eyes.   
  
So, could you go on for years . . .  
enjoying all your natural heart could wish;  
lay up money by thousands;  
ride in your carriage;  
deck your body with jewelry;  
fill your house with splendid furniture;  
enjoy everything that earth can give;  
then there would come, some day or other, sickness   
to lay you upon a dying bed. To you the world has   
now passed away with all its lusts; with you all is   
now come to an end; and now you have, with a   
guilty soul, to face a holy God.  
  
"**The world passes away, and the lust thereof**."  
  
All these lusts for which men have sold body and soul,  
half ruined their families, and stained their own name;   
all these lusts for which they were so mad that they   
would have them at any price, snatch them even from   
hell's mouth; all these lusts are passed away, and **what   
have they left?** A gnawing worm; a worm that can never   
die, and the wrath of God as an unquenchable fire.   
  
That is all which the love of the world can do for you,   
with all your toil and anxiety, or all your amusement   
and pleasure.   
  
You have not gained much perhaps of this world's goods,   
with all your striving after them. But could the world fill   
your heart with enjoyment, and your money bags with   
gold, as the dust of the grave will one day fill your mouth,   
it would be much to the same purpose. If you had got all   
the world, you would have got nothing after your coffin   
was screwed down, but gravedust in your mouth.   
  
Such is the end of the world.  
  
"**The world passes away, and the lust thereof**."  
  
**DEATH is the great and final extinguisher of all human   
hopes and pleasures.** Look and see how man sickens   
and dies, and is tumbled into the cemetery, where his   
body is left to the worms, and his soul to face an angry   
God, on the great judgment day.  
  
"**The world passes away, and the lust thereof**."

**Weary?**  
  
"Then Jesus said, "Come to Me, all of you   
who are **weary** and carry heavy burdens,   
and I will give you rest." Mat 11:28  
  
The Lord's purpose in laying burdens upon  
us is **to weary us out**. We cannot learn our   
religion in any other way. We cannot learn   
it from the Bible, nor from the experience of   
others. It must be a personal work, wrought   
in the heart of each; and we must be brought,   
all of us, if ever we are to find rest in Christ,   
to be absolutely **wearied out of sin and self**,   
and to have no righteousness, goodness, or   
holiness of our own.  
  
The effect, then, of all spiritual labor is to bring  
us to this point: to be **weary** of the **world**, for we   
feel it, for the most part, to be a valley of tears;  
to be **weary** of **self**, for it is our greatest plague;   
**weary** of **professors**, for we cannot see in them   
the grace of God, which alone we prize and value;   
**weary** of the profane, for their ungodly conversation   
only hurts our minds; **weary** of our **bodies**, for they   
are often full of sickness and pain, and always   
clogs to our soul; and **weary** of **life**, for we see   
the emptiness of those things which to most   
people make life so agreeable.  
  
By this painful experience we come to this point:   
to be **worn out and wearied**; and there we must   
come, before we can rest entirely on Christ.   
  
As long as we can rest in the **world**, we shall   
rest in it. As long as the things of time and   
sense can gratify us, we shall be gratified in   
them. As long as we can find anything pleasing   
in **self**, we shall be pleased with it. As long as   
anything visible and tangible can satisfy us,   
we shall be satisfied with them.   
  
But when we get **weary** of all things visible,   
tangible, and sensible—**weary** of ourselves,   
and of all things here below—then we want   
to rest upon Christ, and Christ alone.  
  
"Then Jesus said, "Come to Me, all of you   
who are **weary** and carry heavy burdens,   
and I will give you rest." Mat 11:28  
  
  
  
  
**Oh, how religious he once used to be!**   
  
"And I, the Son of Man, have come to seek   
and save **those who are LOST**." Luk 19:10  
  
**Oh, how religious he once used to be!**   
  
How comfortably he could walk to church with his   
Bible under his arm, and look as devout and holy   
as possible! How regularly also, he could read the  
Scriptures, and pray in his manner, and think  
himself pretty well, with one foot in heaven.   
  
**But a ray of heavenly light** has beamed into his soul,   
and shown him who and what **God** is; what **sin** and   
a sinful heart is; and who and what he **himself** as a   
sinner is. The keen dissecting knife of God has come   
into his heart, laid it all bare, and let the gory matter   
flow out. When his conscience is bleeding under the  
scalpel, and is streaming all over with the gore and   
filth thus let out, **where is the clean heart once   
boasted of?**   
  
**Where is his religion now?**All buried beneath a load of filth!  
 **Where is all his holiness gone?** His . . .  
holy looks,   
holy expressions,   
holy manners,   
holy gestures,   
holy garb;   
where are they all gone?   
All are flooded and buried. The sewer has broken   
out, and the filthy stream has discharged itself   
over his holy looks, holy manners, holy words and   
holy gestures; and he is, as Job says, 'in the ditch.'   
  
We never find the right **religion**, until we have lost   
the wrong one. We never find **Christ**, until we have   
lost SELF. We never find **grace**, until we have lost   
our own pitiful self-holiness.   
  
"And I, the Son of Man, have come to seek   
and save **those who are LOST**." Luk 19:10  
  
  
  
**It is a creature of many lives!**  
  
**Man is a strange compound.** A sinner, and   
the worst of sinners, and yet a Pharisee!   
  
A wretch, and the vilest of wretches, and   
yet pluming himself on his good works!   
  
Did not experience convince us to the contrary,   
we would scarcely believe that a monster like man,   
a creature, as someone has justly said, **"half beast   
and half devil,"** should dream of pleasing God by his   
obedience, or of climbing up to heaven by a ladder   
of his own righteousness.  
  
**Pharisaism** is firmly fixed in the human heart.   
Deep is the root,   
broad the stem,   
wide the branches,   
but poisonous the fruit,   
of this gigantic tree, planted by pride   
and unbelief in the soil of human nature.   
  
**Self-righteousness** is not peculiar to only certain   
individuals. It is interwoven with our very being.   
It is the only religion that human nature . . .understands,  
relishes, or   
admires.  
  
Again and again must the heart be ploughed up,   
and its corruptions laid bare, to keep down the   
growth of **this pharisaic spirit.   
  
It is a creature of many lives!** It is not one blow,   
nor ten, nor a hundred that can **kill** it. **Stunned** it   
may be for a while, but it revives again and again!   
  
Pharisaism can live and thrive under any profession.  
Calvinism or Arminianism is the same to it. It is not   
the garb he wears, nor the mask he carries, that  
constitutes the man.  
  
  
  
**The believer's chief troubles**  
  
As earth is but a valley of tears, the Christian has many   
**tribulations** in common with the world. **Family troubles**   
were the lot of Job, Abraham, Jacob and David. **Sickness**   
befell Hezekiah, Trophimus and Epaphroditus. **Reverses   
and losses** fell upon Job. **Poverty and famine** drove   
Naomi into the land of Moab.   
  
**Trouble**, then, is in itself no sign of grace; for it   
inevitably flows from, and is necessarily connected   
with, man's fallen state.  
  
But we should fix our eye on two things, as especially   
marking **the temporal afflictions of the Lord's family**:  
1. That they are all weighed out and timed by special   
appointment. For though "man is born to trouble as the   
sparks fly upwards," yet "affliction comes not forth of   
the dust, neither does trouble spring out of the ground."  
Job 5:6   
2. That they are specially sanctified, and made to   
"work together for good" to those who love God.  
  
**But the believer's chief troubles** **are internal**,   
and arise from . . .  
the assaults of Satan,   
powerful temptations,  
the guilt of sin laid on the conscience,   
doubts and fears about a saving interest in Christ, and  
a daily, hourly conflict with a nature ever lusting to evil.  
  
  
  
**A religion that satisfies thousands.**  
  
"Having **a form of godliness** but denying its power."  
2Ti 3:5  
  
Much that passes for religion,   
is not true religion at all.  
  
Much that goes for hopes of salvation,   
is nothing but lying refuges.  
  
Much is palmed off for the teaching of the Spirit,  
which is nothing but delusion.  
  
**Vital godliness is very rare.**  
  
There are very few people spiritually taught of God.  
  
There are very few ministers who really preach the truth.  
  
Satan is thus daily deceiving thousands, and tens of thousands.  
  
A living soul, however weak and feeble in himself,   
cannot take up with **a religion in the flesh**.   
  
He cannot rest on the opinions of men, nor be   
deceived by Satan's delusions. He has a secret   
gnawing of conscience, which makes him dissatisfied   
with **a religion that satisfies thousands.**  
  
**Then down they sink to the bottom!**  
  
"**Until the pit is dug for the wicked.**" Psa 94:13  
  
In Eastern countries, the ordinary mode of catching  
wild beasts is to dig a pit, and fix sharp spears in the   
bottom. And when the pit has been dug sufficiently  
deep, it is covered over with branches of trees, earth,  
and leaves, until all appearances of the pitfall are   
entirely concealed. What is the object? That the wild   
beast intent upon bloodshed—the tiger lying in wait   
for the deer, the wolf roaming after the sheep, the   
lion prowling for the antelope, not seeing the pitfall,   
but rushing on and over it, may not see their doom   
until they break through and fall upon the spears at  
the bottom.  
  
**What a striking figure is this!**   
  
Here are the ungodly, all intent upon their purposes;   
prowling after evil, as the wolf after the sheep, or the   
tiger after the deer, thinking only of . . .  
some worldly profit,  
some covetous plan,  
some lustful scheme,  
something the carnal mind delights in;   
but on they go, not seeing any danger until the moment  
comes when, as Job says, "they go down to the bars of   
the pit."   
  
The Lord has been pleased to hide their doom from them.   
The pit is all covered over with leaves of trees, grass, and   
earth. The very appearance of the pit was hidden from the   
wild beasts; they never knew it until they fell into it, and   
were transfixed.   
  
So it is with the wicked; both with religious professors   
and the profane. There is no fear of God, no taking heed   
to their steps, no cry to be directed, no prayer to be shown   
the way; no pausing, no turning back. On they go, on they   
go; heedlessly, thoughtlessly, recklessly; pursuing some   
beloved object. On they go, on they go; until in a moment   
they are plunged eternally and irrevocably into the pit!  
  
There are many such both in the professing church as well   
as in the ungodly world. The Lord sees what they are, and   
where they are. He knows where the pit is. He knows their   
steps. He sees them hurrying on, hurrying on, hurrying on.   
All is prepared for them. The Lord gives them . . .  
no forewarning,   
no notice of their danger,   
no teachings,  
no chastenings,  
no remonstrances,  
no frowns,   
no stripes.  
They are left to themselves to fill up the measure of   
their iniquity, until they approach the pit that has been   
dug for them, and **then down they sink to the bottom!**

**Who can come out of the battle alive?**  
**"Hold me up, and I shall be safe!"** Psa 119:117  
  
We know little of ourselves, and less   
of one another. **We do not know . . .**  
our own needs,  
what is for our good,  
what snares to avoid,  
what dangers to shun.   
  
**Our path is . . .**  
bestrewed with difficulties,  
beset with temptations,   
surrounded with foes,  
encompassed with perils.   
  
At every step there is a snare!   
  
At every turn an enemy lurks!  
  
Pride digs the pit,   
carelessness blindfolds the eyes,   
carnality drugs and intoxicates the senses,  
the lust of the flesh seduces,   
the love of the world allures,   
unbelief paralyzes the fighting hand and the praying knee,   
sin entangles the feet,   
guilt defiles the conscience,   
and Satan accuses the soul.   
  
Under these circumstances, **who can come out of   
the battle alive?** Only he who is kept by the mighty   
power of God. **"Hold me up, and I shall be safe!"**  
  
**MERCY!**  
  
"**Look upon me, and be merciful unto me.**" Psa 119:132  
  
When shall we ever get beyond the need of God's mercy?  
  
**We feel our need of continual mercy . . .**   
as our sins abound,  
as our guilt is felt,  
as our corruption works,  
as our conscience is burdened,  
as the iniquities of our heart are laid bare,  
as our hearts are opened up in the Spirit's light.  
  
**We need . . .**   
mercy for every adulterous look;   
mercy for every covetous thought;   
mercy for every light and trifling word;   
mercy for every wicked movement of our depraved hearts;   
mercy while we live;  
mercy when we die;   
mercy to accompany us every moment;  
mercy to go with us down to the portals of the grave;   
mercy to carry us safely through the swellings of Jordan;   
mercy to land us safe before the Redeemer's throne!   
  
"Look upon **me**, and be merciful unto **me**."  
  
**Why me?**Because I am so vile a sinner.   
Because I am so base a backslider.   
Because I am such a daring transgressor.   
Because I sin against You with every breath that I draw.   
Because the evils of my heart are perpetually manifesting themselves.   
Because nothing but Your mercy can blot out such   
iniquities as I feel working in my carnal mind.   
  
**I need . . .**  
inexhaustible mercy,  
everlasting mercy,  
super-abounding mercy.   
  
Nothing but such mercy as this can suit such a guilty sinner!  
  
  
  
  
**A flowery path?**  
  
Does the road to heaven lie across a smooth,  
grassy meadow, over which we may quietly  
walk in the cool of a summer evening, and   
leisurely amuse ourselves with gathering of  
flowers and listening to the warbling of the birds?   
  
No child of God ever found the way to heaven   
**a flowery path**. It is the wide gate and broad  
way which leads to perdition. It is the **strait   
gate** and **narrow way**, the **uphill road**, full of . . .  
difficulties,  
trials,  
temptations,  
and enemies,   
which leads to heaven, and issues in eternal life.  
  
But our Father manifests mercy and grace. He never   
leaves nor forsakes the objects of His choice. He . . .  
fulfills every promise,  
defeats every enemy,  
appears in every difficulty,  
richly pardons every sin,  
graciously heals every backsliding,  
and eventually lands them in eternal bliss!  
  
  
  
  
Toys and playthings of the religious babyhouse  
  
"**I** **will feed My flock.**" Eze 34:15  
  
The only real food of the soul must be of God's   
own appointing, preparing, and communicating.   
  
You can never deceive a hungry child. You may   
give it a plaything to still its cries. It may serve   
for a few minutes; but the pains of hunger are   
not to be removed by a doll. A toy horse will not   
allay the cravings after the mother's breast.   
  
So with babes in grace. A hungry soul   
cannot feed upon playthings.   
  
Altars,   
robes,   
ceremonies,   
candlesticks,   
bowings,   
mutterings,   
painted windows,   
intoning priests, and   
singing men and women;  
**these dolls and wooden horses; these** **toys   
and playthings of the religious babyhouse**,   
cannot feed the soul that, like David, cries out   
after the living God. (Psa 42:2-3)  
  
Christ, the bread of life, the manna that   
came down from heaven, is the only food   
of the believing soul. (John 6:51)

**But oh, the struggle! oh, the conflict!**  
  
"**I will overturn, overturn, overturn it**; and it  
shall be no more." Eze 21:27  
  
Jesus wants our hearts and affections. Therefore  
**every idol must go down**, sooner or later, because  
the idol draws away the affections of the soul from   
Christ. Everything that is loved in opposition to Him   
must sooner or later be taken away, that the Lord   
Jesus alone may be worshiped. Everything which  
exacts the allegiance of the soul must be overthrown.  
  
Jesus **shall** have our heart and affections, but in   
having our heart and affection, He shall have it . . .  
wholly,   
solely, and   
undividedly.   
He **shall** have it entirely for Himself.  
He **shall** reign and rule supreme.   
  
Now, **here comes the conflict and the struggle.**   
**SELF** says, "I will have a part." **Self wants to be . . .**  
honored,   
admired,   
esteemed,   
bowed down to.   
Self wants to indulge in, and gratify its desires.   
Self wants, in some way, to erect its throne in   
opposition to the Lord of life and glory.   
  
But Jesus says, "No! I must reign supreme!"   
  
Whatever it is that stands up in opposition to Him,   
**down it must go!** Just as Dagon fell down before   
the ark, so **self must fall down before Christ . . .**  
in every shape,  
in every form,   
in whatever subtle guise self wears,   
down it must come to a wreck and ruin before   
the King of Zion!  
  
So, if we are continually building up **SELF**,   
Jesus will be continually overthrowing self.  
  
If we are setting up our **idols**,   
He shall be casting them down.  
  
If we are continually hewing out "**cisterns**   
that can hold no water," He will be continually   
dashing these cisterns to pieces.   
  
If we think highly of our **knowledge**,   
we must be reduced to total folly.  
  
If we are confident of our **strength**,   
we must be reduced to utter weakness.  
  
If we highly esteem our **attainments**, or in   
any measure are resting upon the **power of   
the creature**, the power of the creature must   
be overthrown, so that we shall stand weak   
before God, unable to lift up a finger to deliver   
our souls from going down into the pit.   
  
In this way does the Lord teach His people the   
lesson that **Christ must be all in all**. They learn . . .  
not in the way of speculation,  
nor in the way of mere dry doctrine,  
not from the mouth of others, but   
they learn these lessons in painful soul-experience.  
  
And every living soul that is sighing and longing after  
a manifestation of Christ and desiring to have Him  
enthroned in the heart; every such soul will know,  
sooner or later . . .  
an utter overthrow of self,   
a thorough prostration of this idol,   
a complete breaking to pieces of this beloved image,   
that the desire of the righteous may be granted, and   
that Christ may reign and rule as King and Lord in him   
and over him, setting up His blessed kingdom there, and   
winning to Himself every affection of the renewed heart.  
  
Are there not moments, friends, are there not some   
few and fleeting moments when the desire of our souls   
is that Christ should be our Lord and God; when we are   
willing that He should have **every affection**; that **every   
rebellious thought** should be subdued and brought into   
obedience to the cross of Christ; that **every plan** should   
be frustrated which is not for the glory of God and our   
soul's spiritual profit?   
  
Are there not seasons in our experience when we can   
lay down our souls before God, and say "Let Christ be   
precious to my soul, let Him come with power to my   
heart, let Him set up His throne as Lord and King, and   
let self be nothing before Him?" **But oh, the struggle!   
oh, the conflict!** when God answers these petitions!  **When our plans are frustrated**, what a   
rebellion works up in the carnal mind!   
  
**When self is cast down**, what a rising up of   
the fretful, peevish impatience of the creature!   
  
When the Lord does answer our prayers, and   
strips off all false confidence; when He does   
remove our rotten props, and dash to pieces   
our broken cisterns, **what a storm; what a   
conflict** takes place in the soul!   
  
But He is not to be moved; He will take His own way.   
"I will overturn, let the creature say what it will. I will   
overturn, let the creature think what it will. Down it   
shall go to ruin! It shall come to a wreck! It shall be   
overthrown! My purpose shall be accomplished, and   
I will fulfill all My pleasure. Self is a rebel who has   
set up an idolatrous temple, and I will overturn and   
bring the temple to ruin, for the purpose of manifesting   
My glory and My salvation, that I may be your Lord and   
your God."  
  
If God has overturned **our bright prospects**, shall we say   
it was a cruel hand that laid them low? If He has overthrown  **our worldly plans**, shall we say it was an unkind act? If He  
has reduced **our false righteousness** to a heap of rubbish,   
in order that Christ may be embraced as our all in all, **shall   
we say it was a cruel deed?**   
  
Is he an unkind **father** who takes away poison from   
his child, and gives him food? Is she a cruel **mother**   
who snatches her boy from the precipice on which he   
was playing? No! The kindness was manifested in the   
act of snatching the child from destruction!  
  
So if the Lord has broken and overthrown our purposes,   
it was a kind act; for in so doing **He brings us to nothing,   
that Christ may be embraced as our all in all**, that our   
hearts may echo back, "O Lord, fulfill all Your own promises   
in our souls, and make us willing to be nothing; that upon the   
nothingness of self, the glory and beauty and preciousness   
of Christ may be exalted!"

**A snake, a monkey, an onion, a bit of rag**"Dear children, keep yourselves from **idols**." 1Jn 5:21 **Idolatry** is a sin very deeply rooted in the human heart.   
  
We need not go very far to find the most convincing   
proofs of this. Besides the experience of every age   
and every climate, we find it where we would least   
expect it—the prevailing sin of a people who had the   
greatest possible proofs of its wickedness and folly;   
and the strongest evidences of the being, greatness,   
and power of God.   
  
It is true that now this sin does not break out exactly   
in the same form. It is true that golden calves are not   
now worshiped—at least the calf is not, if the gold is.   
Nor do Protestants adore images of wood, brass, or   
stone.   
  
But that rank, property, fashion, honor, the opinion   
of the world, with everything which feeds the lust of   
the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life;   
are as much idolized now, as Baal and Moloch were   
once in Judea.  
  
What is an idol?   
  
It is that which occupies that place in our esteem   
and affections, in our thoughts, words and ways,   
which is due to God only. Whatever is to us, what   
the Lord alone should be—that is **an idol to us.**   
  
It is true that **these idols differ** almost as widely   
as the peculiar propensities of different individuals.   
But as both in ancient and modern times, the grosser   
idols of wood and stone were and are beyond all   
calculation in number, variety, shape, and size.   
So is it in **these inner idols**, of which the outer   
idols are mere symbols and representations.   
  
**Nothing has been . . .**  
too base or too brutal,  
too great or too little,  
too noble or too vile,   
from the sun walking in its brightness—to **a snake,   
a monkey, an onion, a bit of rag**—which man has   
not worshiped. And these intended representations   
of Divinity were but the **outward symbols** **of what   
man inwardly worshiped**. For the inward idol preceded   
the outward—and the fingers merely carved what the   
imagination had previously devised. The gross material   
idol, then, is but a symbol of the inner mind of man.   
  
But we need not dwell on this part of the subject.   
There is another form of idolatry much nearer home;  
the idolatry not of an ancient Pagan, or a modern   
Hindu—but that of a Christian.   
  
Nor need we go far, if we would but be honest   
with ourselves, to each find out **our own idol . . .**  
what it is,   
how deep it lies,  
what worship it obtains,  
what honor it receives,   
and what affection it engrosses.   
  
Let me ask myself, "**What do I most love?**"   
  
If I hardly know how to answer that question, let   
me put to myself another, "What do I most think   
upon? In what channel do I usually find my thoughts   
flow when unrestrained?"—for thoughts flow to the   
idol as water to the lowest spot.  
  
If, then, the thoughts flow continually to . . .  
the farm,  
the shop,  
the business,  
the investment,  
to the husband, wife, or child,  
to that which feeds lust or pride,  
worldliness or covetousness,  
self-conceit or self-admiration;  
that is the idol which, as a magnet, attracts  
the thoughts of the mind towards it.  
  
**Your idol may not be mine, nor mine yours**; and  
yet we may **both** be idolaters! You may despise or   
even hate my idol, and wonder how I can be such   
a fool, or such a sinner, as to hug it to my bosom!  
And I may wonder how a partaker of grace can   
be so inconsistent as to love such a silly idol   
as yours! You may condemn me, and I condemn   
you. And the Word of God, and the verdict of a   
living conscience may condemn us both.   
  
**O how various and how innumerable these idols   
are!** One man may possess a refined taste and  
educated mind. Books, **learning**, literature, languages,   
general information, shall be his idol. **Music**—vocal   
and instrumental, may be the idol of a second—so   
sweet to his ears, such inward feelings of delight   
are kindled by the melodious strains of voice or   
instrument, that music is in all his thoughts, and   
hours are spent in producing those harmonious   
sounds which perish in their utterance. Painting,   
statuary, architecture, the **fine arts** generally, may   
be the Baal, the dominating passion of a third.   
**Poetry**, with its glowing thoughts, burning words,   
passionate utterances, vivid pictures, melodious   
cadence, and sustained flow of all that is beautiful   
in language and expression, may be the delight of   
a fourth. **Science**, the eager pursuit of a fifth.   
These are the highest flights of the human mind.   
These are not the base idols of the drunken feast,   
the low jest, the mirthful supper—or even that less   
debasing but enervating idol—**sleep** and **indolence**,   
as if life's highest enjoyments were those of the  
swine in the sty.  
  
You middle-class people—who despise art and science,   
language and learning, as you despise the ale-house,   
and ball field—may still have an idol. Your **garden**, your   
beautiful roses, your verbenas, fuchsias, needing all the   
care and attention of a babe in arms, may be your idol.   
Or your pretty **children**, so admired as they walk in the   
street; or your new **house** and all the new furniture; or   
your **son** who is getting on so well in business; or your   
**daughter** so comfortably settled in life; or your dear   
**husband** so generally respected, and just now doing so   
nicely in the farm. Or your own still dearer **SELF** that   
needs so much feeding, and dressing and attending to.  
  
Who shall count the **thousands of idols** which draw   
to themselves those thoughts, and engross those   
affections which are due to the Lord alone?   
  
You may not be found out. **Your idol** may be so hidden,   
or so peculiar, that all our attempts to touch it, have left   
you and it unscathed. Will you therefore conclude that you   
have none? Search deeper, look closer; it is not too deep   
for the eye of God, nor too hidden for the eyes of a tender   
conscience anointed with divine eye-salve.   
  
Hidden diseases the most incurable of all diseases.   
Search every fold of your heart until you find it. It may   
not be so big nor so ugly as your neighbor's. But an idol   
is still an idol, whether so small as to be carried in the   
coat pocket, or as large as a gigantic statue.  
  
An idol is not to be admired for its beauty, or loathed   
for its ugliness—but to be hated because it is an idol.   
  
"Dear children, keep yourselves from **idols**." 1Jn 5:21

**The mother and mistress of all the sins**  
  
"**I hate pride** and arrogance." Pro 8:13  
  
"**The Lord detests all the proud of heart**. Be sure   
of this: They will not go unpunished." Pro 16:5  
  
Of all sins, **pride** **seems most deeply imbedded in the   
very heart of man**. Unbelief, sensuality, covetousness,   
rebellion, presumption, contempt of God's holy will and  
word, deceit and falsehood, cruelty and wrath, violence   
and murder—these, and a forest of other sins have   
indeed struck deep roots into the black and noxious   
soil of our fallen nature; and, interlacing their lofty   
stems and gigantic arms, have wholly shut out the   
light of heaven from man's benighted soul.   
  
But these and their associate evils do not seem so   
thoroughly interwoven into the very constitution of   
the human heart, nor so to be its very life-blood,   
as pride. The **lust of the flesh** is strong, but there   
are respites from its workings. **Unbelief** is powerful,   
but there are times when it seems to lie dormant.  
**Covetousness** is ensnaring, but there is not always  
a bargain to be made, or an advantage to be clutched.  
  
These sins differ also in strength in different individuals.   
Some seem not much tempted with the grosser passions   
of our fallen nature; others are naturally liberal and   
benevolent, and whatever other idol they may serve,   
they bend not their knee to the golden calf.  
  
But where lust may have no power, covetousness no   
dominion, and anger no sway—there, down, down in   
the inmost depths, heaving and boiling like the lava   
in the crater of a volcano, works **that master sin—  
that sin of sins, pride!**   
  
Pride is **the mother and mistress of all the sins**;   
for where she does not conceive them in her ever-  
teeming womb, she instigates their movements,   
and compels them to pay tribute to her glory.  
  
The 'origin of evil' is hidden from our eyes. Whence   
it sprang, and why God allowed it to arise in His fair   
creation, are mysteries which we cannot fathom. But   
thus much is revealed—that of this mighty fire which   
has filled hell with sulphurous flame, and will one   
day envelop earth and its inhabitants in the general   
conflagration, **the first spark was pride!**  
  
Pride is therefore emphatically **the devil's own sin**.   
We will not say his darling sin, for it is his torment,   
the serpent which is always biting him, the fire which   
is ever consuming him. But it is the sin which hurled   
him from heaven, and transformed him from a bright   
and holy seraph, into a foul and hideous demon!   
  
How subtle, then, and potent must that **poison** be,   
which could in a moment change an angel into a devil!   
How black in nature, how concentrated in virulence   
that **venom**—one drop of which could utterly deface   
the image of God in myriads of bright spirits before   
the throne—and degrade them into monsters of   
uncleanness and malignity!

**I needed no monkish rules then.**  
  
**A man may . . .**  
have a consistent profession of religion,   
have a sound, well ordered creed,   
be a member of a Christian church,   
attend to all ordinances and duties,   
seek to frame his life according to God's word,   
have his family prayer, and private prayer,   
be a good husband, father, and friend,   
be liberal and kind to God's cause and people,   
and yet with all this bear no fruit Godwards.   
  
What is all this but **pitiful self-holiness**?  
  
**Real gospel fruit** is only produced by the word   
of God's grace falling into the heart, watering   
and softening it. Without this there is . . .  
not one gracious feeling,  
not one spiritual desire,  
not one tender thought,  
not one heavenly affection.   
  
We have tried, perhaps, to **make ourselves holy.**  
We have watched our eyes, our ears, our tongues;   
have read so many chapters every day out of God's   
word; continued so long upon our knees; and so   
tried to work a kind of holiness into our own souls.   
  
Many years ago, I used to try to pray for the better   
part of an hour; and I am ashamed to say, I have   
been glad to hear the clock strike. What was this   
but **a monkish, self-imposed rule**, to please God   
by the length of my prayers?  
  
But when the Lord was pleased to touch my conscience   
with His finger, He gave me a remarkable spirit of grace   
and supplication; **I needed no monkish rules then.**

**The strong man sinks down into a babe!**  
  
"The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer;   
my God, **my strength**, in whom I will trust." Psa 18:2  
  
As long as a man has any **strength** of his own, he will   
never have any strength in the Lord; for the strength   
of Jesus is made perfect in our weakness.   
  
Oh, what a painful lesson we have to learn to find   
all our strength is weakness. **There was a time   
when we thought we had strength, and could . . .**  
resist Satan,  
overcome the world,  
endure persecution,  
bear the reproach of man,  
mortify and keep down pride, and the evils of our heart.   
  
Have we found ourselves able to carry out our fancied   
strength? What has been our experience in this matter?   
That we have discovered more and more our own weakness;   
that we cannot stand against one temptation; **the least   
gust blows us down!**  
  
Our besetting lusts, our vile passions, and the wicked   
desires of our hearts, so entice our eyes and thoughts;   
so entwine themselves around our affections; that **we  
give out in a moment**, unless God Himself holds us up!   
We cannot stand against sin; our heart is as weak as   
water.  
  
Thus we learn our weakness, by feeling ourselves   
to be the very weakest of the weak, and the very   
vilest of the vile.   
  
As the Lord leads a man deeper down into the   
knowledge of his corruptions, it makes him more   
and more out of conceit with **his** **righteous, pious,   
holy self**. The more the Lord leads a man into the   
knowledge of . . .  
temptation,  
his besetting sin,  
the power of his corruptions,  
the workings of his vile nature;   
the more deeply and painfully he learns what   
a poor, helpless, weak, powerless wretch he is.  
  
As the Lord is pleased to unfold before his eyes the   
strength, power, and fullness lodged in Jesus Christ;   
He draws him, leads him, brings him, encourages him,   
and enables him to come to this fullness. And by the   
hand of faith he draws supplies out of that fullness.  
  
As the Lord enables the soul to look to Jesus, His   
blessed strength is communicated and breathed into   
his soul. Then the 'poor worm Jacob' threshes the   
mountains, beats down the hills, and makes them   
fly before him as chaff. **When the Lord strengthens   
him, he can . . .**  
stand against temptation,  
overcome sin,  
bear persecution,  
subdue the evils of his heart, and   
fight against the world, the flesh, and the devil.   
  
**When the Lord leaves him**, he is like Samson with   
his locks cut. He sinks into all evil, and feels the   
helplessness of his fallen nature. Let the Lord but  
remove His gracious presence, and **the strong man  
sinks down into a babe!** And he that in the strength  
of the Lord could thresh the mountains, falls down  
**as weak and helpless as a little child**.  
  
Thus the Lord painfully and solemnly teaches us, that   
being nothing in ourselves, and feeling our weakness,   
helplessness, and wretchedness; **in Him alone we   
have strength.**

**Save me, and I shall be saved!**  
  
"**Save me, and I shall be saved!**" Jer 17:14   
  
This implies **salvation from the power of sin**;  
the secret dominion sin possesses in the heart.  
  
O, what a tyrannical rule does sin sometimes   
exercise in our carnal minds! How soon are we   
entangled in flesh-pleasing snares! How easily   
brought under the secret dominion of some hidden   
corruption! And how we struggle in vain to deliver   
ourselves when we are caught in the snares of   
the devil, or are under the power of any one lust,   
besetment, or temptation!   
  
The Lord, and the Lord alone can save us from all   
these things. **He saves from the power of sin by . . .**  
bringing a sense of His dying love into our hearts,   
delivering us from our idols,  
raising our affections to things above,  
breaking to pieces our snares,  
subduing our lusts,  
taming our corruptions, and  
mastering the inward evils of our dreadfully fallen nature.  
  
Here is this **sin!** Lord, save me from it.  
  
Here is this **snare!** Lord, break it to pieces.  
  
Here is this **temptation!** Lord, deliver me out of it.  
  
Here is this **lust!** Lord, subdue it.  
  
Here is my **proud heart!** Lord, humble it.  
  
None but the Lord can do these things for us . . .   
nothing but the felt power of God,   
nothing but the putting forth of His mighty arm,   
nothing but the shedding abroad of His dying love,   
nothing but the operations of His grace upon our soul,   
can deliver us from the secret power of evil.   
  
"**Save me, and I shall be saved!**"  
  
  
  
  
**Crush its viper head with the heel of our boot!**  
  
"Whoever will come after Me, let him **deny himself**,   
and take up his cross and follow Me" Mar 8:34  
  
To deny and renounce **self** lies at the very foundation   
of vital godliness.   
  
It is easy in some measure to leave the world; easy   
to leave the professing church; but to go forth out of   
**self**, there is the difficulty, for this "self" embraces   
such a variety of forms.   
  
What varied shapes and forms does **this monster   
SELF** assume! How hard to trace his windings! How   
difficult to track this wily foe to his hidden den; drag   
him out of the cave; and immolate him at the foot of   
the cross, as Samuel hewed down Agag in Gilgal.   
  
Proud self,   
righteous self,   
covetous self,   
ambitious self,   
sensual self,   
deceitful self,   
religious self,   
flesh-pleasing self.  
  
How difficult to detect, unmask, strip out of its   
changeable suits of apparel, **this ugly, misshaped   
creature**, and then stamp upon it, as if one would   
**crush its viper head with the heel of our boot!**  
  
Who will do such violence to beloved **self**, when every   
nerve quivers and shrinks; and the coward heart cries   
to the uplifted foot, "Spare, spare!"   
  
But unless there is this **self** crucifixion, there is   
no walking hand in hand with Christ, no heavenly   
communion with Him; for there can no more be a   
partnership between Christ and self, than there   
can be a partnership between Christ and sin.

**Poor, moping, dejected creatures**  
  
We are, most of us, **so fettered down by . . .**  
the chains of time and sense,  
the cares of life and daily business,  
the weakness of our earthly frame,  
the distracting claims of a family, and   
the miserable carnality and sensuality of our fallen nature,   
**that we live at best a poor, dragging, dying life.**   
  
Many of us are **poor, moping, dejected creatures**.  
We have . . .  
a variety of trials and afflictions,  
a daily cross and   
the continual plague of an evil heart.  
  
We know enough of ourselves to know that in SELF   
there is neither help nor hope, and never expect a   
smoother path, a better, wiser, holier heart. As then . . .  
the **weary** man seeks rest,  
the **hungry** man seeks food,  
the **thirsty** man seeks drink,  
and the **sick** man seeks health,   
so do we stretch forth our hearts and arms that we   
may embrace the Lord Jesus Christ, and sensibly   
realize union and communion with Him.   
  
He discovers the evil and misery of sin that we may   
seek pardon in His bleeding wounds and pierced side.  
  
He makes known to us our nakedness and shame,   
and, as such, our exposure to God's wrath, that we   
may hide ourselves under His justifying robe.  
  
He puts gall and wormwood into the world's choicest   
draughts, that we may have no sweetness but in and   
from Him.

**What a battlefield is the heart**  
  
I have so much opposition within, so many   
temptations, lusts, and follies; so many   
snares and besetments; and a vile heart,   
dabbling in all carnality and filth.   
  
I am indeed exercised "by sin and grace."   
  
Sin or grace seems continually uppermost;   
striving and lusting against one another.   
What . . .  
lustings, sorrowings;  
fallings, risings;  
defeats, and victories.   
  
**What a battlefield is the heart**, and there   
the fight is lost and won. When sin prevails,   
mourning over its wounds and slaughter.  
When grace and godly fear beat back   
temptation, a softening into gratitude.

How can he travel through this waste howling wilderness?  
  
If you are alive to what you are as a poor, fallen   
sinner—you will see yourself surrounded by . . .  
enemies,   
temptations,  
sins, and  
snares.  
  
You will feel yourself utterly defenseless, as weak  
as water, without any strength to stand against them.   
You will see a mountain of difficulties before your eyes.  
  
If you know anything inwardly and experimentally   
of yourself of . . .   
the evils of your heart,  
the power of sin,  
the strength of temptation,  
the subtlety of your unwearied foe,   
and the daily conflict between nature and grace,   
the flesh and the Spirit, which are the peculiar marks  
of the true child of God—you will find and feel your  
**need of** **salvation as a daily reality**.  
  
**How shall you escape** the snares and temptations   
spread in your path? How shall you get the better   
of all your enemies . . .  
external,  
internal,  
infernal,   
and reach heaven's gates safe at last?  
  
There is **present** salvation, an . . .  
inward,  
experimental,  
continual   
salvation communicated out of the   
fullness of Christ as a risen Mediator.   
  
Don't you need to be daily and almost hourly  
saved? But from what? Why, from everything in  
you that fights against the will and word of God.  
  
Sin is not dead in you.  
  
If you have a saving interest in the precious blood  
of Christ—if your name is written in the Lamb's book  
of life, and heaven is your eternal home—that does  
not deliver you from the **indwelling** of sin, nor from  
the **power** of sin—except as grace gives you present  
deliverance from it.  
  
**Sin still works in your carnal mind**, and will   
work in it until your dying hour. What then   
you need to be saved from is the . . .  
guilt,   
filth,  
power,  
love, and  
practice   
of that sin which ever dwells and ever works  
in you, and often brings your soul into hard  
and cruel bondage.  
  
Now Christ lives at the right hand of God for His dear   
people, that He may be ever saving them by His life.   
There He reigns and rules as their glorious covenant   
Head, ever watching over, feeling for and sympathizing   
with them, and communicating supplies of grace for the   
deliverance and consolation for all His suffering saints   
spread over the face of the earth. The glorious Head is   
in heaven, but the suffering members upon earth; and   
as He lives on their behalf, He maintains by His Spirit   
and grace, His life in their soul.  
  
Each Christian has to walk through a great and terrible   
wilderness, wherein are fiery serpents, and scorpions,   
and drought (Deu 8:15); where he is surrounded with   
temptations and snares—his own evil heart being his   
worst foe.   
  
**How can he travel through this waste howling   
wilderness** unless he has a Friend at the right hand   
of God to send him continual supplies of grace—who   
can hear his prayers, answer his petitions, listen to   
his sighs, and put his tears into his bottle—who can   
help him to see the snares, and give him grace to   
avoid them—who observes from his heavenly watch   
tower the rising of evil in his heart, and can put a   
timely and seasonable check upon it before it bursts  
into word or action?   
  
He needs an all-wise and ever-living Friend who can . . .  
save him from **pride** by giving him true humility;   
save him from **hardness of heart** by bestowing repentance;   
save him from **carelessness** by making his conscience tender;   
save him from all his **fears** by whispering into his soul, "Fear   
not, I have redeemed you."   
  
The Christian has to be continually looking   
to the Lord Jesus Christ . . .  
to revive his soul when drooping,  
to manifest His love to his heart when cold and unfeeling,  
to sprinkle his conscience with His blood when guilty and sinking,  
to lead him into truth,  
to keep him from error and evil,  
to preserve him through and amid every storm,  
to guide every step that he takes in his onward journey,   
and eventually bring him safe to heaven.  
  
We need continual supplies of His grace, mercy, and   
love received into our hearts, so as to save us . . .  
from the love and spirit of the world,  
from error,  
from the power and strength of our own lusts,   
and the base inclinations of our fallen nature.   
  
These will often work at a fearful rate; but this will   
only make you feel more your need of the power and   
presence of the Lord Jesus to save you from them all.  
  
**You are a poor, defenseless sheep**, surrounded  
by wolves, and, as such, need all the care and  
defense of the good Shepherd.  
  
**You are a ship in a stormy sea**, where winds and   
waves are all contrary, and therefore need an all  
wise and able pilot to take you safe into harbor.  
  
There a single thing on earth or in hell which can   
harm you—if you are only looking to the Lord Jesus   
Christ, and deriving supplies of grace and strength   
from Him.  
  
  
  
  
What trifles, what toys, what empty vanities  
  
**What trifles, what toys, what empty   
vanities** do the great bulk of men pursue!  
  
  
  
  
**If God left us for a single hour**  
  
"**Don't leave us!**" Jer 14:9  
  
How much is summed up in those three words!  
  
What would it be for God to leave us?  **What and where would we be,**  **if God left us for a single hour?**  
  
**What would become of us?**   
  
We would fall at once into the hands . . .  
of sin,  
of Satan, and  
of the world.   
  
We would be abandoned to our own evil  
hearts—abandoned, utterly abandoned to   
the unbelief, the infidelity, to all the filth   
and sensuality of our wicked nature—to fill   
up the measure of our iniquities, until we   
sank under His wrath to rise no more!  
  
"**Don't leave us!**" Jer 14:9  
  
  
  
  
**An idol is an idol**  
"Son of man, these leaders have set **up idols   
in their hearts!** They have embraced things  
that lead them into sin." Eze 14:3  
  
**An idol is an idol**, whether worshiped inwardly   
in heart, or adorned outwardly by the knee.  
  
Therefore, give the people of Israel this message  
from the Sovereign Lord: "Repent and turn away from  
your idols, and stop all your loathsome practices. I,  
the Lord, will punish all those, both Israelites and  
foreigners, who reject Me and set up **idols in their  
hearts**, so that they fall into sin." Eze 14:6-7  
  
  
  
  
**A worldly spirit will ever peep out**  
  
"He gave Himself for our sins to rescue us  
from the present evil age." Gal 1:4  
  
**The first effect of sovereign grace** in its divine   
operation upon the heart of a child of God, is to   
**separate him from the world** by infusing into him   
a new spirit. There is little evidence that grace   
ever touched our hearts if it did not separate us   
from this ungodly world.  
  
Where there is not this divine work upon a sinner's   
conscience—where there is no communication of this   
new heart and this new spirit, no infusion of this holy   
life, no animating, quickening influence of the Spirit   
of God upon the soul—whatever a man's outward   
profession may be, **he will ever be of a worldly spirit**.   
  
A set of doctrines, however sound, merely received   
into the natural understanding—cannot divorce a man   
from that innate love of the world which is so deeply   
rooted in his very being. No mighty power has come   
upon his soul to revolutionize his every thought, cast   
his soul as if into a new mold—and by stamping upon   
it the mind and likeness of Christ to change him   
altogether. **This worldly spirit may be . . .**  
checked by circumstances,  
controlled by natural conscience, or  
influenced by the example of others;   
but **a worldly spirit will ever peep out** from the   
thickest disguise, and manifest itself, as occasion   
draws it forth, in every unregenerate man.

**What a lesson is here for ministers!**  
  
"And my speech and my preaching were **not   
with enticing words of man's wisdom**, but   
in demonstration of the Spirit and of power"  
1Co 2:4  
  
The word "enticing" is as we now say, "persuasive."   
It includes, therefore, every branch of skillful oratory,  
whether it be logical reasoning to convince our   
**understanding**—or appeals to our feelings to stir up   
our **passions**—or new and striking ideas to delight  
our **intellect**—or beautiful and eloquent language to   
please and captivate our **imagination**.   
  
All these "enticing words" of man's wisdom—**the very   
things which our popular preachers most speak and aim   
at**—this great apostle renounced, discarded, and rejected!  
  
He might have used them all if he liked. He possessed  
an almost unequalled share of natural ability and great   
learning—a singularly keen, penetrating intellect—a   
wonderful command of the Greek language—a flow of   
ideas most varied, striking, and original—and powers of   
oratory and eloquence such as have been given to few.   
He might therefore have used enticing words of man's   
wisdom, had he wished or thought it right to do so—but   
he would not. He saw what deceptiveness was in them,   
and at best they were mere arts of oratory. He saw that   
these enticing words—though they might . . .  
touch the natural **feelings**,  
work upon the **passions**,   
captivate the **imagination**,  
convince the **understanding**,   
persuade the **judgment**, and to a certain extent force   
their way into men's minds—yet when all was done that   
could thus be done, it was merely **man's wisdom** which   
had done it.  
  
Earthly wisdom cannot communicate heavenly faith.   
Paul would not therefore use enticing words of man's   
wisdom, whether it were force of logical argument, or   
appeal to natural passions, or the charms of vivid   
eloquence, or the beauty of poetical composition, or   
the subtle nicety of well arranged sentences. He would   
not use any of these enticing words of man's wisdom   
to draw people into a profession of religion—when their  
heart was not really touched by God's grace, or their   
consciences wrought upon by a divine power.  
  
He came to win souls for Jesus Christ, not converts   
to his own powers of oratorical persuasion—to turn   
men from darkness to light, and from the power of   
Satan unto God—not to charm their ears by poetry   
and eloquence—but to bring them out of the vilest   
of sins that they might be washed, sanctified, and   
justified by the Spirit of God—and **not entertain   
or amuse** their minds while sin and Satan still   
maintained dominion in their hearts!  
  
All the labor spent in bringing together a church   
and congregation of professing people by the power   
of logical argument and appeals to their natural   
consciences would be utterly lost, as regards fruit   
for eternity—for a profession so induced by him and   
so made by them would leave them just as they were . . .  
in all the depths of **unregeneracy**,  
with their sins **unpardoned**,  
their persons **unjustified**,   
and their souls **unsanctified**.  
  
He therefore discarded all these ways of winning   
over converts—as deceitful to the souls of men,   
and as dishonoring to God.   
  
It required much grace to do this—to throw aside   
what he might have used, and renounce what most   
men, as gifted as he, would have gladly used.  
  
**What a lesson is here for ministers!**   
  
How anxious are some men to shine as great   
preachers! How they covet and often aim at   
some grand display of what they call eloquence   
to charm their hearers—and win praise and honor   
to **self**!  
  
How others try to argue men into religion, or by   
appealing to their natural feelings, sometimes to   
frighten them with pictures of hell, and sometimes   
to allure them by descriptions of heaven.  
  
But all such arts, for they are no better, must be   
discarded by a true servant of God. Only the Spirit   
can reveal Christ, taking of the things of Christ, and   
showing them unto us, applying the word with power   
to our hearts, and bringing the sweetness, reality,   
and blessedness of divine things into our soul.  
  
"And my speech and my preaching were not   
with enticing words of man's wisdom, **but in   
demonstration of the Spirit and of power**."  
  
Unless we have a measure of the same demonstration   
of the Spirit, all that is said by us in the pulpit drops to   
the ground—it has no real effect—there is no true or   
abiding fruit—no fruit unto eternal life. If there be in it   
some enticing words of man's wisdom, it may please   
the mind of those who are gratified by such arts—it may   
stimulate and occupy the attention for the time—but   
there it ceases, and all that has been heard fades away   
like a dream of the night.

**A peculiar, indescribable, invincible power**  
  
"Our gospel did not come to you **in word only**,   
but also with **power**, with the **Holy Spirit** and   
with **deep conviction**." 1Th 1:5   
  
The gospel comes to some **in word only**. They   
hear the word of the gospel, the sound of truth;   
but it reaches the outward ear only—or if it touches  
the inward feelings, it is merely as the word of men.   
  
But where the Holy Spirit begins and carries on   
His divine and saving work, He attends the word   
with **a peculiar, an indescribable, and yet an   
invincible power.**   
  
It falls as from God upon the heart. He is heard to   
speak in it—and in it His glorious Majesty appears   
to open the eyes, unstop the ears, and convey a   
message from His own mouth to the soul.  
  
**Some hear the gospel as the mere word of men**,   
perhaps for years before God speaks in it with a   
divine power to their conscience. They thought   
they **understood** the gospel—they thought they   
**felt** it—they thought they **loved** it. But all this   
time they did not see any vital distinction between   
receiving it as the mere word of **men**, and as the   
word of **God**.   
  
The levity, the superficiality, the emptiness stamped   
upon all who merely receive the gospel as the word   
of men—is sufficient evidence that **it never sank   
deep into the heart, and never took any powerful   
grasp upon their soul.**   
  
It therefore never brought with it any real separation   
from the world—never gave strength to mortify the least   
sin—never communicated power to escape the least snare   
of Satan—was never attended with a spirit of grace and   
prayer—never brought honesty, sincerity, and uprightness   
into the heart before God—never bestowed any spirituality   
of mind, or any loving affection toward the Lord of life and   
glory. It was merely the reception of truth in the same way   
as we receive scientific principles, or learn a language, a   
business, or a trade. **It was all . . .**  
shallow,   
superficial,  
deceptive,  
hypocritical.  
  
**But in some unexpected moment**, when little looking   
for it, the word of God was brought into their conscience   
with a **power** never experienced before. A light shone in   
and through it which they never saw before . . .  
a majesty,  
a glory,  
an authority,  
an evidence   
accompanied it which they never knew before. And   
under this light, life, and power they fell down, with   
the word of God sent home to their heart.  
  
When then Christ speaks the gospel to the heart—  
when He reveals Himself to the soul—when His word,   
dropping as the rain and distilling as the dew, is   
received in faith and love—He is embraced as the   
chief among ten thousand and the altogether lovely   
one—He takes His seat upon the affections and   
becomes enthroned in the heart as its Lord and God.  
  
Is there life in **your** bosom?   
  
Has God's power attended the work?   
  
Is the grace of God really in your heart?   
  
Has God spoken to your soul?   
  
Have you heard His voice, felt its power,   
and fallen under its influence?  
  
"And we also thank God continually because,   
when you received the word of God, which you  
heard from us, you accepted it not as **the word   
of men**, but as it actually is, **the word of God**,   
which is effectually at work in you who believe."   
1Th 2:13

**The deep things of God**   
  
"**But God has revealed it to us by His Spirit.**  
The Spirit searches all things, even **the deep  
things of God**." 1Co 2:10  
  
The Spirit of God in a man's bosom searches   
**the deep things of God**, so as to lead him into   
a spiritual and experimental knowledge of them.   
  
**What depths** do we sometimes see in a single   
text of Scripture as opened to the understanding,   
or applied to the heart?  
  
**What a depth** in the blood of Christ—how it   
"cleanses from all sin,"—even millions of millions   
of the foulest sins of the foulest sinners!  
  
**What a depth** in His bleeding, dying love,   
that could stoop so low to lift us so high!   
  
**What a depth** in His pity and compassion to extend   
itself to such guilty, vile transgressors as we are!  
  
**What depth** in His rich, free, and sovereign grace,   
that it should super-abound over all our aggravated   
iniquities, enormities, and vile abominations!  
 **What depth** in His sufferings—that He should have   
voluntarily put Himself under such a load of guilt,   
such outbreakings of the wrath of God—as He felt   
in His holy soul when He stood in our place to   
redeem poor sinners from the bottomless pit—that   
those who deserved hell, should be lifted up into   
the enjoyment of heaven!

**The religionists of the day**  
"And everyone will hate you because of your  
allegiance to Me." Luk 21:17  
 **Professors of religion** have always been the   
deadliest enemies of the children of God.   
  
Who were so opposed to the blessed Lord as the   
Scribes and Pharisees? It was the religious teachers   
and leaders who crucified the Lord of glory!  
  
And so in every age **the religionists of the day**   
have been the hottest and bitterest persecutors   
of the Church of Christ.   
  
Nor is the case altered now. The more the children   
of God are firm in the truth, the more they enjoy its  
power, the more they live under its influence, and  
the more tenderly and conscientiously they walk in  
godly fear, the more will the professing generation   
of the day hate them with a deadly hatred.   
  
Let us not think that we can disarm it by a godly life;   
for the more that we walk in the sweet enjoyment of   
heavenly truth and let our light shine before men as   
having been with Jesus, the more will this draw down   
their hatred and contempt.  
  
"And the world hates them because they do not  
belong to the world, just as I do not." Joh 17:14

**My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me!**  
"**My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me!**"   
Isa 24:16  
  
There is no more continual source of lamentation   
and mourning to a child of God than a sense of his   
own barrenness. He would be fruitful in every good   
word and work. **But when he contrasts . . .**  
his own miserable unprofitableness,  
his coldness and deadness,  
his proneness to evil,  
his backwardness to good,  
his daily wanderings and departings from God,  
his depraved affections,  
his stupid frames,   
his sensual desires,  
his carnal projects, and  
his earthy grovelings,  
with what he sees and knows should be the fruit   
that should grow upon a fruitful branch in the only   
true Vine, he sinks down under a sense of his own   
wretched barrenness and unfruitfulness.  
  
Yet what was the effect produced by all this upon   
his own soul? To wean him from the creature; to   
divert him from looking to any for help or hope, but   
the Lord Himself. It is in this painful way that the   
Lord often, if not usually, cuts us off from all human   
props, even the nearest and dearest, that we may   
lean wholly and solely on Himself.

**Those poor stupid people!**  
  
"**The world knows us not.**" 1Jn 3:1  
  
Both the openly profane world, and the   
professing world, are grossly ignorant   
of the children of God. Their . . .  
real character and condition,   
state and standing,   
joys and sorrows,   
mercies and miseries,  
trials and deliverances,  
hopes and fears,  
afflictions and consolations,  
are entirely hidden from their eyes.  
  
The world knows nothing of the motives and   
feelings which guide and actuate the children  
of God. **It views them as a set of gloomy,   
morose, melancholy beings**, whose tempers   
are soured by false and exaggerated views of   
religion—who have pored over the thoughts of   
hell and heaven until some have frightened   
themselves into despair, and others have puffed   
up their vain minds with an imaginary conceit of   
their being especial favorites of the Almighty.   
"They are really," it says, "no better than other   
folks, if so good. But they have such contracted   
minds—are so obstinate and bigoted with their   
poor, narrow, prejudiced views—that wherever   
they come they bring disturbance and confusion."   
  
**But why this harsh judgment?**   
  
Because the world knows nothing of the spiritual  
feelings which actuate the child of grace, making   
him act so differently from the world which thus   
condemns him.  
  
It cannot understand our sight and sense of the   
exceeding sinfulness of sin—and that is the reason  
why we will not run riot with them in the same   
course of ungodliness.   
  
It does not know with what a solemn weight eternal   
things rest upon our minds—and that that is the cause   
why we cannot join with them in pursuing so eagerly   
the things of the world, and living for time as they   
do—instead of living for eternity.   
  
Being unable to enter into the spiritual motives and   
gracious feelings which actuate a living soul, and the   
movements of divine life continually stirring in a   
Christian breast, they naturally judge us from their   
own point of view, and condemn what they cannot   
understand.  
  
You may place a **horse** and a **man** upon the same  
hill—while the man would be looking at the woods   
and fields and streams—the horse would be feeding   
upon the grass at his feet. The horse, if it could   
reason, would say, "What a fool my master is! How  
he is staring and gaping about! Why does he not sit   
down and open his basket of provisions—for I know   
he has it with him, for I carried it—and feed as I do?"   
  
So the worldling says, "**Those poor stupid people**,   
how they are spending their time in going to chapel,   
and reading the Bible in their gloomy, melancholy way.   
Religion is all very well—and we ought all to be religious   
before we die—but they make so much of it. Why don't   
they enjoy more of life? Why don't they amuse themselves   
more with its innocent, harmless pleasures—be more gay,   
cheerful, and sociable, and take more interest in those   
things which so interest us?"   
  
The reason why the world thus wonders at us is   
because it knows us not, and therefore **cannot   
understand that we have . . .**  
sublimer feelings,  
nobler pleasures, and  
more substantial delights,  
than ever entered the soul of a worldling!  
  
Christian! the more you are conformed to the image   
of Christ—the more separated you are from the world,   
the less will it understand you. If we kept closer to the   
Lord and walked more in holy obedience to the precepts   
of the gospel, we would be **more misunderstood** than   
even we now are! It is our worldly conformity that   
makes the world understand many of our movements   
and actions so well.  
  
But if our movements were more according to the mind of   
Christ—if we walked more as the Lord walked when here   
below—we would leave the world in greater ignorance of   
us than we leave it now—for the hidden springs of our life   
would be more out of its sight, our testimony against it   
more decided, and our separation from it more complete.

**We were not always a set of poor mopes**  
  
"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set   
your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated   
at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things   
above, not on earthly things. For **you died**, and your   
life is now hidden with Christ in God." Col 3:1-3  
  
Men's pursuits and pleasures differ as widely as   
their station or disposition—but a life of selfish   
gratification reigns and rules in all.  
  
Now it is by this **death** that we die unto . . .  
the things of time and sense;   
to all that charms the natural mind of man;  
to the pleasures and pursuits of life;  
to that busy, restless world which once held   
us so fast and firm in its embrace—and whirled   
us round and round within its giddy dance.   
  
Let us look back. **We were not always a set of poor   
mopes**—as the world calls us. We were once as merry   
and as gay as the merriest and gayest of them.   
  
**But what were we really and truly with all our mirth?**  
  
Dead to God—alive to sin. Dead to everything holy and   
divine—alive to everything vain and foolish, light and   
trifling, carnal and sensual—if not exactly vile and   
abominable.   
  
Our natural life was with all of us a life of gratifying our   
senses—with some of us, perhaps, chiefly of pleasure and   
worldly happiness—with others a life of covetousness, or   
ambition, or self-righteousness.  
  
Sin once put forth its intense power and allured   
us—and we followed like the fool to the stocks.   
  
Sin charmed—and we listened to its seductive wiles.  
  
Sin held out its bait—and we too greedily,   
too heedlessly swallowed the hook.   
  
"May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus   
Christ, through which **the world has been crucified to  
me, and I to the world**." Gal 6:14

**To walk after the flesh**  
  
"There is therefore now **no condemnation** to   
those who are in Christ Jesus, **who walk not   
after the flesh**, but after the Spirit." Rom 8:1  
  
**To walk after the flesh** carries with it the idea of   
the flesh going before us—as our leader, guide, and   
example—and our following close in its footsteps,  
so that wherever it drags or draws we move after   
it, as the needle after the magnet.   
  
**To walk after the flesh**, then, is to move   
step by step in implicit obedience to . . .  
the commands of the flesh,   
the **lusts** of the flesh,  
the **inclinations** of the flesh,  
and the **desires** of the flesh,   
whatever shape they assume,   
whatever garb they wear,   
whatever name they may bear.   
  
**To walk after the flesh** is to be ever pursuing,   
desiring, and doing the things that please the   
flesh, whatever aspect that flesh may wear or   
whatever dress it may assume—whether molded   
and fashioned after the grosser and more flagrant   
ways of the profane world—or the more refined   
and **deceptive religion** of the professing church.  
  
But are the grosser and more manifest sinners the   
only people who may be said to walk after the flesh?   
Does not all **human religion**, in all its varied forms and   
shapes, come under the sweep of this all-devouring   
sword? Yes! Every one who is entangled in and led by   
**a fleshly religion**, walks as much after the flesh as   
those who are abandoned to its grosser indulgences.   
  
Sad it is, yet not more sad than true, that **false   
religion has slain its thousands**, if open sin has   
slain its ten thousands.   
  
**To walk after the flesh**, whether it be in the   
grosser or more refined sense of the term, is   
the same in the sight of God.

**The very thought is appalling!**  
"Once you were alienated from God and were   
**His** **enemies**, separated from Him by your  
evil thoughts and actions." Col 1:21  
  
All man's sins, comparatively speaking, are but   
'motes in the sunbeam' compared with **this giant   
sin** **of enmity against God.** A man may be given   
up to fleshly indulgences; he may sin against his   
fellow creature—may rob, plunder, oppress, even  
kill his fellow man. But viewed in a spiritual light,  
what are they compared with the dreadful, the  
damnable sin of **enmity** against the great and  
glorious Majesty of heaven?  
  
**This is a sin that lives beyond the grave!**  
  
Many sins, though not their consequences, die   
with man's body, because they are bodily sins.   
  
But this is a sin that goes into eternity with him,   
and flares up like a mighty volcano from the very   
depths of the bottomless pit! **Yes, it is the very   
sin of devils**, which therefore binds guilty man   
down with them in the same eternal chains, and   
consigns him to the same place of torment!   
  
O the unutterable enmity of the heart against   
the living God! **The very thought is appalling!**   
  
How utterly ruined, then, how wholly lost must   
that man's state and case be, who lives and   
dies as he comes into the world . . .  
unchanged,  
unrenewed,  
unregenerated!   
  
I will not dwell longer upon this gloomy subject,   
on this sad exhibition of human wickedness and   
misery, though it is needful we should know it for   
ourselves, that we should have a taste of this bitter   
cup in our own most painful experience, that we may   
know the sweetness of the cup of salvation when   
presented to our lips by free and sovereign grace.  
  
Nothing but the mighty power of God Himself   
can ever turn this **enemy** into a **friend**!  
  
"Once you were alienated from God and were   
**His** **enemies**, separated from Him by your  
evil thoughts and actions, yet now He has   
brought you back as **His friends**. He has done   
this through His death on the cross in His own   
human body. As a result, He has brought you   
into the very presence of God, and you are holy   
and blameless as you stand before Him without   
a single fault." Col 1:21-22  
  
  
  
  
**I will give you rest**  
  
**Are you ever weary . . .**  
of the world,  
of sin,   
of self,  
of everything below the skies?   
  
If so, you want something to give you **rest**.   
  
You look to SELF—it is but shifting sand, tossed  
here and there with the restless tide, and ever   
casting up mire and dirt. No holding ground; no   
anchorage; no rest there.   
  
You look to OTHERS—you see what man is, even   
the very best of men in their best state—how fickle,   
how unstable, how changing and changeable; how   
weak even when willing to help; how more likely   
to add to, than relieve your distress; if desirous   
to sympathize with and comfort you in trouble and   
sorrow, how short his arm to help, how unsatisfactory   
his aid to relieve! You find no rest there.   
  
You lean upon the WORLD—it is but a broken   
reed which runs into your hand and pierces you.   
You find no rest there.   
  
So look where you will, there is no rest for the   
sole of your foot.   
  
But there is a rest. Our blessed Lord says, "Come to  
**Me**, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens,   
and **I will give you rest**." Mat 11:28

**That which is highly esteemed among men**  
  
"**That which is highly esteemed among men** is  
an abomination in the sight of God." Luk 16:15  
  
The pride,   
the ambition,  
the pleasures,  
the amusements,   
in which we see thousands and tens of thousands  
engaged—and sailing down the stream into a dreadful   
gulf of eternity—are all an abomination in the sight of   
God.   
  
Whereas, such things as . . .  
faith,  
hope,   
love,  
humility,   
brokenness of heart,   
tenderness of conscience,   
contrition of spirit,   
sorrow for sin,   
self-loathing,   
self-abasement,   
looking to Jesus,  
taking up the cross,  
denying one's self,  
walking in the strait and narrow path that leads to   
eternal life—in a word, the power of godliness—**these   
things are despised by all**—and by none so much as   
mere heady professors who have a name to live while   
dead.  
  
"**That which is highly esteemed among men** is  
an abomination in the sight of God." Luk 16:15  
  
  
 **Invincibly and irresistibly drawn**  
  
**As the Lord is pleased to enlighten   
his mind, the Christian sees . . .**  
such a beauty,  
such a blessedness,  
such a heavenly sweetness,  
such a divine loveliness,   
such a fullness of surpassing grace,  
such tender condescension,  
such unwearied patience,  
such infinite compassion,  
**in the Lord of life and glory**—that he is as   
if **invincibly and irresistibly drawn** by these   
attractive influences to come to His feet to   
learn of Him. So far as the Lord is pleased to   
reveal Himself in some measure to his soul,   
by the sweet glimpses and glances which he   
thus obtains of His Person and countenance,   
he is drawn to His blessed Majesty by cords   
of love to look up unto Him and beg of Him  
that He would drop His word with life and   
power into his heart.

**Woman's chief besetting sins**"The Lord will strip away their artful beauty—their  
ornaments, headbands, and crescent necklaces;   
their earrings, bracelets, and veils. Gone will be   
their scarves, ankle chains, sashes, perfumes, and  
charms; their rings, jewels, party clothes, gowns,  
capes, and purses; their mirrors, linen garments,  
head ornaments, and shawls." Isa 3:18-23  
  
"The Lord will wash away the **filth** of the women  
of Zion." Isa 4:4  
  
These women of Zion are typical representatives of   
women professing godliness in all ages. The Lord   
looked at their hearts, and the motives of their gaudy  
attire. There He saw **pride, luxury, love of dress and   
admiration**—**woman's chief besetting sins**—and all   
this was in His eyes so much **filth!**  
  
But as I do not wish to be too hard upon the women,   
I may say, that **we men have our hidden filth** to as   
great, or worse degree, than they. In us there are . . .  
many secret and powerful lusts,  
much hypocrisy, self-righteousness, pride, and  
various other sinful and sensual abominations.  
  
  
  
  
**You are not your own!**

"**You are not your own!** For you are bought with  
a price—therefore glorify God in your body, and in   
your spirit, which are God's." 1Co 6:19  
  
Your **eyes** are not your own—that you may feed your   
lusts, that you may go about gaping, and gazing, and   
looking into every shop window to see the fashions of   
the day—learn the prevailing pride of life—and thus lay   
up food for your vain mind—either in coveting what   
must be unfitting to your profession—or applying your   
money to an improper use—or being disappointed   
because you cannot afford to buy it.   
  
Your **ears** are not your own—that you may listen to   
every foolish tale—drink in every political, worldly, or   
carnal report which may fall upon them—and thus feed   
that natural desire for news, gossip, and even slander   
—which is the very element of the carnal mind.  
  
Your **tongue** is not your own—that you may speak   
what you please, and blurt out whatever passes in   
the chambers of your heart, without check or fear.  
  
Your **hands** are not your own—that you may use them  
as implements of evil—or employ them in any other way   
than to earn with them an honest livelihood. Our hands   
were not given us for sin—but for godly uses.  
  
Your **feet** are not your own—that you may walk in   
the ways of the world—or that they should carry you   
to haunts where all around you are engaged upon   
errands of vanity and sin.  
  
**All** must be held according to the disposal of God,   
and under a sense of our obligations to Him.  
  
But perhaps you will say, in the rebellion of your carnal   
mind, "What restraint all this lays upon us. Cannot we   
look with our eyes as we like—hear with our ears as we   
please—and speak with our tongues as we choose? Will   
you so narrow our path that we are to have nothing of   
our own—not even our time or money, our body or soul?   
Surely we may have a little enjoyment now and then—a   
little recreation, a little holiday sometimes, a little   
relaxation from being always so strict and so religious—  
a little feeding of our carnal mind which cannot bear all   
this restraint?"  
  
Well, but what will you bring upon yourself by . . .  
the roving eye,  
the foolish tongue,  
the loose hand,  
the straying foot?  
  
Darkness,   
bondage,  
guilt,   
misery,   
death!  
  
"But," you say, "we are not to be tied up so   
tightly as all this! We have gospel liberty,   
but you will not allow us even that!"   
  
Yes, blessed be God, there is gospel liberty, for   
there is no real happiness in religion without it;   
but not liberty to sin—not liberty to gratify the   
lusts of the flesh—not liberty to act contrary to   
the gospel we profess, and the precepts of God's   
Word—for this is not liberty but licentiousness.  
  
"**You are not your own!** For you are bought with  
a price—therefore glorify God in your body, and in   
your spirit, which are God's." 1Co 6:19  
  
  
  
  
**Do you seek you great things for yourself?**  
**"Do you seek you great things for yourself?   
Seek them not!"** Jer 45:5  
  
O the pride of man's heart! How it will work and show   
itself even under a guise of religion and holiness!  
  
Few can see that in religion, what are considered  
great things—are really very little; and what are   
considered little—are really very great.   
How few can see that . . .  
a broken heart,   
a contrite spirit,  
a humble mind,  
a tender conscience,  
a meek, quiet, and patient bearing of the cross,  
a believing submission and resignation to the will of God,  
a looking to Him alone, for all supplies in providence and grace,   
a continual seeking of His face,  
a desiring nothing so much as the visitations of His favor,  
a loving, affectionate, forbearing, and forgiving spirit,  
a bearing of injuries and reproaches without retaliation,  
a liberal heart and hand, and  
a godly, holy, and separate life and walk—  
are **the things which in God's sight are great.**   
While a knowledge of doctrine, clear insight into   
gospel mysteries, and a ready speech are really   
very **little** things—and are often to be found side   
by side and hand in hand with a proud, covetous,   
worldly, unhumbled spirit, and a living in what is   
sinful and evil.  
  
How many **ministers** are seeking after great gifts**—**   
thirsting after popularity, applause, and acceptance   
among men! They are not satisfied with being   
simply and solely what God may make them by   
His Spirit and grace**—**with the blessing which He   
may make them to a scattered few here and there.   
This inferior position, as they consider it, so beneath   
their grace and gifts, their talents and abilities**—**does   
not satisfy their restless mind and aspiring desires.   
**Their ambition is . . .**  
to stand at the very head of their peers,  
be looked up to and sought after as a leader and a guide,  
have a larger building,   
have a fuller congregation,  
have a better salary, and  
have a wider field for the display of their gifts and abilities.  
Gladly would they . . .  
stand apart from all others,  
brook no rival to their 'pulpit throne', and  
be lord paramount at home and abroad.   
  
And what is the **consequence** of this proud, ambitious   
spirit? What **envy**, what **jealousy**, what **detraction** do   
we see in men who want to stand at the top of the tree!   
How, again and again, do they seek to rise by standing,   
as it were**—**on the slain bodies of others!

**"Do you seek you great things for yourself?  
Seek them not!"** Jer 45:5  
  
  
  
**We would not be such muck-worms!**  
  
"I pray also that the **eyes of your heart may be   
enlightened**—in order that you may know the hope   
to which He has called you—what a rich and glorious  
inheritance He has given to His people." Eph 1:18  
  
If the Spirit would but enlighten the eyes of our heart,  
how this would lift us up out of the mud and mire of this  
wretched world! **We would not be such muck-worms**,   
raking and scraping a few straws together—or **running   
about like ants with our morsel of grain!** We would have   
our affections fixed more on things above. We would . . .  
**know** more of Christ,  
**enjoy** more of Christ,  
**be** more like Christ,  
**walk** more like Christ walked, and  
look forward to our glorious inheritance.   
  
If these things were brought into our hearts with divine   
power—how they would sweeten every bitter cup, and   
carry us through every changing scene, until at last we   
were landed above—to see the Lord as He is, in the full   
perfection of His infinite glory!

**The multitude of Your tender mercies**

"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your   
loving-kindness—according unto **the multitude of  
Your tender mercies** blot out my transgressions."   
Psa 51:1  
  
What a sweet expression it is—and how it seems   
to convey to our mind that God's mercies do not   
fall 'drop by drop'—but are as innumerable . . ..  
as the **sand** upon the sea-shore;  
as the **stars** that stud the midnight sky;  
as the **drops of** **rain** that fill the clouds before   
they discharge their copious showers upon the earth.   
  
It is the **multitude** of His mercies that makes Him so   
merciful a God. He does not give but a **drop** or two of   
mercy—that would soon be gone, like the rain which   
fell this morning under the hot sun. But His mercies   
flow like a **river!** There is in Him . . .  
a multitude of mercies,   
for a multitude of sins,  
and a multitude of sinners!   
  
This felt and received in the love of it—**breaks, humbles,   
softens, and melts** a sensible sinner's heart—and he says,   
"What, sin against such mercies? What, when the Lord has   
remembered me in my low estate, and manifested once  
more a sense of His mercy? What, shall I go on to provoke  
Him again—walk inconsistently again—be entangled in  
Satan's snares again? O, forbid it God, forbid it gospel,   
forbid it tender conscience, forbid it every constraint of   
dying love!"  
  
"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your   
loving-kindness—according unto **the multitude of  
Your tender mercies** blot out my transgressions."   
Psa 51:1

**Can Christ love one like me?**  
  
"To grasp how wide and long and high and deep   
is the love of Christ, and to know this love that  
surpasses knowledge." Eph 3:17-19  
You may wonder sometimes—and it is a wonder that   
will fill heaven itself with anthems of eternal praise—  
how such a glorious Jesus can ever look down from   
heaven upon such crawling reptiles, on such worms   
of earth—what is more, upon such sinners who have   
provoked Him over and over again by their misdeeds.   
Yes, how this exalted Christ, in the height of His glory,   
can look down from heaven on such poor, miserable,   
wretched creatures as we—this is the mystery that   
fills angels with astonishment!  
  
We feel we are such crawling reptiles—such undeserving   
creatures—and are so utterly unworthy of the least notice   
from Him, that we say, "**Can Christ love one like me?**   
Can the glorious Son of God cast an eye of pity and   
compassion, love and tenderness upon one like me—who   
can scarcely at times bear with myself—who sees and   
feels myself one of the vilest of the vile, and the worst   
of the worst? O, what must I be in the sight of the   
glorious Son of God?"   
  
And yet, He says, "I have loved you with an everlasting   
love." His love has breadths, and lengths, and depths,   
and heights unknown!  
  
Its breadth exceeds all human span;   
its length outvies all creature line;   
its depth surpasses all finite measurement;   
its height excels even angelic computation!  
  
Because His love is . . .  
so wondrous,  
so deep,  
so long,  
so broad,  
so high;  
it is so suitable to our every want and woe.  
  
"To grasp how wide and long and high and deep   
is the love of Christ, and to know this love that  
surpasses knowledge." Eph 3:17-19

**A woman's best ornament**  
  
"Don't be concerned about the **outward beauty**   
that depends on fancy hairstyles, expensive  
jewelry, or beautiful clothes. You should be  
known for the **beauty that comes from within**,  
the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit,  
which is so precious to God." 1Pe 3:3-4  
  
This "**beauty that comes from within**" is that . . .  
meekness,  
quietness,  
gentleness,  
brokenness of heart,  
contrition of spirit,  
humility of mind,   
tenderness of conscience,   
which are fitting to the children of God.   
  
A gentle and quiet spirit is **a woman's best ornament**.   
  
As to other gay and unbecoming ornaments, let those   
wear them, who wish to serve and to enjoy . . .  
the lust of the flesh,  
the lust of the eyes,  
and the pride of life.   
  
Let the "daughters of Zion" manifest they have other   
ornaments than what the world admires and approves.   
Let them covet . . .  
the teachings of God,  
the smiles of His love,  
the whispers of His favor.  
The more they have of these, the less will they care   
for the adornments which the "daughters of Canaan"  
run so madly after; by which also they often impoverish   
themselves, and by opening a way for admiration, too   
often open a way for seduction and ruin.

**O you filthy creature!**  
  
"Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me  
from this life that is dominated by sin?" Rom 7:24  
  
No doubt you have **your enemies**—and so have we all.  
  
But I will tell you where you have an enemy—and a   
greater enemy than ever you have found in others—  
**yourself!** I have often felt that I could do myself more   
harm in five minutes, than all my enemies could do me   
in fifty years! I need not fear what **others** may do or   
say—I fear **myself** more than them all—knowing what   
I am as a sinner—the strength of sin—and the power   
of temptation.   
  
Be sure of this—that **YOU are the worst  
enemy you ever had . . .**your sin,  
your lust,  
your covetousness,  
your pride,  
your self-righteousness.  
  
God Himself will make you feel your enemy.   
You shall see something of his accursed designs;   
how sin has deceived you, betrayed you, brought   
guilt upon your conscience, and made you a burden   
to yourself. You shall be brought to feel, and say,   
"There is nothing I hate so much as my own vile   
heart—my own dreadfully corrupt nature. O what   
an enemy do I carry in my own bosom! Of all my   
enemies, he is surely the worst! Of all my foes,   
he is the most subtle and strong!"  
  
Have you not sometimes felt as though you could   
take your lusts by the neck and dash their heads   
against a stone? Have you not felt you could take   
out of your breast this vile, damnable heart, lay   
it upon the ground, and stamp upon it?   
And when tempted with . . .  
pride,  
or unbelief,  
or infidelity,  
or blasphemy,  
or any hateful lust,   
how you have cried out again and again with   
anguish of spirit, "O this heart of mine!"  
  
We hate our sins, and would, if possible, have no   
more to do with them, and would say to this **lust**,   
**idol**, or **temptation**, "**O you filthy creature!** What   
an enemy you are to my soul! O that I could   
forever be done with you!"  
  
"Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me  
from this life that is dominated by sin? Thanks be to   
God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord."   
Rom 7:24-25

**You never knew what real happiness was!**  
  
One false charge against the children of God, is that   
they are **a poor, moping, miserable people**, who . . .  
know nothing of happiness,   
renounce all cheerfulness, mirth, and gladness,  
hang their heads down all their days like a bulrush,  
are full of groundless fears,  
nurse the gloomiest thoughts in a kind of melancholy,   
grudge others the least enjoyment of pleasure and happiness,   
and try to make everyone else as dull and as miserable as   
their dull and miserable selves.   
  
Is not this a false charge?   
  
You know—that you never had any real happiness   
in the things of time and sense—that under all your   
'pretended gaiety' there was real gloom—that every   
'sweet' was drenched with bitterness—that vexation   
was stamped upon all that is called pleasure and   
enjoyment.  
  
**You never knew what real happiness was**, until you   
knew the Lord, and were blessed with His presence,   
and some manifestation of His goodness and mercy!

**Were it no bigger than a child's doll**

"**I will cleanse you from all your idols.**" Eze 36:25  
  
Idolatry takes a wide range. There are 'respectable' idols   
and 'vulgar' idols—just as there are marble statues, and   
other objects of worship made up of shells and feathers.

And yet each will still be an idol.

Respectable idols we can admire—vulgar idols we detest.

**But an idol is an idol**—however respectable, or however  
vulgar—however admired, or however despised they may be.  
  
But O how numerous are these respectable idols!   
  
Love of money,   
ambition,   
craving after human applause,   
desire to rise in the world;   
all these we may think are natural desires that  
may be lawfully gratified. But O, what idols may   
they turn out to be!  
  
But there are more **secret** and more **dangerous** idols.   
You may have a husband, or wife, or child—whom you   
love almost as much as yourself—you bestow upon   
this idol of yours all the affections of your heart.  
Nothing is too good for it, nothing too dear for it.   
  
You don't see how this is an idol.   
  
But, whatever you **love** more than God,   
whatever you **worship** more than God,   
whatever you **crave** for more than God,  
is an idol.  
  
It may lurk in the chambers of imagery—you may   
scarcely know how fondly you love it. But let God   
take that idol out of your breast—let Him pluck that   
idol from its niche—and you will then find how you   
have allowed your affections to wander after that   
idol and loved it more than God Himself. It is when   
the idol is taken away, removed, dethroned—that   
we learn what an idol it has been.   
  
How we hug and embrace our idols!  
  
How we cleave to them!  
  
How we delight in them!  
  
How we bow down to them!   
  
How we seek gratification from them!   
  
How little are we aware what affections entwine   
around them—how little are we aware that they   
claim what God has reserved for Himself when   
He said, "My son, give Me your heart."   
  
Many a weeping widow learns for the first time that   
her **husband** was an idol. Many a mourning husband learns for the first time how too dearly, how too fondly,   
how too idolatrously he loved his **wife**. Many a man   
does not know how dearly he loves **money** until he   
incurs some serious loss. Many do not know how   
dearly they hold **name**, **fame**, and **reputation** until   
some slanderous blight seems to touch that tender   
spot. Few indeed seem to know how dear **SELF** is,  
until God takes it out of its niche and sets Himself   
there in its room.  
  
Self,  
pride,  
reputation,  
the love of money  
the love of name and fame—  
these idols you cannot take with you into the courts   
of heaven. **How would God be moved to jealousy** **if   
you could you carry an idol**—**were it no bigger than   
a child's doll**—**into the courts above!**  
  
"**I will cleanse you from all your idols.**" Eze 36:25

**Your filth will be washed away!**  
  
O, what loathsome monsters of iniquity—how  
polluted, filthy, and vile do we feel ourselves   
to be—when the guilt of our sin is charged home   
upon our conscience! Have you not sometimes   
loathed yourselves on account of your abominations?   
Has not the filth of your sin sometimes disgusted you;  
the opening up of that horrible, that ever running   
sewer, which you daily carry about with you?  
  
We complain, and justly complain—of a reeking sewer   
which runs through a street—or of a ditch filled with   
everything disgusting. But do we feel as much—do   
we complain as often—of the foul sewer which is   
ever running in our soul—of the filthy ditch in our  
own bosom?   
  
As the sight of this open sewer meets our eyes—and  
its stench enters our nostrils, it fills us with self-loathing  
and self-abhorrence before the eyes of a holy God.   
  
"Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you   
will be clean. **Your filth will be washed away!**"   
Eze 36:25-26  
  
  
  
**Philippians 3:7**  
  
"But whatever was to my profit I now consider  
**loss** for the sake of Christ." Php 3:7  
  
This includes the loss . . .  
of all your fancied **holiness**,  
of all your vaunted **strength**,  
of all your natural or acquired **wisdom**,  
of all your boasted **knowledge**;   
in a word, of everything in **creature religion** of which   
the heart is proud, and in which it takes delight.   
  
All, all must be counted loss for Christ's sake—all,   
all must be sacrificed to His bleeding, dying love.  
  
Our dearest joys,  
our fondest hopes,  
our most cherished idols,   
must all sink and give way to the grace,  
blood, and love of an incarnate God.  
  
  
  
  
**Strangers & Pilgrims**   
  
"They confessed that they were **strangers  
and pilgrims** on the earth." Heb 11:13  
  
You feel yourself a **stranger** in this ungodly world;   
it is not your element—it is not your home. You are   
in it during God's appointed time—but you wander   
up and down this world a **stranger . . .**  
to its company,   
to its maxims,  
to its fashions,   
to its principles,   
to its motives,   
to its lusts,  
to its inclinations, and   
all in which this world moves as in its native element.   
  
Grace has separated you by God's distinguishing power,   
that though you are **in** the world, you are not **of** it. You   
feel yourself to be a **stranger** here—as David says, "a   
**stranger** and a sojourner, as all my fathers were."   
  
I can tell you plainly . . .  
if you are at home in the world;  
if the things of time and sense are your element;  
if you feel one with . . .  
the **company** of the world,   
the **maxims** of the world,   
the **fashions** of the world,   
the **principles** of the world,   
grace has not reached your heart—the faith   
of God's elect does not dwell in your bosom.  
  
**The first effect of grace is to SEPARATE.**   
  
It was so in the case of Abraham. He was called   
by grace to leave the land of his fathers and go   
out into a land that God would show him.   
  
And so God's own word to His people is now,   
"Come out from among them, and be separate."  
  
Separation, separation, separation from the world   
is the grand distinguishing mark of vital godliness!  
  
There may be indeed separation of **body** where there  
is no separation of **heart**. But what I mean is . . .  
separation of heart,  
separation of principle,  
separation of affection,  
separation of spirit.  
  
And if grace has touched your heart and you are  
a partaker of the faith of God's elect—you are a  
**stranger** in the world, and will make it manifest  
by your life and conduct that you are such.  
  
  
But they were also **pilgrims**—that is, sojourners   
through weary deserts—longing, longing for home,   
possessing nothing in which they could take   
pleasure—feeling the weariness of a long journey   
and anxious for rest.   
  
Are you not at times almost worn out by . . .  
sin,  
self,  
trials,  
temptations,   
afflictions;   
so that you would gladly lay down your weary   
body in the grave—that your soul might rest   
in the sweet enjoyment of the King of kings?   
  
If such is your spirit, you have something   
of the spirit of the **pilgrim** sojourning in a   
weary land, and and longing for . . .  
rest,  
happiness,  
and peace   
in a better country.  
  
"But they desire a better place—a  
heavenly homeland." Heb 11:16

**Looking down into a filthy pit!**  
  
"The human heart is most deceitful and desperately   
wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?" Jer 17:9  
  
Sometimes we are so astonished . . .  
at what we **are**,  
at what we **have been**, or  
at what we **are capable of**.   
  
We stand sometimes and look at our heart, and see  **what a seething, boiling, and bubbling is there!**  
And we look at it with indignant astonishment, as   
we would look into a pool of filthy black mud, all   
swarming and alive with every hideous creature!  
  
**So when a man takes a view of his own heart . . .**  
its dreadful hypocrisy,  
its vile rebellion,  
its alarming deceitfulness,   
its desperate wickedness,  
of what his heart is capable of plotting,   
of what evil it can conceive and imagine,   
it is as if he stood **looking down into a filthy pit** and   
saw with astonishment, mingled with self-abhorrence,   
what his heart is, as the fountain of all iniquity.   
  
A man must have some knowledge of his own heart   
to understand such language as this.   
  
You that are so exceedingly 'pious' and so 'extra good',   
and from whose heart the veil has never been taken away   
to show you what you are, will perhaps think that I am   
drawing a caricature of human nature, and painting it as   
the haunt of thieves and prostitutes.   
  
**Could you but have the veil taken off your heart**,   
you would see that you were capable of doing all   
that wickedness that others have done, or can do!  
  
By this sight of **ourselves**, we learn **what a wonderful   
God we have to deal with!** Surely none so highly prize   
the grace of God as those who are most led into a   
knowledge of the fall, and the havoc and ruin, and the   
guilt and misery which it has brought into our own hearts.

**The largest slice of the well-sugared cake**  
  
"They confessed that they were **strangers  
and pilgrims** on the earth." Heb 11:13  
  
Many profess that they are **strangers and pilgrims** here   
below. But they take care to have as much of this world's   
comforts as they can scrape together by hook and by crook.   
  
They talk about being 'strangers', yet can be in close   
friendship with men of the world. And could you see them   
at the exchange, at the market, behind the counter, or at   
home with their families—**you would not find one mark   
to distinguish them from the ungodly!**  
  
Yet they come to chapel—and if called upon to pray, they   
will tell the people they are "poor strangers and pilgrims in   
a valley of tears"—while all the time their hearts are in the   
world—and their eyes stand out with fatness—and they are   
as light and trifling as a comic actor—and have no concerns   
except to get **the largest slice of the well-sugared cake**   
that the world sets before them!  
  
It is not the 'mere profession of the lips'—but 'grace in   
the heart', that makes a man a stranger and a pilgrim.  
  
God's people are strangers and sojourners—the world is not   
their home—nor can they take pleasure in it. Sin is often a   
burden to them—guilt often lies as a heavy weight upon   
their conscience—a thousand troubles harass their minds  
—a thousand perplexities oppress their souls. They cannot   
bury their minds in business and derive all their happiness   
from their successes, for they feel that this earth is not their   
home. They are often cast down and exercised, because they   
have to live with such an ungodly heart in such an ungodly   
world.  
  
"They confessed that they were **strangers  
and pilgrims** on the earth." Heb 11:13  
  
  
  
  
**The things which men despise**  
"**The things which are highly esteemed among men**   
are an abomination in the sight of God!" Luk 16:15  
  
**The pride, ambition, pleasures, and amusements**, in   
which we see thousands and tens of thousands engaged   
—and sailing down the stream into a dreadful gulf of   
eternity—are all an abomination in the sight of God!  
  
Whereas **the things which men despise**, such as . . .  
faith,  
hope,  
love,  
humility,  
brokenness of heart,  
tenderness of conscience,  
contrition of spirit,  
sorrow for sin,  
self-loathing,   
self-abasement,  
looking to Jesus,  
taking up the cross,  
denying one's self,  
walking in the narrow path that leads to eternal life,  
—are despised by all—and by none so much as mere heady   
religious professors—who have a name to live, while dead.  
  
"The things which are highly esteemed among men   
are an abomination in the sight of God." Luk 16:15  
  
  
  
Can they beat back this monster to his filthy den?  
  
"**Hold me up, and I shall be safe!**" Psa 1:1  
  
The Lord's people are a **tempted** people. **Satan** is ever   
waiting at their gate, constantly suggesting every hateful   
and improper thought—perpetually inflaming the rebellion   
and enmity of their carnal mind—and continually **plaguing**,   
**harassing**, and **besieging** them in a thousand ways!  
  
Can they repel him?  **Can they beat back this monster to his filthy den?**  
  
Can they beat back this leviathan? They cannot—they feel   
they cannot. They know that nothing but the voice of Jesus,   
inwardly speaking with power to their souls, can **beat back   
the lion of the bottomless pit!** One whisper, one soft word   
from the lips of His gracious Majesty, can and will put every   
temptation to flight!  
"Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called   
you by name—you are Mine! When you go through deep   
waters and great trouble—I will be with you! When you   
go through rivers of difficulty—you will not drown! When   
you walk through the fire of oppression—you will not be  
burned up—the flames will not consume you. For I am   
the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel—your Savior!"  
Isa 43:1-3  
  
  
  
**When it comes in the guise of a friend**  
  
"Be of good cheer, I have overcome **the world**."   
  
Does not this show that the world is an enemy to   
the Lord, and to the Lord's people? and never so   
much an enemy—never to be so much dreaded—as   
**when it comes in the guise of a friend**. When it . . .   
steals upon your **heart**,  
engrosses your **thoughts**,  
wins your **affections**,  
draws away your **mind** from God,  
—then it is to be dreaded.   
  
When the world smites us as an enemy—its   
blows are not to be feared. It is **when it smiles   
upon us as a friend**—it is most to be dreaded.  
  
When our **eyes** begin to drink it in,   
when our **ears** begin to listen to its voice,   
when our **hearts** become entangled in its fascinations,   
when our **minds** get filled with its anxieties,   
when our **affections** depart from the Lord   
and cleave to the things of time and sense,  
—then the world is to be dreaded.   
  
  
  
  
Canaanitish idols and heathenish abominations  
  
"You shall destroy their altars, and break down   
their images, and cut down their groves, and burn   
their engraved images with fire!" Deu 7:5   
  
Our hearts are by nature full of **Canaanitish idols and   
heathenish abominations**, which must be destroyed!   
  
Lusts after evil things,   
adulterous images,  
idolatrous desires,  
strong hankerings after sin—  
along with evils which have **the impudence  
to wear a religious garb**—such as . . .  
towering thoughts of our own ability,   
pleasing dreams of creature holiness,   
swellings up of pride—dressed out and painted   
in all the tawdy colors of Satanic delusion—how   
can these abominations be allowed to run rampant   
in the human heart?   
  
The altarsand **religious rites** of Canaanites were to be   
destroyed as much as their **idols**! And thus we may say   
of **that very religious being—man**, that his false worship   
and heathenish notions of God must be destroyed—as well   
as his more flagrant, though not more dangerous, lusts   
and abominations.   
  
The sentence against both is, "Destroy them!" They   
must not stand side by side with Immanuel, who is   
to have the preeminence in all things, and who is   
"the Alpha and the Omega—the first and the last."   
  
And O what a mercy it is to have both **our FLESHLY and   
RELIGIOUS abominations both destroyed!** For I am sure   
that **God** and **self** never can rule in the same heart—that   
Christ and the devil can never reign in the same bosom  
—each claiming the supremacy!

**This inward conflict**  
  
"I know that nothing good lives in me—that is, in  
my sinful nature. For I have the **desire** to do what  
is good—**but I cannot carry it out**." Rom 7:18  
  
Now it is this which makes the Lord's people such a   
burdened people—that makes them so oppressed in   
their souls as to cry out against themselves daily,   
and sometimes hourly—**that they are what they are**  
—that they would be spiritual, yet are carnal—that   
they would be holy, yet are unholy—that they would   
have sweet communion with Jesus, yet have such   
sensual alliance with the things of time and sense—  
that they would be Christians in word, thought, and   
deed; yet, in spite of all, they feel their carnal mind,   
their wretched depravity intertwining, interlacing,   
gushing forth—contaminating with its polluted stream   
everything without and within—so as to make them   
sigh, groan, and cry being burdened, "What a wretched   
man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?"  
Rom 7:24  
  
He would not be entangled in these snares for ten thousand   
worlds—he hates the evils of his heart, and mourns over the   
corruptions of his nature. They make the tear fall from his   
eye, and the sob to heave from his bosom—they make him   
a wretched man—and fill him day after day with sorrow,   
bitterness, and anguish.  
  
None but a saved soul, under divine teaching, can see   
this evil—and mourn and sigh under the depravity, the   
corruption, the unbelief, the carnality, the wickedness,   
and the deceitfulness of his evil heart.

**This inward conflict**, this sore grief, this internal burden,   
that all the family of God are afflicted with—is an evidence   
that the life and grace of God are in their bosoms.   
  
"Thank God! **The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord!**   
So you see how it is—in my mind I really want to obey   
God's law, but because of my sinful nature I am a   
slave to sin." Rom 7:25  
  
  
  
**Who really knows how bad it is?**  
  
"The human heart is most deceitful and  
desperately wicked! **Who really knows  
how bad it is?**" Jer 17:9  
  
Without a knowledge of the corruptions   
and abounding evils of our deceitful and   
desperately wicked heart . . .  
unbelief,  
infidelity,  
pride,  
hypocrisy,  
worldly mindedness,  
carnality,  
sensuality,  
selfishness;   
**there will be . . .**  
no humility,  
no self loathing,  
no dread of falling,  
no desire to be kept,  
no knowledge of the super-aboundings   
of grace, over the aboundings of sin.

**So many truly sincere and religious people**  
  
"Cornelius and all his family were **devout** and   
**God-fearing**; he **gave generously** to those in   
need and **prayed to God regularly**." Act 10:2   
  
Yet Cornelius and his family weren't saved! (Act 11:14)  
  
  
–A generous centurion build a synagogue. (Luk 7:3-5)  
  
–A young man keeps the commandments from his   
youth up. (Luk 18:21)  
  
–Balaam prophesies. (Num 23:16)  
  
–Saul weeps. (1Sa 24:16)  
  
–Judas preaches the gospel. (Mat 10:5-8)  
  
Yet none of these men were saved!  
  
  
It is at times, enough to fill one's heart with mingled  
astonishment and sorrow, to see **so many truly sincere   
and religious people**, whose religion will leave them short   
of eternal life—because they are destitute of saving grace.  
  
**To see so much . . .**  
amiability,  
benevolence,  
devotedness,  
self-denial,  
liberality  
loveliness of character,  
integrity,  
consistency of life,  
all inescapably dashed against the rock of inflexible justice,   
and there shattered and lost—swallowed up with its unhappy   
possessors in the raging billows beneath—such a sight, did   
we not know that the Judge of the whole earth cannot do   
wrong, would indeed stagger us to the very center of our being!

**Sick of SIN, sick of SELF, sick of the WORLD**  
  
"**Delight yourself in the LORD** and He will give  
you the desires of your heart." Psa 37:4  
  
By nature we **delight in SIN**. It is the very element of   
our nature—and even after the Lord has called us by   
His grace and quickened us by his Spirit—there is the   
same love to sin in the heart as there was before.  
We **delight** in it—we would **wallow** in it—take our full   
**enjoyment** of it—and **swim** in it as a fish swims in   
the waters of the sea!  
  
By nature we also are **prone to IDOLATRY**. **Self** is   
the grand object of all our sensual and carnal worship.   
Our own **exaltation**,   
our own **amusement**,   
our own **pleasure**,   
our own **gratification.  
Something whereby SELF may be . . .**  
flattered,  
admired,  
adored,   
delighted,   
is the grand end and aim of man's natural worship.  
  
By nature we also **delight in the WORLD**. It is . . .  
our element,  
our home,  
what our carnal hearts are intimately blended with.

From all these things, then, which are intrinsically   
evil—which a pure and holy God must hate with   
absolute abhorrence—we must be **weaned** and   
effectually **divorced**—we need to have these   
things **embittered** to us.   
  
All the time we are doing homage and worship to   
**self**—all the time we are loving the **world**—all the   
time we delight in **sin**—all the time we are setting   
up **idols** in the secret chambers of imagery—there   
is no delighting ourselves in the Lord.  
  
We cannot delight ourselves in the Lord until we are   
purged of creature love—until the idolatry of our hearts is   
not merely manifested, but hated and abhorred—until by . . .  
cutting temptations,  
sharp exercises,  
painful perplexities,   
and various sorrows,  
we are brought to this state—to be . . .  
**sick of SIN,  
sick of SELF,  
sick of the WORLD**.   
  
Until we are brought to loathe ourselves, we are not   
brought to that spot where none but God Himself can   
comfort, please, or make the soul really happy.  
  
Now the very means that God employs to embitter the   
world to us are cutting and grievous dispensations—as   
unexpected reverses in fortune—or afflictions of body,   
of family, or of soul. But these very means that the Lord   
employs to divorce our carnal union from the world, stir   
up the self-pity, the murmuring, the peevishness, and   
the rebelliousness of our nature. So that we think we   
are being very harshly dealt with, in being compelled   
to walk in this trying path.   
  
But only by these cutting dispensations we are eventually   
brought to delight ourselves in Him, who will give us the   
desires of our heart.  
  
How **long** you shall be walking in this painful path—  
how **heavy** your trials—what their **duration** shall be—how   
**deep** you may have to sink—how **cutting** your afflictions   
may be in body or soul, God has not defined, and we cannot.   
But they must work until they have produced this result—  
weaned, divorced, and separated us from all that we   
naturally love and idolatrously cleave unto—and all   
that we adulterously roam after. If our trials have not   
done this, they must go on until they produce that effect.   
  
The burden must be laid upon the back,   
affliction must try the mind,   
perplexities must encumber the feet,   
until we are brought to this point—that **none but the   
Lord Himself**, with a taste of His dying love, can comfort   
our hearts, or give us that inward peace and joy which  
our soul is taught to crave after.

A hundred doctrines floating in the head  
  
**By five minutes real communion** with the Lord . . .  
we learn more,  
we know more,  
we receive more,  
we feel more, and  
we experience more  
than by a thousand years of merely studying   
the Scriptures, or using external forms, rites,  
and ceremonies.

One truth written by the Spirit in the heart,   
will bring forth more fruit in the life, than  **a hundred doctrines floating in the head**.

**However low we may sink**  
  
What a mercy it is to have a faithful, gracious, and   
compassionate High Priest who can sympathize with   
His poor, tried, tempted family—so that **however   
low we may sink** **. . .**  
His **piteous** **eye** can see us in our low estate,  
His **gracious** **ear** hear our cries,  
His **loving** **heart** melt over us, and  
His **strong arm** pluckus from our destructions!   
  
Oh, what would we do without such a gracious   
and most suitable Savior as our blessed Jesus! **How He seems to rise more and more . . .**  
in our estimation,  
in our thoughts,  
in our desires,  
in our affections,  **as we see and feel . . .**  
what a wreck and ruin we are,  
what dreadful havoc sin has made with us,  
what miserable outcasts we are by nature.  
  
But oh, how needful it is, dear friend, to be   
brought down in our soul to be the . . .  
chief of sinners,  
viler than the vilest,  
worse than the worst,   
that we may really and truly believe in, and cleave   
unto, **this most precious and suitable Savior!**Yours affectionately in the Lord,  
[J. C. Philpot](http://www.gracegems.org/Philpot/sermons.htm), October 1, 1868

**Nothing but a slave!**  
  
"**Once you were slaves of sin!**" Rom 6:17  
  
What a picture does this draw of our sad state, while   
walking in the darkness and death of unregeneracy!   
  
The Holy Spirit here sets forth **Sin as a harsh master**,   
**exercising tyrannical dominion over his slaves!** How   
this portrays our state and condition in a state of   
unregeneracy—slaves to sin!   
  
Just as a master commands his slave to go here and   
there—imposes on him certain tasks—and has entire   
and despotic authority over him—so **sin . . .**  
had a complete mastery over us,   
used us at its arbitrary will and pleasure,  
drove us here and there on its commands.  
  
But in this point we differed from physical slaves—  
that we did not murmur under our yoke—but gladly   
and cheerfully obeyed all sin's commands—and   
never tired of doing the most servile drudgery!  
  
Thus **some** have had sin as **a very vulgar and   
tyrannical master**, who drove them into open acts   
of drunkenness, uncleanness, and profligacy—yes,   
everything base, vile, and evil.   
  
**Others** have been preserved through education,   
through the watchfulness and example of parents,   
or other moral restraints, from going into such open   
lengths of iniquity—and outward breakings forth of   
evil. **But still sin secretly reigned in their hearts** . . .  
pride,   
worldliness,   
love of the things of time and sense,   
hatred to God and aversion to His holy will,   
selfishness and stubbornness,   
in all their various forms, had a complete mastery   
over them! And though sin ruled over them more   
as a gentleman—he kept them in a more refined,   
though not less real or absolute slavery! Whatever   
sin bade them do, that they did, as implicitly as the   
most abject slave ever obeyed a tyrannical master's   
command.   
  
What a picture does the Holy Spirit here draw of   
what a man is! **Nothing but a slave!**—and sin, as   
his master, first driving him upon upon God's sword,   
and then giving him eternal death as his wages!  
  
"**He has** **rescued us from the dominion  
of darkness—and He has brought us into   
the Kingdom of His dear Son!**" Col 1:13

**A glory, a beauty, and a sweetness**  
  
**How sweet it is to trace the Lord's hand in providence** . . .  
to look back on the chequered path that He has led us by;  
to see how His hand has been with us for good;  
what difficulties He has brought us through;  
in what straits He has appeared;   
how in things most trying He has wrought deliverance;   
and how He has sustained us to the present hour.   
  
**How sweet are providential favors** when they come   
stamped with this inscription, "This is from the Lord!"   
**How precious every temporal mercy becomes**—our   
very food, lodging, and clothing!   
  
**How sweet is the least thing** when it comes down   
to us as from God's hands! A man cannot know the   
sweetness of his daily bread until he sees that God   
gives it to him—nor the blessedness of any providential   
dealing until he can say, "God has done this for me—and   
given that to me." **When a man sees the providence of   
God stamped on every action of life, it casts** **a glory, a   
beauty, and a sweetness** **over every day of his life!**

**Having nothing—and yet possessing all things.**  
  
"**Having nothing—and yet possessing all things.**" 2Co 6:10  
  
**How can this apparent contradiction be reconciled?**   
  
It is resolved thus—  
"having nothing" **in self**,  
"possessing all things" **in Christ**.  
  
And just in proportion as I have nothing **in** **self**experimentally—so I possess all things **in** **Christ**.  
  
My own **beggary** leads me out of self   
into His **riches**.   
  
My own **unrighteousness** leads me out of self   
into Christ's **righteousness**.   
  
My own **defilement** leads me out of self   
into Christ's **sanctification**.   
  
My own **weakness** leads me out of self   
into Christ's **strength**.   
  
My own **misery** leads me out of self   
into Christ's **mercy**.  
  
"**Having nothing—and yet possessing all things.**" 2Co 6:10  
  
These two branches of divine truth, so far from clashing with   
each other—sweetly, gloriously, and blessedly harmonize.   
And just in proportion as we know spiritually, experimentally,   
and vitally of "having nothing," **in** **self**—just so much shall we   
know spiritually, experimentally, and vitally of "possessing all   
things" **in** **Christ.**

**Riches, honors, and comforts**  
  
"But we have this **precious treasure** in earthen vessels."  
2Co 4:7  
  
How different is the estimate that **the Christian** makes   
of **riches, honors, and comforts**—from that made by   
the **world** and the **flesh**!   
  
The world's idea of **riches** are only such as consist in gold   
and silver, in houses, lands, or other tangible property.  
  
The world's estimate of **honors**, are only such as **man**has to bestow.  
  
The world's notion of **comfort**, is "fulfilling the   
desires of the flesh and of the mind."   
  
But the true Christian takes a different estimate   
of these matters, and feels that . . .  
the only true **riches** are those of God's grace in the heart,  
the only real **honor** is that which comes from **God**,  
the only solid **comfort** is that which is imparted by the   
Holy Spirit to a broken and contrite spirit.   
  
Now, just in proportion as we are filled by the Spirit   
of **God**—shall we take faith's estimate of **riches,   
honors, and comforts**. And just so much as we are   
imbued with the spirit of the **world**—shall we take   
the flesh's estimate of these things.  
  
When the eye of the **world** looked on the Apostles, it   
viewed them as a company of poor ignorant men—a set   
of wild enthusiasts, who traveled about the country   
preaching Jesus, who they said, had been crucified,   
and was risen from the dead. The natural eye saw no   
beauty, no power, no glory in the truths they brought   
forth. Nor did it see that the poor perishing bodies of   
these outcast men contained in them **a heavenly   
treasure**—and that they would one day shine as the   
stars forever and ever—while those who despised   
their word would sink into endless woe.  
  
The **spirit of the world** can never understand or love the  
things of eternity—it can only look to, and can only rest   
upon, the poor perishing things of time and sense.  
  
  
  
**The continued teachings of the Spirit**  
  
When once, by **the operation of the Spirit** on   
our conscience, we have been stripped of . . .  
formality,  
superstition,  
self-righteousness,  
hypocrisy,  
presumption,  
and the **other delusions of the flesh that hide   
themselves under the mask of religion**—we have   
felt the difference between having a name to live   
while dead, and the power of vital godliness—and   
as a measure of divine life has flowed into the   
heart out of the fullness of the Son of God—**we   
desire no other religion** **but that which stands   
in the power of God**—by that alone can we live,   
and by that alone we feel that we can die.   
  
And, at last, we are brought to this conviction and   
solemn conclusion—that **there is no other true   
religion but that which consists in** **the continued   
teachings of the Spirit, and the communications   
of the life of God to the soul.**  
  
And with the Spirit's teachings are connected . . .  
all the actings of **faith** in the soul,   
all the anchorings of **hope** in the heart,  
all the flowings forth of **love**,  
every tear of genuine **contrition** that flows down the cheeks,  
every sigh of **godly sorrow** that heaves from the bosom,  
every **cry** and **groan** because of the body of sin,  
every breath of **spiritual prayer** that comes from the heart,  
every **casting** of our souls upon Christ,  
all **submission** to Him,   
all **communion** with Him,  
all **enjoyment** of Him, and  
all the inward **embracements** of Him  
in His suitability and preciousness.  
  
 **It will come in at every chink and crevice!**  
"**I know that nothing good lives in me.**"   
Rom 7:18  
  
The world within us is ten thousand times   
worse than the world outside of us!  
  
We may shut and bar our doors, and exclude the   
outside world—but the world within cannot be so   
shut out! More—we might go and hide ourselves   
in a hermit's cave, and never see the face of man   
again—but even there we would be as carnal and   
worldly as if we lived in Vanity Fair!   
  
We cannot shut out the world—**it will come in   
at every chink and crevice!** This wretched world   
will intrude itself into our every thought and   
imagination!  
  
I don't know how it may be with you, but I have no   
more power to keep out the workings of sin in my   
heart—than I have power by holding up my hand to   
stop the rain from coming down to the earth! **Sin will   
come in at every crack and crevice**, and manifest   
itself in the wretched workings of an evil heart!  
  
The seeds of every crime are in our nature—and   
therefore, could your flesh have its full swing—there   
would not be a viler wretch in **London** than you!  
  
  
  
  
**At last to cheat the devil!**  
  
If **God** is not your master—the **devil** will be.  
  
If **grace** does not rule—**sin** will reign.  
  
If **Christ** is not your all in all—the **world** will be.  
  
It is not as though we could roam abroad in total  
liberty. We must have a master of one kind, or another.  
  
**And which is best?**  
  
A bounteous, benevolent Benefactor,  
a merciful, loving, and tender Parent,  
a kind, forgiving Father and Friend,  
a tender-hearted, compassionate Redeemer?  
  
**OR**  
  
A cruel devil,  
a miserable world,  
a wicked, vile, abominable heart?   
  
**Which is better?**To live under the sweet constraints of the   
dying love of a dear Redeemer—under . . .  
gospel influences,  
gospel principles,  
gospel promises, and   
gospel encouragements?  
  
**OR**   
  
To walk in imagined liberty, with sin in our heart,   
exercising dominion and mastery there—and binding   
us in iron chains to the judgment of the great day?   
  
Even taking the present life—there is more real pleasure,   
satisfaction, and solid happiness in half an hour with God,   
in sweet union and communion with the Lord of life and   
glory, in reading His word with a believing heart, in finding   
access to His sacred presence, in knowing something of the   
droppings in of His favor and mercy—than in . . .  
all the delights of sin,  
all the lusts of the flesh,  
all the pride of life, and  
all the amusements that the world has ever devised   
to kill time and cheat self—thinking, by a death-bed   
repentance—**at last to cheat the devil!  
  
  
  
  
This is what the Lord says**  
  
**This is what the Lord says**—"**Cursed is the one who   
trusts in man**, who depends on flesh for his strength   
and whose heart turns away from the Lord." Jer 17:5  
  
The Lord here does not lay down a man's moral  
or immoral character as a test of salvation.  
He does **not** say, "Cursed is . . .  
the thief,  
the adulterer,  
the extortioner,  
the murderer,  
the man that lives in open profanity."  
  
He puts all that aside, and fixes His eye and lays  
His hand upon one mark—which may exist with the  
greatest morality and with the highest profession  
of religion.  
  
"I will tell you," the Lord says, "who are under My  
curse—the person who trusts in man—who depends  
on flesh for his strength—and in so doing, his heart  
turns away from Me."   
  
**This is what the Lord says**—"**Cursed is the one who  
trusts in man**, who depends on flesh for his strength  
and whose heart turns away from the Lord." Jer 17:5

**That hideous idol SELF in his little shrine**  
  
Never again will we say any more to the work   
of our hands—"**You are our gods!**" Hos 14:3  
  
The besetting sin of Israel was the worship of **idols**.   
  
Perhaps, if you have walked into the British Museum,   
and seen the idols that were worshiped in former days   
in the South Sea Islands, you have been amazed that   
rational beings could ever bow down before such ugly   
monsters.  
  
But does the heart of a South Sea Islander differ from   
the heart of an Englishman? Not a bit! The latter may   
have more civilization and cultivation—**but his heart   
is the same!** And though you have not bowed down to   
these monstrous objects and hideous figures—there   
may be as filthy an idol in **your** heart! Where is   
there a filthier idol than the lusts and passions of   
man's fallen nature?   
You need not go to the British Museum to see   
filthy idols and painted images. **Look within!**   
  
Where is there a more groveling idol than **Mammon**,   
and the **covetousness** of our heart? You need not   
wonder at heathens worshiping hideous idols—when   
you have **pride**, **covetousness**, and above all **that   
hideous idol SELF in his little shrine**, hiding himself   
from the eyes of man—but to which you are so often   
rendering your daily and hourly worship!  
  
If a person does not see that **the root of all   
idolatry** is SELF, he knows but little of his heart.   
  
  
  
  
**Such a perpetual and unceasing conflict?**  
  
"**I do not understand what I do!** For what I want   
to do I do not do; but what I hate I do. I know   
that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful   
nature. For I have the desire to do what is good,   
but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the   
good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do  
—this I keep on doing. So I find this law at work:   
When I want to do good, evil is right there with   
me. **What a wretched man I am!** Who will rescue  
me from this body of death?" Rom 7:15, Rom 7:18-19, Rom 7:21, Rom 7:24  
  
What a picture of that which passes in a godly   
man's bosom! He has in him two distinct  **principles**, two different natures—**one . . .**  
holy,  
heavenly,  
spiritual,  
panting after the Lord, and  
finding the things of God its element.   
  
**And yet in the same bosom a principle . . .**  
totally corrupt,   
thoroughly and entirely depraved,  
perpetually striving against the holy principle within,  
continually lusting after evil,  
opposed to every leading of the Spirit in the soul,  
and seeking to gratify its filthy desires at any cost!   
  
Now, must there not be a feeling of misery in a man's  
bosom to have these two armies perpetually fighting?  
That when he desires to do good, evil is present with  
him—when he would be holy, heavenly minded, tender  
hearted, loving, seeking God's glory, enjoying sweet   
communion with Jehovah—there is a base, sensual,   
earthly heart perpetually at work—infusing its baneful   
poison into every thought, counteracting every desire,   
and dragging him from the heaven to which he would   
mount, down to the very hell of carnality and filth?   
  
There is a holy, heavenly principle in a man's bosom   
that knows, fears, loves, and delights in God. Yet he   
finds that sin in himself, which is altogether opposed to   
the mind of Christ, and lusts after that which he hates.   
Must there not be sorrow and grief in that man's bosom   
to feel **such a perpetual and unceasing conflict?**  
Is there ever this piteous cry forced by guilt, shame,   
and sorrow out of **your** bosom, "O wretched man that   
I am!" If not, be assured that you are dead in sin, or   
dead in a profession.

**But who is our greatest enemy?**The **pride** of our heart,   
the **presumption** of our heart,   
the **hypocrisy** of our heart,   
the intense **selfishness** of our heart,   
are often hidden from us.   
  
This wily devil, **self**, can wear such   
masks and assume such forms.  
  
This serpent, **self**, can so creep and crawl,   
can so twist and turn, and can disguise   
itself under such false appearances,   
that it is often hidden from ourselves.   
  
Who is the greatest enemy we have to fear?   
  
We all have our enemies.   
  
**But who is our greatest enemy?**He who you carry in your own bosom—your daily,   
hourly, and ever-present companion, that entwines   
himself in nearly every thought of your heart—that . . .  
sometimes puffs up with pride,  
sometimes inflames with lust,  
sometimes inflates with presumption, and  
sometimes works under feigned humility and fleshly holiness.  
  
God is determined to stain the pride of human   
glory. He will never let **self** (which is but another   
word for the creature) wear the crown of victory.   
It must be crucified, denied, and mortified.  
  
Now this **self** must be overcome. The way to   
overcome **self** is by looking out of self to Him   
who was crucified upon Calvary's tree—to receive   
His image into your heart—to be clothed with His   
likeness—to drink into His spirit—and "receive out   
of His fullness grace for grace."

**We need grace, free grace**  
  
**"May grace** and peace **be multiplied unto you**."  
2Pe 1:2  
  
When we see and feel **how** **we need grace every   
moment in our lives**, we at once perceive the beauty in   
asking for an abundant, overflowing measure of grace.   
  
We cannot walk the length of the street without sin.   
  
Our carnal minds, our vain imaginations, are all on the  
lookout for evil. Sin presents itself at every avenue, and  
lurks like the prowling night-thief for every opportunity   
of secret plunder. In fact, in ourselves, in our fallen nature,   
**except as restrained and influenced by grace**, we sin with   
well near every breath that we draw. We need, therefore,   
grace upon grace, or, in the words of the text, grace to be   
"multiplied" in proportion to our sins. Shall I say in   
proportion? No! If sin abounds, as to our shame and sorrow   
we know it does, **we need grace to much more abound!**  
  
When the 'tide of sin' flows in with its muck and mire,   
we need the 'tide of grace' to flow higher still, to carry   
out the slime and filth into the depths of the ocean,   
so that when sought for, they may be found no more.   
  
**We need grace, free grace . . .**  
grace today,  
grace tomorrow,  
grace this moment,  
grace the next,  
grace all the day long.  
  
**We need grace, free grace . . .**healing grace,  
reviving grace,  
restoring grace,  
saving grace,  
sanctifying grace.   
  
And all this multiplied by all our . . .  
wants and woes,  
sins,  
slips,  
falls, and  
unceasing and aggravated backslidings.   
  
**We need grace, free grace . . .**  
grace to believe,  
grace to hope,  
grace to love,  
grace to fight,  
grace to conquer,  
grace to stand,  
grace to live,  
grace to die.   
  
**Every moment of our lives we need . . .**  
keeping grace,  
supporting grace,  
upholding grace,   
withholding grace.  
  
**"May grace** and peace **be multiplied unto you**."  
2Pe 1:2

**Are you seeking great things for yourself?**

**Oh, how many ministers do I see led by . . .**  
ambition,  
pride,  
self-interest, or  
covetousness!   
  
How few have singleness of eye to God's glory!

**"Are you seeking great things for yourself?   
Don't do it!"** Jer 45:5  
  
**Ministers often seek . . .**  
great gifts,  
great eloquence,  
great knowledge of mysteries,  
great congregations,  
great popularity and influence.   
  
**"Are you seeking great things for yourself?   
Don't do it!"** Jer 45:5

**We are not flogged into loving Him**  
  
**"Set your affections on things above,  
not on things on the earth."** Col 3:2  
  
**Where are your affections to be set?**  
  
Are they to be set on "things on the earth" . . .  
those perishing toys,  
those polluting vanities,  
those carking cares,   
which must ever dampen the life of God in the soul?  
  
The expression, "things on the earth," takes in a wide   
scope. It embraces not only the vain toys, the ambitious   
hopes, the perishing pleasures in which a gay, unthinking   
world is sunk and lost—but even the legitimate calls of   
business, the claims of wife and home, family and friends,   
with every social tie that binds to earth. Thus . . .  
every object on which the eye can rest;  
every thought or desire that may spring up in the mind;  
every secret idol that lurks in the bosom;  
every care and anxiety that is not of grace;  
every fond anticipation of pleasure or profit that the   
world may hold out, or the worldly heart embrace  
—all, with a million pursuits in which man's fallen nature   
seeks employment or happiness—are "things on the earth"   
on which the affections are not to be set.   
  
We may love our wives and children. We should   
pursue our lawful callings with diligence and industry.   
We must provide for our families according to the good   
providence of God. But we may not so set our affections   
on these things, that they pull us down from heaven to   
earth. He who is worthy of all our affections claims   
them all for Himself. He who is **the Bridegroom of   
the soul** demands, as He has fairly won, the unrivaled   
love of His bride.  
  
**But how are we to do this?**   
  
Can we do this great work by ourselves? No! it is only the   
Lord Himself, manifesting His beauty and blessedness to   
our soul, and letting down the golden cord of His love   
into our bosom, that draws up our affections, and fixes   
them on Himself. In order to do this, **He captivates the   
heart** by . . .some look of love,  
some word of His grace,  
some sweet promise, or  
some divine truth spiritually applied.  
  
**When He thus captivates the soul**, and draws it up,   
then the affections flow unto Him as the source and   
fountain of all blessings.   
  
**We are not flogged into loving Him**, but are **drawn by   
love into love.** Love cannot be bought or sold. It is an   
inward affection that flows naturally and necessarily   
towards its object, and all connected with it. And thus,   
as love flows out to Jesus, the affections instinctively   
and necessarily set themselves "on things above, and   
not on things on the earth."   
  
Jesus must be revealed to our soul by the power of God   
before we can see His beauty and blessedness—and so   
fall in love with Him as "the chief among ten thousand,  
and the altogether lovely One." Then everything that . . .  
speaks of Christ,   
savors of Christ,   
breathes of Christ,   
becomes inexpressibly sweet and precious!  
  
In no other way can our affections be lifted up from earth   
to heaven. We cannot control our affections—they will run   
out of their own accord. If then our affections are **earthly**,   
they will run towards earthly objects. If they are **carnal** and   
sensual, they will flow towards carnal and sensual objects.  
  
But when the Lord Jesus Christ, by some manifestation   
of His glory and blessedness—or the Holy Spirit, by taking   
of the things of Christ and revealing them to the soul—sets   
Him before our eyes as the only object worthy of, and   
claiming every affection of our heart—then the affections   
flow out, I was going to say naturally, but most certainly   
spiritually, towards Him. And when this is the case, the   
affections are set on things above.  
  
  
  
  
**O what a company of lusts!**  
**"We are powerless against this mighty army  
that is attacking us! We do not know what to  
do. But our eyes are upon You!"** 2Ch 20:12  
  
There is no use fighting the battle in our own   
strength. We have none.  
  
O, when **temptation** creeps like a serpent into the   
carnal mind, it winds its secret way and coils around   
the heart. As the boa-constrictor is said to embrace   
its victim, entwining his coil around it, and crushing   
every bone without any previous warning—so does  **temptation often seize us suddenly in its powerful   
embrace**. Have we in ourselves any more power to   
extricate our flesh from its slimy folds, than the poor   
animal has from the coils of the boa-constrictor?  
  
So with the corruptions and lusts of our fallen nature.   
Can you always master them? **Can you seize these  
serpents by the neck and wring off their heads?**  
 **To examine our heart** is something like examining   
by the microscope a drop of ditch-water—the more   
minutely it is looked into, the more hideous forms   
appear. All these strange monsters, too, are in   
constant motion, devouring or devoured. And, as   
more powerful lenses are put on the microscope,   
more and more loathsome creatures emerge into   
view, until eye and heart sicken at the sight.   
  
Such is our heart. Superficially viewed—passably fair.   
But **examined by the spiritual microscope**, hideous   
forms of every shape and size appear—lusts and   
desires in unceasing movement, devouring each   
other, and yet undiminished—and each successive  
examination bringing new monsters to light! **O what   
a company of lusts!** How one seems to introduce and   
make way for the other! and how one, as among the   
insect tribe, is the father of a million!  
  
We must take these lusts and passions by the neck,   
and lay them down at the feet of God, and thus bring   
the omnipotence of Jehovah against what would destroy  
us—"Here are my **lusts**, I cannot manage them. Here are   
my **temptations**, I cannot overcome them. Here are my  **enemies**, I cannot conquer them. Lord, I do not know   
what to do. Will You not subdue my enemies?"   
  
This is fighting against sin—not in the flesh, but in the   
Spirit. Not by the law, but by the gospel. Not by self,   
but by the grace of God. And if your soul has had many   
a tussle, and many a wrestle, and many a hand-to-hand   
conflict with sin, you will have found this out before now   
—that nothing but the grace, power, and Spirit of Christ   
ever gave you the victory, or the least hope of victory.  
  
**"We are powerless against this mighty army  
that is attacking us! We do not know what to  
do. But our eyes are upon You!"** 2Ch 20:12

**As if this beautiful viper had no poison fang!**  
  
"Deliver me from all my transgressions!" Psa 39:7

Ah! how rarely it is that we see sin in its true colors   
—that we feel what the apostle calls, "the exceeding   
sinfulness of sin!" O how much is the dreadful evil of   
sin for the most part veiled from our eyes! Our deceitful   
hearts so gloss it over, so excuse, palliate, and disguise   
it—**that it is daily trifled, played, and dallied with, as if   
this beautiful viper had no poison fang!**  
It is only as the Spirit is pleased to open the eyes to   
see, and awaken the conscience to feel "the exceeding   
sinfulness of sin," and thus discover its dreadful character,   
that we have any real sight or sense of its awful nature.  
  
Sins of heart,   
sins of lip,   
sins of life,   
sins of omission,   
sins of commission,   
sins of ingratitude,   
sins of unbelief,   
sins of rebellion,   
sins of lust,   
sins of pride,   
sins of worldliness!   
As all these transgressions, troop after troop, come   
in view, and rise up like spectres from the grave, well   
may we cry with stifled voice, "Deliver me, O deliver   
me from all my transgressions! Deliver me from . . .  
the guilt of sin,  
the filth of sin,  
the love of sin,  
the power of sin, and  
the practice of sin!"

**The very remedy for all the maladies  
which we groan under!**  
  
**Grace** only suits those who are altogether  
guilty and filthy. Grace is completely opposed  
to **works** in all its shapes and bearings.  
  
Thus no one can really desire to taste the   
sweetness and enjoy the preciousness of grace,   
who has not "seen an end of all perfection" in   
the creature, and is brought to know and feel   
in the conscience, that **his good works would   
damn him** as equally with his bad works.   
  
When grace is thus opened up to the soul,   
it sees that grace flows only through the   
Savior's blood—**and that grace . . .**  
superabounds over all the aboundings of sin,  
heals all backslidings,  
covers all transgressions,  
lifts up out of darkness,  
pardons iniquity,   
and is just **the very remedy for all the  
maladies which we groan under!**

**Weaned from feeding on husks and ashes**  
  
"I will satisfy her **poor** with **bread**." Psa 132:15  
  
The Lord has given a special promise to Zion's  
poor—"I will satisfy her poor with **bread**."  **Nothing else? Bread? Is that all?**   
  
Yes! That is all God has promised—bread,   
the staff of life.   
  
But what does He mean by "bread"?   
  
The Lord Himself explains what bread is. He says,   
"**I am the Bread of life.** He who comes to Me will   
never go hungry, and he who believes in Me will   
never be thirsty. **I am the living Bread** who came   
down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread,   
he will live forever." Joh 6:35, Joh 6:51  
  
The bread, then, that God gives to Zion's poor is   
His own dear Son—fed upon by living faith, under   
the special operations of the Holy Spirit in the heart.  
  
"I will satisfy her **poor** with bread." Psa 132:15  
  
But must not we have an **appetite** before we can   
feed upon **bread**? The **rich** man who feasts continually   
upon juicy meat and savory sauces, would not live upon   
bread. To come down to live on such simple food as bread  
—why, one must be really hungry to be satisfied with that.   
  
So it is spiritually. A man fed upon 'mere notions' and a   
number of 'speculative doctrines' cannot descend to the   
simplicity of the gospel. **To feed upon a crucified Christ,   
a bleeding Jesus!**—he is not sufficiently brought down to   
the starving point, to relish such spiritual food as this!  
  
Before, then, he can feed upon this Bread of life **he must  
be made spiritually poor.** And when he is brought to be   
nothing but a mass of wretchedness, filth, guilt, and misery  
—when he feels his soul sinking under the wrath of God,   
and has scarcely a hope to buoy up his poor tottering heart   
—when he finds the world embittered to him, and he has no   
one object from which he can reap any abiding consolation   
—then the Lord is pleased to open up in his conscience,   
and bring the sweet savor of the love of His dear Son   
into his heart—and he begins to taste gospel bread.   
  
Being **weaned from feeding on husks and ashes**, and   
sick "of the vines of Sodom and the fields of Gomorrah,"   
and being brought to relish simple gospel food, he begins   
to taste a sweetness in 'Christ crucified' which he never   
could know—until he was made experimentally poor.   
  
The Lord has promised to satisfy such.  
  
"I will satisfy her **poor** with **bread**." Psa 132:15  
  
  
  
  
**That secret loveliness**  
"I drew them with My cords of kindness and love."  
Hos 11:4  
  
Where Christ is made in any measure experimentally   
known, He has gained the affections of the heart. He   
has, more or less, taken possession of the soul. He   
has, in some degree, endeared Himself as a bleeding,   
agonizing Savior to every one to whom He has in any   
way revealed Himself. And, thus, the strong cord of   
love and affection is powerfully wreathed around the   
tender spirit and broken heart. Therefore . . .  
His name becomes as 'ointment poured forth',   
there is a preciousness in His blood,   
there is a beauty in His Person,   
there is **that secret loveliness** in Him,  
which wins and attracts and draws out the tender   
affections of the soul. And thus this cord of love   
entwined round the heart, binds it fast and firm   
to the cross of the Lord Jesus.  
  
"I drew them with My cords of kindness and love."  
Hos 11:4  
  
  
  
  
**Lord, I feel my own utter helplessness!**

"O send forth Your light and Your truth,  
let them guide me." Psa 43:3  
  
The Christian is often dissatisfied with his state. He   
is well aware of the shallowness of his attainments   
in the divine life, as well as of the ignorance and the   
blindness that are in him. He cannot perceive the path   
of life. He sees and feels so powerfully the workings   
of sin and corruption, that he often staggers, and is   
perplexed in his mind.  
  
And therefore, laboring under the feeling of . . .  
his own shortcomings for the **past**,  
his helplessness for the **present**,  
and his ignorance for the **future**,   
he wants to go forward wholly and solely   
in the strength of the Lord, to be . . .  
led,  
guided,  
directed,  
kept,   
not by **his own** wisdom and power—but by   
the supernatural entrance of light and truth   
into his soul.  
  
When thus harassed and perplexed, he will at times   
and seasons, as his heart is made soft, cry out with   
fervency and importunity, as a beggar that will not   
take a denial, "O send forth Your light and Your truth,   
let them guide me!" As though he would say, "**Lord,   
I feel my own utter helplessness!** I know I must go   
astray, if You do not condescend to guide me. I have   
been betrayed a thousand times when I have trusted   
**my own heart**. I have been entangled in my **base   
lusts**. I have been puffed up by **presumption**. I have   
been carried away by **hypocrisy** and **pride**. I have been   
drawn aside into the **world**. I have never taken a single   
step aright when left to myself. And therefore feeling  
how unable I am to guide myself a single step of the   
way, I come unto You, and ask You to send forth Your   
light and Your truth, that they may guide me, for **I   
am utterly unable to lead myself**."  
  
The child of God—feeling his own ignorance, darkness,   
blindness, and sinfulness—causes him to moan, and   
sigh, and cry unto God—that he might be . . .  
**led** every step,  
**kept** every moment,  
**guided** every inch.  
  
"O send forth Your light and Your truth,  
let them guide me." Psa 43:3  
  
  
  
  
**O what a way of learning religion!**  
  
"I was caught up into paradise and heard things so  
astounding that they cannot be told!" 2Co 12:4  
  
Now, doubtless, the apostle Paul, after he had been   
thus favored—thus caught up into paradise—thought   
that he would retain the same frame of mind that he   
was in when he came down from this heavenly place;   
that the savor, the sweetness, the power, the unction,   
the dew, the heavenly feeling would continue in his soul.   
And no doubt he thought he would walk all through his   
life with a measure of the sweet enjoyments that he   
then experienced. **But this was not God's way of   
teaching religion!**   
  
God had another way which Paul knew nothing of, and   
that was—if I may use the expression—to bring him   
from the third heaven, where his soul had been blessed   
with unspeakable ravishment—down to the very gates   
of hell. For he says, "**I was given** **a thorn in my flesh,   
a messenger from Satan to BUFFET me**."   
  
The idea "buffeting" is that of a strong man beating   
a weak one with violent blows to his head and face  
—bruising him into a shapeless mass!  **O what a way of learning religion!**  
  
Now I want you to see the contrast we have here.   
  
The blessed apostle caught up into the third **heavens**,   
filled with light, life, and glory—enjoying the presence   
of Christ—and bathing his soul in the river of divine   
consolation.   
  
Now for a reverse—down he comes to the **earth**.   
  
A messenger of Satan is let loose upon him, who buffets,  
beats and pounds this blessed apostle into a shapeless   
mummy—no eyes, no nose, no mouth, no features—but   
one indistinguishable mass of black and blue!  **Such is the mysterious way in which a man learns religion!**But what was all this for?   
  
Does it not appear very **cruel**—does it not seem very   
**unkind** that, after the Lord had taken Paul up into   
the third heaven, He would let the devil buffet him?   
  
Does it not strike our natural reason to be as strange   
and as unheard of a thing, as if a mother who had been   
fondling her babe in her arms, suddenly were to put it   
down, and let a large savage dog ravage it—and look   
on, without interfering, while he was tearing the child   
which she had been a few minutes before dandling in   
her lap, and clasping to her bosom?  
  
"But **to keep me from getting puffed up**, I was given   
a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to BUFFET   
me and **keep me from getting proud**." Here we have   
this difficult enigma solved, this mysterious knot untied!   
  
We find that **the object and end of all these severe   
dealings was to keep Paul from pride!**  
  
Three times Paul besought his loving and sympathizing   
Redeemer, that the trial might be taken away, for it   
was too grievous to be borne. The Lord heard his prayer   
and answered it—but **not** in the way that Paul expected.   
  
His answer was, "**My grace is sufficient for you.**" As though   
He would say, "Paul, beloved Paul, I am **not** going to take   
away your trial; it came from Me—it was given by Me. But   
My grace shall be sufficient for you, for My strength shall   
be made perfect in your weakness. There is a lesson to be   
learned, a path to be walked in, an experience to be passed   
through, wisdom to be obtained in this path—and therefore   
**you must travel in it.** Be content then with this promise   
from My own lips—My grace is sufficient for you, for My   
strength is made perfect in your weakness."   
  
The apostle was satisfied with this—he wanted no more,   
and therefore he burst forth, "Most gladly therefore will   
I rather glory in my infirmities—that the power of Christ   
may rest upon me."  
  
**O what a way of learning religion!  
  
  
  
  
In a most mysterious and inexplicable manner**  
  
"And we know that all things work together for good   
to those who love God, to those who are the called  
according to His purpose." Rom 8:28  
  
I am often **a marvel to myself**, feeling at times . . .  
such barrenness,  
such leanness,  
such deadness,  
such carnality,  
such inability to any spiritual thought.   
  
It is astonishing to me how our souls are kept alive.   
  
Carried on, and yet so secretly—worked upon,   
and yet so mysteriously—and yet led on, guided   
and preserved through so many difficulties and   
obstacles—**the Christian is** **a miracle of mercy!**  
  
He is astonished how he is preserved amid all his . . .  
difficulties,  
obstacles,  
trials, and  
temptations.  
  
Sometimes he seems driven and sometimes drawn,   
sometimes led and sometimes carried—but in one   
way or another the Spirit of God so works upon him   
that, though he scarce knows how, he still presses on!   
  
His very **burdens** make him groan for deliverance.  
  
His very **temptations** cause him to cry for help.  
  
The very **difficulty and ruggedness of the road**   
make him want to be carried every step.  
  
The very **perplexity of the path** compels him to cry out   
for a guide—so that the Spirit working in the midst of, and   
under, and through every **difficulty** and **discouragement**,   
still bears him through, and carries him on—and thus brings   
him through every **trial** and **trouble** and **temptation** and  **obstacle**—until He sets him in glory!  
  
He will then understand, that he has . . .  
not had one **trial** too heavy,   
nor shed one **tear** too much,  
nor put up one **groan** too many,  
but all these things have, **in a most mysterious   
and inexplicable manner**, worked together for   
his spiritual good!  
  
"And we know that all things work together for good   
to those who love God, to those who are the called  
according to His purpose." Rom 8:28  
  
  
  
  
**Wrought with divine power**  
"Our gospel came to you not simply with words,   
but also with **power**, with the **Holy Spirit** and  
with **deep conviction**." 1Th 1:5  
  
**Most men's religion is nothing else but   
'a round of forms' . . .**  
some have their 'doings',   
some have their 'doctrines',   
and others have their 'duties'.   
  
And when the one has performed his **doings**,   
the other learned his **doctrines**, and the third   
discharged his **duties**—why, he is as good a   
Christian, he thinks, as anybody. While all the   
time, the poor deceived creature is thoroughly   
ignorant of the kingdom of God, which stands   
not in simply in word—but in power.   
  
But as the veil of ignorance is taken off the heart,   
we begin to see and feel that there is a power in   
vital godliness—a reality in the teachings of the   
Spirit—that religion is not to be put on and put   
off as a man puts on and off his Sunday clothes.   
  
Where vital godliness is **wrought with divine power**   
in a man's heart, and preached by the Holy Spirit into   
his conscience—it mingles, daily and often hourly,   
with his thoughts—entwines itself with his feelings   
—and becomes the very food and drink of his soul.  
  
Now when a man comes to this spot—to see and feel   
what a reality there is in the things of God made   
manifest in the conscience by the power of the Holy   
Spirit—it effectually takes him out of dead churches,   
cuts him off from false ministers, winnows the chaff   
from the wheat, and brings him into close communion   
with the broken-hearted family of God.  
  
"Our gospel came to you not simply with words,   
but also with **power**, with the **Holy Spirit** and  
with **deep conviction**." 1Th 1:5  
  
  
  
**The more lovely does Jesus appear!**  
  
The poor believer feels, "I continually find all kinds   
of evil working in my mind; every base corruption   
crawling in my heart; everything vile, sensual, and   
filthy rising up from its abominable deeps. **Can I   
think that God can look down in love and mercy   
on such a wretch?**"   
  
**When we see . . .**  
our vileness,  
our baseness,   
our carnality,  
our sensuality,  
how our souls cleave to dust,   
how we grovel in evil and hateful things,   
how dark our minds,   
how earthly our affections,   
how depraved our hearts,   
how strong our lusts,   
how raging our passions;   
we feel ourselves, at times, no more   
fit for God than Satan himself!  
  
"You see, at just the right time, when we were   
utterly helpless, **Christ died for the ungodly!**"  
Rom 5:6  
  
Christ does not justify those who are naturally   
righteous, holy, and religious.   
  
But He takes the **sinner** as he is, in all his filth   
and guilt; **washes** him in the fountain opened   
for sin and uncleanness; and **clothes** the naked   
shivering wretch, who has nothing to cover him   
but filthy rags, in His own robe of righteousness!  
  
The gospel of the grace of God brings glad tidings . . .  
of pardon to the **criminal**,  
of mercy to the **guilty**, and  
of salvation to the **lost!**  
  
That the holy God should look down in love on   
wretches that deserve the damnation of hell; that   
the pure and spotless Jehovah should pity, save,   
and bless enemies and rebels, and make them   
endless partakers of His own glory; this indeed   
is a mystery, the depth of which eternity itself   
will not fathom!  
  
The deeper we sink in self-abasement under a   
sense of our vileness, the higher we rise in a   
knowledge of Christ. And the blacker we are   
in our own view, **the more lovely does Jesus   
appear!**

**Have you not brought this on yourselves?**  
  
"**Have you not brought this on yourselves**   
by forsaking the Lord your God when He led   
you in the way?" Jer 2:17  
  
"**Have you not brought this on yourselves?**"  
says the Lord to His sinning Israel. Who   
dares say he has not by . . .  
his sins,  
his carnality,  
his pride,  
his covetousness,  
his worldly-mindedness,  
his unbelief,  
his foolishness,  
his rebelliousness,  
procured to himself many things that   
have grieved and distressed his soul?   
  
If indeed we take no notice of the sin that dwells   
in us; and pay no regard to our thoughts, desires,   
words, and actions; and take our stand on our own   
righteousness; **we may refuse to believe that we   
are such vile sinners.**   
  
But if we are compelled to look within, and painfully   
feel that SIN is an **indweller**, a lodger, whom we are   
compelled to harbor; a **serpent** that will creep in and   
nestle in our heart, whether we will or not; a **thief**   
that will break through and steal, and whom no bolt   
nor bar can keep out; a **traitor** in the citadel who will   
work by force or fraud, and against whom no resolution   
of ours has any avail; if such be our inward experience   
and conviction, I believe there is not a man or woman   
here who will not confess, "Guilty, guilty! Unclean,   
unclean!"  
  
"Some became **fools** through their rebellious ways,  
and **suffered affliction because of their iniquities**."   
Psa 107:17  
  
We bring affliction upon ourselves. We procure   
suffering by our own iniquities. "O!", says the fool . . .  
"my worldly-mindedness,   
my pride,   
my covetousness,   
my carnality,   
my neglect of divine things,   
my rebelliousness,  
my recklessness,   
the snares I entangled myself in,   
my various besetting sins;  
this it is which has provoked the Lord to afflict   
me so severely, and leave me, fool that I am,   
to reap the fruit of my own devises!"  
  
  
  
**A religious animal**  
  
"Men of Athens, I notice that you are **very religious**,   
for as I was walking along I saw your **many altars**.   
And one of them had this inscription on it—TO AN   
UNKNOWN GOD." Act 17:22-23  
  
Man has been called, and perhaps with some truth,   
**a religious animal**. Religion of some kind, at any rate,   
seems almost indispensable to his very existence—for   
from the most civilized nation, to the most barbarous   
tribe upon the face of the earth—we find some form of   
religion practiced. Whether this is ingrained into the   
very constitution of man, or whether it be received by   
custom or tradition—I will not pretend to decide. But   
that some kind of religion is almost universally   
prevalent, is a fact that cannot be denied.  
  
We will always find these **two kinds of religion** . . .  
false and true,  
earthly and heavenly,  
fleshly and spiritual,  
natural and supernatural.  
  
Compare this vital, spiritual, heavenly,   
divine, supernatural religion . . .  
this work of grace upon the soul,   
this teaching of God in the heart,   
this life of faith within  
—with its flimsy counterfeit.   
  
Compare the actings of . . .  
real faith,   
real hope,  
real love;   
the teachings, the dealings, the leadings, and   
the operations of the blessed Spirit in the soul  
—with rounds of . . .  
duties,  
superstitious forms,  
empty ceremonies, and   
a notional religion, however puffed up and varnished.   
  
Compare the life of God in the heart of a true Christian,   
amid all his dejection, despondency, trials, temptations,   
and exercises; compare that precious treasure, Christ's   
own grace in the soul—with all mere . . .  
external religion,  
superficial religion,   
notional religion.   
  
O, it is no more to be compared than a grain of dust   
with a diamond! No more to be compared than a criminal   
in a dungeon to the King on the throne! In fact, there is   
no comparison between them.  
  
  
  
**What a contrast!**   
"Those who endure to the end will be **saved**." Mar 13:13  
  
**Saved!   
  
Saved from what?**   
  
Saved from hell!  
  
Saved from an eternity of endless misery and horror!  
  
Saved from the worm which never dies!  
  
Saved from the fire which is never quenched!  
  
Saved from the sulphurous flames!  
  
Saved from the companionship of devils and damned spirits!  
  
Saved saved from ever-rolling ages of ceaseless misery and horror!  
  
Have you not thought sometimes about eternity?  **What must an eternity of misery must be**—when   
you can scarcely bear the pain of toothache half an   
hour! O! to be in torment forever! How it racks the   
soul to **think** of it! What tongue, then, can express   
the mercy and blessedness of being saved . . .  
from hell,  
from the billows of the sulphurous lake,  
from infinite despair!  
  
When a soul strikes upon the 'rock of perdition',   
it is at once swallowed up in a dreadful eternity!  
  
Not only are believers saved **from** all this infinite   
and unending misery—but they are saved **into**unspeakable happiness and glory! They are . . .  
saved into heaven,   
saved into eternal communion with the infinite God,  
saved into the eternal enjoyment of His blessed presence,  
saved into the perfect enjoyment of that perfect and   
everlasting love in those regions of endless bliss where   
tears are wiped from off all faces!  
  
What a contrast!   
  
Heaven — hell!   
  
Eternal misery — eternal bliss!   
  
Ages of boundless joy — ages of infinite despair!  
  
But salvation includes not only what we may call  **future** salvation—but **present** salvation. Thus,   
there is a being **saved in the present . . .**  
from the guilt, filth, love, power, and practice of sin,  
from the curse and bondage of the Law,  
from the spirit and love of the world,  
from inward condemnation,  
from the entanglements of Satan,  
from worldly anxieties and cares,   
from following after idols,  
from carelessness,  
from coldness,   
from carnality,  
from every evil way,  
from every delusive path.  
  
 **Sweet buy!**  
  
You say, "I am rich—I have acquired wealth and do   
not need a thing." But you do not realize that you are   
wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. I counsel you   
to **buy from Me white garments, so you can cover   
your shameful nakedness.** Rev 3:17-18  
  
The only qualification is a deep feeling of our necessity,   
our nakedness and our shame—and a feeling that there   
is no other covering for a needy, naked, guilty soul—but   
the robe of the Redeemer's spotless righteousness.   
  
And when the soul is led to His divine feet—full of guilt,  
shame, and fear—abhorring, loathing, and mourning over   
itself—and comes in the actings of a living faith—in the   
sighs and cries of a broken heart—in hungerings, thirstings,   
and longings—desiring that the Lord would bestow upon   
him that rich robe—then the blessed exchange takes place  
—then there is a 'buying'—then the Lord brings out of His   
treasure-house, where it has been locked up—the best   
robe—puts it upon the prodigal, and clothes him from   
head to foot with it!  
  
**Sweet buy!**   
  
**Blessed exchange!**   
  
Our nakedness—for Christ's justifying robe!  
  
Our poverty—for Christ's riches!  
  
Our helplessness and insufficiency—for   
Christ's power, grace, and love!  
  
You say, "I am rich—I have acquired wealth and do   
not need a thing." But you do not realize that you are   
wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. I counsel you   
to **buy from Me white garments, so you can cover   
your shameful nakedness.** Rev 3:17-18

**God's perfect will**  
  
"That good, and acceptable, and **perfect will of God**."  
Rom 12:2  
  
God's will is "perfect". In it, there is . . .  
no spot,   
no stain,   
no weakness,  
no error,   
no instability.   
  
It is and indeed must necessarily be as perfect as God   
Himself; for it emanates from Him who is all perfection;   
and is a discovery of His mind and character.   
  
But when **God's perfect will** . . .  
sets itself against our **flesh**,   
thwarts our dearest **hopes**,   
overturns our fondest **schemes**,  
we cannot see that it is a perfect will. But rather, are  
much disposed to fret, murmur, and rebel against it.  
  
**God's perfect will** may . . .  
snatch a child from your bosom;   
strike down a dear husband;  
tear from your arms a beloved wife;   
strip you of all your worldly goods;  
put your feet into a path of suffering;   
lay you upon a bed of pain and languishing;  
cast you into hot furnaces or overwhelming floods;  
make your life almost a burden to yourself!  
  
How can you, under circumstances so trying and   
distressing as these, acknowledge and submit to   
**God's perfect will**; and let it reign and rule in   
your heart without a murmur of resistance to it?  
  
Look back and see how **God's perfect will** has, in   
previous instances, reigned supreme in all points,   
for your good. It has ordered or overruled all   
circumstances and all events, amid a complication   
of difficulties in providence and grace. Nothing has   
happened to your injury; but all things have worked   
together for your good.   
  
Whatever we have lost, it was better for us that   
it was taken away. Whatever . . .  
property,   
or comfort,   
or friends,  
or health,  
or earthly happiness we have been deprived of,   
it was better for us to lose, than to retain them.   
  
Was your **dear child** taken away? It might be   
to teach you resignation to God's sacred will.   
  
Has a **dear partner** been snatched from your   
embrace? It was that God might be your better  
Partner and undying Friend.   
  
Was any portion of your **worldly substance** taken   
away? It was that you might be taught to live a   
life of faith in the providence of God.   
  
Have your **fondest schemes** been marred; your   
youthful hopes blighted; and you pierced in the   
warmest affections of your heart? It was . . .  
to remove an idol,  
to dethrone a rival to Christ,  
to crucify the object of earthly love,  
so that a purer, holier, and more enduring   
affection might be enshrined in its stead.  
  
To tenderly embrace **God's perfect will** is   
the grand object of all gospel discipline.   
  
The ultimatum of gospel obedience is to **lie   
passive in His hand**, and know no will but His.  
  
"That good, and acceptable, and **perfect will of God**."  
Rom 12:2  
  
  
  
**This sinner, not the Pharisee**  
  
The **proud** **Pharisee** stood by himself and prayed this   
prayer: "I thank you, God, that I am not a **sinner** like   
everyone else, especially like that publican over there!   
For I never cheat, I don't sin, I don't commit adultery,   
I fast twice a week, and I give you a tenth of my   
income." Luk 18:11-12  
  
Man unites in himself, what at first sight seem to   
be completely opposite things. He is the greatest   
of **sinners**—and yet the greatest of **Pharisees**.   
  
Now, what two things can be so opposed to each   
other as **sin** and **self-righteousness**? Yet the very   
same man who is a **sinner** from top to toe, with the   
whole head sick and the whole heart faint—who is   
spiritually nothing else but a leper throughout—how   
contradictory it appears that the same man has in   
his own heart a most stubborn **self-righteousness!**  
  
Now, against these two evils God, so to speak, directs   
His whole artillery—He spares neither one nor the other.  
  
But it is hard to say which is the greatest rebellion   
against God—the existence of **sin** in man and what he   
is as a fallen sinner—or his **Pharisaism**, the lifting up   
his head in pride of self-righteousness.   
  
It is not easy to decide **which is the more obnoxious   
to God**—the **drunkard** who sins without shame—or the   
**Pharisee** puffed up with how pleasing he is to God.  
  
The one is abhorrent to **our** feelings—and, as far as  
decency and morality are concerned, **we** would rather   
see the Pharisee. But when we come to matters of   
true religion, **the Pharisee seems the worst!** At least   
our Lord intimated as much when He said the publicans   
and harlots would enter the kingdom of God before them.  
  
"But **the publican** stood at a distance and dared not   
even lift his eyes to heaven as he prayed. Instead, he   
beat his chest in sorrow, saying, **'O God, be merciful   
to me, for I am a sinner!'**   
I tell you, **this sinner, not the Pharisee**, returned home   
justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself  
will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be   
exalted." Luk 18:13-14  
  
  
  
**Five devilisms!**  
  
As regards **sin in its workings**, we may say   
there are **five devilisms** from which we need   
to be saved . . .   
  
1. The GUILT of sin.   
  
2. The FILTH of sin.   
  
3. The LOVE of sin.   
  
4. The DOMINION of sin.  
  
5. The PRACTICE of sin.   
  
1. We need the application of Christ's precious blood   
to our conscience, to take away the **guilt** of sin.   
  
2. We need the Spirit of Christ to sanctify and   
to wash the soul in the fountain, to cleanse   
from the **filth** of sin.  
  
3. We need the love of Christ shed abroad in   
our hearts, to take away the **love** of sin.   
  
4. We need the power of Christ, to rescue   
us from the **dominion** of sin.   
  
5. We need the grace of Christ, to preserve   
us from the **practice** of sin.  
  
It is feeling **sin** in its various workings, which   
makes us value **Christ!** Strange mysterious way!  
O, strange path! that **to be exercised with sin,   
is the path to the Savior!**  
  
Very painful, very mysterious, very inexplicable   
—that the more you feel **yourself** a wretched,   
miserable sinner; the more you long after **Jesus**,   
who is able to save you to the uttermost!  
  
Thus, we shall find that we need all that Christ is.   
For we are **no little sinners**; andHe is **no little Savior!**  
  
We are great sinners!  
  
He is a Savior—and a great one!  
  
"He is able to save to the uttermost!" Heb 7:25  
  
  
  
**This is the struggle!**  
  
"**Oh, what a wretched man I am!** Who will free me   
from this body that is dominated by sin?" Rom 7:24  
  
If a person were to tell me he did not love sin in his carnal   
mind, I would say with all mildness, "You do not speak the   
truth!" **If your carnal mind does not love sin . . .**  
  
Why do you think of it?  
  
Why do you secretly indulge it in your imagination?  
  
Why do you play with it?  
  
Why do you seek to extract a devilish sweetness out of it?   
  
O, what a mercy it would be, if there were not this   
dreadful love of sin in our heart! **This is the struggle**  
—that there should be this **traitor** in the camp; that   
our carnal mind should be so devilish as to love that   
which made the blessed Jesus die; as to love that   
which crucified the Lord of glory, and to love it with   
a vehement love!   
  
"Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord!"  
Rom 7:25  
  
  
  
**It is I**  
  
"Take courage! **It is I**. Don't be afraid." Mar 6:50  
  
**It is I** who formed you in the womb, and brought you   
forth into your present existence. **It is I**, the Lord your   
God, who has fed you, and clothed you from that hour   
up to the present moment. **It is I**, the Lord your God,   
who has preserved you on every side. When you were   
upon a sick bed, **it was I**, the Lord your God, who   
visited your soul, raised up your body, and gave you   
that measure of health which you do now enjoy. **It is   
I**, the Lord your God, who placed you in the situation   
of life which you do now occupy.   
  
**It is I**, the Lord your God . . .  
who deals out to you every trial,  
who allots you every affliction,  
who brings upon you every cross,  
who works in you everything according   
to My own good pleasure.  
  
When we can thus believe that the Lord our God is   
about our bed and our path, and spying out all our   
ways; when we can look up to Him, and feel that   
He is the Lord **our** God, there is no feeling . . .  
more sweet,   
more blessed,   
more heavenly!  
  
"Take courage! **It is I**. Don't be afraid." Mar 6:50

**That sweet grace**  
  
"Remember how the Lord your God led you through the  
wilderness for forty years, **to humble you**." Deu 8:2  
  
**We learn humility by a deep discovery of   
what we are**; by an opening up of . . .  
the corruption,  
the weakness,   
the wickedness,   
of our fallen nature.  
  
The Lord's way of teaching His people humility is   
by placing them first in one trying spot, and then   
in another; by allowing . . .  
some **temptation** to arise;  
some **stumbling block** to be in their path;  
some **besetting sin** to work upon their corrupt affections;  
some **idol** to be embraced by their idolatrous heart;  
something to take place to **draw out the sin** which is   
in their heart; and thus make it manifest to their sight.  
  
As a general rule, **we learn humility**, not by hearing   
ministers tell us what wicked creatures we are; nor   
by merely looking into our bosoms and seeing a whole   
swarm of evils working there; but from being compelled   
by painful necessity to believe that we are vile, through   
circumstances and events time after time **bringing to   
light those hidden evils in our heart**, which we once  
thought ourselves pretty free from.  
  
We learn humility, not merely by a discovery of what  
**we** are, but also by a discovery of what **Jesus** is.   
  
**We need a glimpse . . .**  
of Jesus,  
of His love,  
of His grace,  
of His blood.

When these two feelings meet together   
in our bosom . . .  
our shame, and the Lord's goodness;  
our guilt, and His forgiveness;  
our wickedness, and His superabounding mercy;   
they break us, humble us, and lay us, dissolved in tears   
of godly sorrow and contrition, at the footstool of mercy!  
  
**And thus we learn humility, that sweet grace**, that   
blessed fruit of the Spirit in real, vital, soul-experience.  
  
  
  
**Slaves of Satan!**   
  
"Then they will come to their senses and escape from  
**the Devil's trap**. For they have been **held captive by  
him to do whatever he wants.**" 2Ti 2:26  
  
In our natural state, **we are all** **the slaves of Satan!**   
  
We love our foul master, hug his chain, and delight in his  
servitude, little thinking what awful wages are to follow.  
  
This mighty conqueror has with him a numerous train of   
captives! This haughty master, the 'god of this world', has   
in his fiendish retinue, a whole array of slaves who gladly   
do his behests. They obey him cheerfully, though he is  
leading them down to the bottomless pit! For though **he  
amuses them while here in this world with a few toys  
and baubles**, he will not pay them their wages until he  
has enticed and flattered them into that ghastly gulf of  
destruction, in which he himself has been weltering for  
ages.   
  
"Satan, the god of this evil world, has blinded the  
minds of those who don't believe." 2Co 4:4  
  
  
  
**To keep me from getting puffed up**  
  
"But **to keep me from getting puffed up**, I was   
given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan   
to torment me and **keep me from getting proud.**   
Three different times I begged the Lord to take   
it away. Each time He said to me, 'My grace is   
sufficient for you, for **My power** is made perfect   
in **your weakness**.' Therefore I will boast all the   
more gladly about **my weaknesses**, so that   
**Christ's power** may rest on me." 2Co 12:7-9  
  
Depend upon it, the Lord's family have to **go through   
much tribulation on their way to heaven**. So says the   
unerring word of truth, and so speaks the experience   
of every God-taught soul. Now . . .  
in these seasons of trouble,  
in these painful exercises,  
in these perplexing trials,   
the Lord's people need strength; yet the Lord   
sends these trials in order to drain and exhaust   
them of 'creature strength'.   
  
Such is the 'self-righteousness' of our heart; such   
the 'legality' intertwined with every fiber of our   
natural disposition—that we cleave to our own   
**righteousness** as long as there is a thread to   
cleave to; we stand in our own **strength** as long   
as there is a point to stand upon; we lean upon   
our own **wisdom** as long as a particle remains!  
  
In order, then, to exhaust us, drain us, strip us, and   
purge us of this pharisaic leaven, the Lord sends . . .  
trials,  
temptations,  
sorrows,   
perplexities.  **What is their effect?**   
  
To teach us **our weakness**, and bring us to that   
one and only spot where God and the sinner   
meet—the spot of **creature helplessness**.   
  
In order, therefore, to bring us to this spot, to know   
experimentally **the strength of Christ**, and feel it to   
be more than a doctrine, a notion, or a speculation—  
to know it as an internal reality, tasted by the inward   
palate of our soul—to have this experience wrought   
into our hearts with divine power, we must be brought   
to this spot—to feel **our own utter weakness.  
  
  
  
If anyone loves the world**  
  
"Do not love the world or anything in the world.   
**If anyone loves the world**, the love of the  
Father is not in him." 1Jn 2:15  
  
If the love of the Father is in us, we will not  
love the world—nor will the world love us!  
  
If your heart and spirit are still in the world,  
and you are not separated from . . .  
its society,  
its amusements,  
its pursuits,  
its pleasures,  
its delights,  
its men,  
its maxims,   
you certainly lack any evidence of a divine   
change having been wrought in your soul.  
  
"Anyone who chooses to be **a friend of the  
world** becomes an enemy of God." Jas 4:4

**Paul's highest attainment**  
  
"**I am nothing**." 2Co 12:11  
  
This was **Paul's highest attainment**  
in the knowledge of self.  
  
To be a daily pauper living on alms is humbling   
to proud nature, which is always seeking to **be**   
something, and to **do** something.  
  
If this **self-nothingness** was wrought in us, we   
would be spared much pain, in wounded pride.  
  
People are building up religion all over the   
country, but there is not one of a thousand who   
has yet learned **the first lesson—to be nothing.**   
Of all this noisy crowd, how few lie at Jesus' feet,   
helpless and hopeless, and find help and hope   
in Him!  
  
If you can venture to **be nothing**, it will save you   
a world of anxiety and trouble! But proud, vain,   
conceited flesh wants to be something . . .  
to preach well,  
to make a name for one's self,  
and be admired as a preacher.  
  
"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;  
of whom **I am the worst**." 1Ti 1:15  
  
"**I am less than the least** of all God's people." Eph 3:8  
  
"**I am nothing**." 2Co 12:11  
 **Let God but take the cover off**   
  
"The human heart is most deceitful and desperately   
wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?" Jer 17:9  
  
It is our mercy, if we only feel and groan under   
corruption **inwardly**, without it breaking forth   
**outwardly**—to wound our own souls, grieve the   
people of God, and gladden our enemies.   
  
**Let God but take the cover off the boiling   
cauldron of our corrupt nature**, and the filthy   
scum would surface in the sight of all men!  
  
"Hold me up, and I shall be safe!" Psa 119:117  
  
  
When the cold winds are whistling over your grave  
  
"So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on   
what is unseen. For what is seen is **temporary**,   
but what is unseen is **eternal**." 2Co 4:18  
  
How really empty and worthless are all human   
**cares** and **anxieties**, as well as all human **hopes**and **pleasures**—when viewed in the light of a   
vast and endless eternity!  
  
In twenty years, today's price of oil will probably   
mean little to you. But it will matter much whether   
your soul is in heaven or hell.  
  
**When the cold winds are whistling over your grave**,   
or the warm sun resting on it—**what will it matter**   
whether sheep sold badly or well at the market?  
  
**Could we realize eternal things more**, we would   
be less anxious about temporal things. It is only   
our **unbelief** and **carnality** which fetter us down to   
**the poor things of time and sense**.  
  
"This world is fading away, along with everything  
it craves. But if you do the will of God, you will  
live forever." 1Jn 2:17

**The art of preaching**  
  
We are overrun with **a shallow, superficial ministry**,   
which is destitute of all life, savor, and power. A dry,   
dead-letter scheme of doctrine, as mathematically   
correct as the squares of a chess-board, prevails,   
where what is called "truth" is preached. And to   
move Bible texts on the squares as pawns, is called   
"**the art of preaching**".  
  
How simple is truth!   
  
Man's misery—God's mercy.  
  
The aboundings of sin—the super-aboundings of grace.  
  
The depths of the fall—the heights of the recovery.  
  
The old man—the new man.  
  
The diseases of the soul—the balm of a Savior's blood.  
  
These lessons learned are in the furnace of inward   
experience. How different from . . .  
the monkish austerity of the Ritualist,  
the lip service of the Pharisee, and  
the dry Calvinistic formulary!  
  
What a dreadful lack is there of true preaching now!   
I look round and see so few men qualified to feed the   
church of God. We are overrun with parsons, but, oh   
dear! what are they? **I cannot but attribute much   
of the low state of the churches to the ministers!**  
  
Ezekiel 34 is a true picture of the false shepherds.

**My desire is . . .**  
  
1. To exalt the **grace** of God.  
  
2. To proclaim **salvation** alone through the blood   
and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ.  
  
3. To declare the sinfulness, helplessness, and   
hopelessness of **man** in a state of nature.  
  
4. To describe, as far as I am able, the living   
**experience** of the saints of God in their trials,   
temptations, and sorrows—and in their   
consolations and blessings.

**A great and inestimable mercy**  
  
It is **a great and inestimable mercy** when our   
various **trials** and **troubles** are made a means of   
driving us to the Lord, as our only hope and help.  
  
Those circumstances, outward or inward,   
temporal or spiritual, which . . .  
stir up an earnest spirit of prayer,  
make us cease from the creature,  
beat us out of all false refuges,  
wean us from the world,  
show us the vileness and deceitfulness of our hearts,  
lead us up to Jesus, and make Him near, dear, and  
precious—must be considered **blessings**.  
  
It is true, **troubles** rarely come to us as such, or at  
the time appear as such—no, they usually appear as  
if they would utterly swallow us up! **But we must  
judge of them by their fruits and effects.**  
**Job** could not see the hand of God in his troubles and  
afflictions. But it was made plain after he was brought  
to abhor himself and repent in dust and ashes.  
  
I am very sure, if we are in the **right** way, we shall find  
it a **rough** way, and have many trials and troubles.  
  
"God disciplines us for our good, that we may share  
in His holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the   
time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a  
harvest of righteousness and peace for those who  
have been trained by it." Heb 12:10-11

**Such freaks are more fit for a traveling circus**  
  
I have been much puzzled by those in the professing   
church. Most have a great assurance and unwavering   
confidence—unaccompanied by godly fear, and the   
other fruits and graces of the Spirit. I see this as   
presumption or delusion.   
  
Where the Holy Spirit works **faith**, He also works . . .  
sorrow for sin,  
deadness to the world,  
tenderness of conscience,  
brokenness of spirit,  
humility,  
simplicity,  
sincerity,  
meekness,  
patience,  
spiritual affections,  
holy and heavenly desires,  
true hope, and  
love toward the Lord and His people.   
  
Where we see **these fruits and graces of the Spirit**   
lacking, or sadly deficient, there we must conclude   
that true **faith**, the root from which they all grow, is   
lacking or deficient likewise.   
  
**There are no 'freaks' in the kingdom of heaven.**I mean such as have . . .  
'little hearts' and 'large heads',  
active legs and withered hands,  
nimble tongues and crippled arms.  
**Such freaks are more fit for a traveling circus**   
than the Church of the living God.  
  
To fear God,   
to tremble at His word,   
to be little and lowly in our own eyes,   
to hate sin and ourselves as sinners,   
to pour out our hearts before the Lord,   
to seek His face continually,   
to lead a life of faith and prayer,   
to be dead to the world,   
to feel Jesus to be precious,   
to behold His dying love by the eyes of living faith;  
these realities are almost despised and overlooked   
by many 'great professors' in our day!

**An apostolic face and a Judas heart**  
  
Many think that a **minister** is exempt from such   
coldness, deadness, and barrenness, as private   
Christians feel. And the hypocritical looks and   
words of many of Satan's ministers favor this   
delusion. Holiness is so much on their **tongues**,   
and on their **faces**, that their deluded hearers   
necessarily conclude that it is in their **hearts**.  
  
But, alas! nothing is easier or more common,  
than **an apostolic face and a Judas heart**.  
  
Most pictures that I have seen of the "Last Supper"   
represent **Judas** with a ferocious countenance. Had   
painters drawn a holy, meek-looking face, I believe   
they would have given a truer resemblance.   
  
Many pass for **angels in the pulpit**, who if the truth   
were known, would be seen to be devils and beasts   
in heart, lip, and life at home.  
  
"How terrible it will be for you teachers of religious   
law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! You are so careful  
to clean the **outside** of the cup and the dish, but **inside**you are filthy—full of greed and self-indulgence! You try  
to look like upright people **outwardly**, but **inside** your  
hearts are filled with hypocrisy and lawlessness."  
Mat 23:25, Mat 23:28

**A languishing body**  
  
([Letters of J. C. Philpot](http://www.gracegems.org/Philpot/letters.htm))  
  
(February 1, 1840, **to a dying youth**)  
  
My dear friend,  
**A languishing body** is a heavy cross. **Sickness** often . . .  
depresses our spirits,  
shatters our nerves, and  
casts a gloom over our minds.  
  
But it is **good** thus to be weaned and detached,  
and gradually loosened from the strong ties that   
bind us to earth. I was ill once for many months,   
and many thought I would never recover. I found   
it a heavy trial, but I believe it was **profitable to   
my soul**. May the Lord make all your bed in your   
sickness, give you many testimonies of His special   
favor—and when He sees fit to take down your   
earthly tabernacle, remove you to **that happy   
country** where the inhabitant shall never say,   
"I am sick," where tears are wiped away from   
all faces, and sorrow and sighing flee away.  
  
May the Lord speedily grant your desires, and   
visit your soul with looks of love, rays of mercy,   
and beams of tender kindness, so as to smile  
you into . . .  
humility,  
resignation,  
patience,  
gratitude,   
contrition,  
love, and  
godly sorrow.  
  
Yours affectionately in the bonds of the gospel,  
J. C. Philpot

**A painted bauble**  
  
"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new   
creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"  
2Co 5:17  
  
What a wonderful revolution is effected by   
divine teaching and heavenly visitations!  
  
The soul is brought to live in a new world   
and breathe a new element. Old things pass  
away, and behold, all things become new.   
  
New desires, feelings, hopes, fears, and   
exercises arise, and the soul becomes a new   
creature. The **world** appears in its true colors,  
as **a painted bauble**, and as its **pleasures** are  
valued at their due worth, so its good **opinion**is little cared for or desired.  
  
**What is this poor vain world** with all its gilded clay,  
deceptive honors and respectability, and soap-bubble  
charms—compared to one smile from our loving Savior?  
  
"And this world is fading away, along with  
everything it craves." 1Jn 2:17

**The religion which I want**  
  
**I am quite sick of modern religion**—it is such   
a mixture, such a medley, such a compromise.   
I find much, indeed, of this religion in my own   
heart, for it suits the flesh well—but I would   
not have it so, and grieve it should be so.  
 **The religion which I want** is that of the Holy Spirit.   
  
I **know** nothing but what He teaches me.  
  
I **feel** nothing but what He works in me.   
  
I **believe** nothing but what He shows me.   
  
I only **mourn** when He smites my rocky heart.   
  
I only **rejoice** when He reveals the Savior.  
  
This religion I am seeking after, though miles and   
miles from it—but no other will satisfy or content me.   
  
When the blessed Spirit is not at work in me,   
and with me, I fall back into all the . . .  
darkness,  
unbelief,   
earthliness,  
idleness,  
carelessness,  
infidelity, and   
helplessness   
of my Adam nature.  
  
True religion is a supernatural and mysterious thing.

It will matter little when I lie in my coffin!   
  
**What does it really matter** where we spend  
the few years of our pilgrimage here below?  
  
Life is short, vain, and transitory; and if I live   
in comfort and wealth, or in comparative poverty,   
**it will matter little when I lie in my coffin!**   
  
This life is soon passing away, and an eternal state  
fast coming on! **It will greatly matter whether . . .**  
our **religion** was natural or spiritual,  
our **faith** human or divine,  
our **hope** a heavenly gift or a spider's web!   
  
But our blind, foolish hearts are so concerned about   
things which are but the dust of the balance, and so   
little anxious about our all in all.  
  
There is **no greater inheritance** than to be a son or   
daughter of the Lord Almighty. To have a saving   
interest in . . .   
the **electing love** of the Father,  
the **redeeming blood** of the Son,  
and the **sanctifying operations** of the Holy Spirit,   
is **worth a million of worlds!** Without such, we must   
be eternally miserable; and with it eternally happy.  
  
"For God has reserved **a priceless inheritance** for His  
children. It is kept in heaven for you, pure and undefiled,   
beyond the reach of change and decay!" 1Pe 1:4

A little drop of purity in the midst of impurity  
 **How mysterious is the life of God in the soul.   
It seems like** **a little drop of purity in the midst   
of impurity.**We shall always find **sin** to be our worst enemy,   
and **self** our greatest foe. We need not fear   
anything but sin—nothing else can do us any   
real injury. Though the Lord in tender mercy   
forgives His erring wandering children, yet He   
makes them all deeply feel that indeed it is   
an evil and a bitter thing to sin against Him.

**If Mr. Pride gets a wound in the head**  
  
"**Some are preaching out of jealousy and rivalry**.  
But others preach about Christ with pure motives."  
Php 1:15  
  
I hope I can rejoice in the Lord's blessing the labors   
of other good men. It is indeed a sad spirit **when   
ministers are jealous of each other**, and would   
rather cavil and find fault with each other, instead   
of desiring that the blessing of God might rest   
upon them and their labors. Oh that miserable   
spirit of detraction and **envy**, which would gladly   
pull others down, that we might stand as it were,   
a little higher upon their bodies! Where is there any . . .  
true humility of mind,  
simplicity of spirit,  
brotherly love, or  
an eye to God's glory,   
when this wretched spirit is indulged?  
  
**If Mr. Pride gets a wound in the head**, it will  
not be the worse for the grace of humility.

**Our greatest enemy**  
  
I am more afraid of myself—my lusts and passions,   
and strong and horrible corruptions—than of anybody   
in the whole world.  
  
SELF is and ever will be **our greatest enemy**. And   
all our enemies would be as weak as water against   
us, were we not such vile wretches in ourselves.

**The end will make amends for all!**

**What a world it is of sin and sorrow!**  
  
How everything serves to remind us   
that **we are all passing away!**  
  
I feel for you in your trials and **afflictions**,  
so **various**, **painful**, and **multiplied**. But   
dare I wish you free from what the all-wise,  
all-gracious Lord lays upon you? Could   
He not in a moment remove them all?   
  
Our Father sees fit in His wisdom and mercy   
to afflict His children, and we know that He  
would not do so unless it were for the good   
of their soul. What can we say then? All we   
can do is to beg of the Lord that He would   
support, comfort, and bless them.  
  
It is **in the furnace** that we learn our need of   
realities, and our own helplessness and inability.   
The furnace also brings to our mind the shortness   
of life, and how vain all things are here below.  
 **Affliction are sent to . . .**  
wean from this world,  
make life burdensome,  
and death desirable.  
  
I well know that **the poor coward flesh** is fretful   
and impatient under afflictions, and would gladly  
have **a smoother, easier path**.But **we cannot   
choose our own trials**, nor our own afflictions.   
All are appointed in fixed weight and measure;  
and the promise is that all things shall work   
together for good to those who love God.  
  
Wherever we go, and wherever we are, we must   
expect trials to arise. But it will be our wisdom   
and mercy to submit to what we cannot alter, and   
not fret or repine under the trial—but accept it as   
sent for our good.  
  
We need trial upon trial, and stroke upon stroke   
to bring our soul out of carnality. We slip insensibly   
into carnal ease; but afflictions and trials of body   
and mind stir us up to some degree of earnestness   
in prayer, show us the emptiness and vanity of   
earthly things, make us feel the suitability and   
preciousness of the Lord Jesus.  
  
The path in which you have been led so many  
years is a **safe** way, though a **rough** and **rugged**way. **The end will make amends for all!**

**We are no longer young**  
  
"My life is but a breath." Job 7:7  
  
"My life passes more swiftly than a runner.  
It flees away, filled with tragedy." Job 9:25  
  
My dear friend,  
**We are no longer young. Life is, as it were,   
slipping from under our feet.** It is a poor life   
to live to sin, self, and the world—but it is   
a blessed life to live unto the Lord.  
  
I never expect to be free from trial, temptation,   
pain, and suffering of one kind or another, **while   
in this valley of tears**. It will be my mercy if these   
things are sanctified to my soul's eternal good.   
  
**I cannot choose my own path**, nor would I wish   
to do so, as I am sure it would be a wrong one.   
  
I desire to be led of the Lord Himself into the way  
of peace, and truth, and righteousness—to walk in   
His fear, live to His praise, and die in the sweet   
experience of His love.   
  
I have many enemies, but **fear none so much as   
myself**. O may I be kept from all evil and all error,   
and do the things which are pleasing in God's sight.   
  
**Our days are hastening away** swifter than a runner.  
Soon with us it will be time no longer, and therefore   
how we should desire to live to the Lord, and not   
to **self!**Yours affectionately in the truth,  
J. C. Philpot, June 20, 1861

**The afflictions of the ungodly**  
  
"It was good for me to be afflicted." Psa 119:71  
  
There is a great difference between the   
afflictions of the godly, and **the afflictions   
of the ungodly**.   
  
To the godly afflictions are a blessing;   
but to the ungodly afflictions are a curse.  
  
Afflictions soften the heart of the godly;   
but they harden the heart of the ungodly.   
  
In the case of the godly, afflictions . . .   
stir up the grace of prayer,  
wean the heart from the world,  
bring us to Word of God,  
make us consider our latter end,   
give power and reality to divine things,   
show us the emptiness of all creature religion,   
make us look more simply and believingly to   
the blessed Lord, to feel how suitable He is to   
every want and woe; and that in Him, and in   
Him alone, is pardon, acceptance, and peace.   
  
But **the afflictions of the ungodly** only produce . . .  
sullenness,  
self-pity, and  
rebellion.

**Like a little child in the arms of eternal love**  
  
How I see men deluded and put off with a vain   
show, and how few there are, whether ministers   
or people, who seem to know anything of the   
transforming efficacy of real religion and vital   
godliness.  
  
**We desire** to be more separated from the world   
in heart, spirit, and affection; to be spiritually  
minded, and to know more of that holiness   
without which no man shall see the Lord.   
  
And though we find sin still working in us, and   
sometimes as bad as ever, yet **our desire** is to   
have it subdued in its power, as well as purged   
away in its guilt and filth.   
  
We have lived to see what the **world** can do for   
us—and found it can only entangle; and what **sin**can do—which is to please for a moment and   
then bite like an adder.   
  
And we have seen also a little of the Person and   
work, blood and righteousness, grace and glory,   
blessedness and suitability of **the Son of God**;   
and He has won our heart and affections, so as   
at times to be the chief among ten thousand   
and the altogether lovely One.  
  
May you experience the sweetness and blessedness   
of calmly relying on the faithfulness of God, and lying   
**like a little child in the arms of eternal love**.  
  
Yours very affectionately,  
J. C. Philpot

The end of God in all His doings and dealings  
  
Blessed are those chastenings and those   
teachings which bring us to the feet of Christ,   
and by which He is made precious to the soul.  
  
This is **the end of God in all His doings and   
dealings** with His people—to strip and empty   
them wholly of **self**, and to manifest and make   
His dear **Son** feelingly and experimentally their   
All in all. In Him and in Him alone can we, do   
we, find either rest or peace.  
  
  
  
  
**The only smile worth having**  
  
**All the vain applause of mortals**, and all   
that is called **popularity**, I think little of.   
It leaves an aching void, and often a guilty   
conscience. The blessing of the Lord makes   
rich, and all else is poverty, rags, and shame.   
  
Not he who commends himself is approved,   
but whom the Lord commends. **God's smile,   
not man's, is** **the only smile worth having.**

**The incredible greatness of His power**  
  
"I pray that you will begin to understand **the incredible  
greatness of His power** to us who believe Him." Eph 1:19  
  
**The work of God on the soul**, is a work of sovereign and   
omnipotent power! See what a mighty power was put forth in   
turning us from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan   
unto God; and how it was the outstretched arm of Omnipotence   
alone, which could deliver us from the power of darkness and   
bring us into the eternal heavenly kingdom.  
  
Consider **the difficulties which grace has to overcome**,   
in the "quickening" of a dead soul into spiritual life. View   
the depths of the fall. Contemplate . . .  
the **death of the soul** in trespasses and sins,  
the **thorough alienation** from the life of God,  
the darkness, blindness, and ignorance of the **understanding**,  
the perverseness of the **will**,  
the hardness of the **conscience**,  
and the depravity of the **affections**!  
  
**View the soul's . . .**  
obduracy, stubbornness and obstinacy;  
its pride, unbelief, infidelity and self-righteousness;  
its passionate love to, habitual practice of, and long   
imprisonment to sin. Consider its strong prejudices   
against everything godly and holy!  
  
Contemplate the desperate, implacable enmity of the   
**carnal mind** against God Himself—its firm and deep  
rooted love to the world, in all its varied shapes and   
forms—and remember also how all its hopes, happiness,   
and prospects are bound up in the things of time and sense!  
  
**O what a complicated mass of difficulties, do all these   
foes** form in their firm combination, like a compact, well  
armed, thoroughly trained army—against any power which   
would seek to dislodge them from their position!  
  
Add to this—all the power, malice, and deceitful arts of  **Satan**, as the strong armed man—keeping the palace night   
and day, and yielding to none but the stronger than he!  
  
Consider, too, the **sacrifices** which must often be made  
by one who is to live godly in Christ Jesus . . .  
the tenderest ties, perhaps, to be broken;  
the lucrative prospects which have to be abandoned;  
old friends to be renounced;  
family connections to be given up;  
position in life to be lost;  
shame and contempt to be entailed on oneself!  
  
Viewing, then, a soul dead in sin, with **all** **these   
difficulties and obstacles** in their complicated array,   
must we not pronounce that to be **a mighty act of   
power** which, in spite of **all these apparently invincible   
hindrances**, lifts it up and out of them all, into a new   
and spiritual life? So fully and thoroughly is this fruit   
and effect of omnipotent power, and of omnipotent   
power alone, that it is spoken of in the word as . . .  
a new and heavenly **birth**;  
a new **creation**;  
a **resurrection**—all which terms imply a putting forth of a divine power,  
as distinct from and independent of any creature effort.  
  
Contemplate also, the mighty power of God in "maintaining"  
divine life in our soul. We have to see and feel . . .  
what mountains of difficulty,  
what seas of temptation,  
what winds and storms of error,  
what assaults and snares of Satan,  
what floods of vilenessand ungodliness within and without,  
what strong lusts and passions,  
what secret slips and falls,  
what backslidings and departures from the living God,  
what long seasons of darkness, barrenness, and death,  
what opposition of the flesh to the strait and narrow way,  
what crafty hypocrites, pretended friends, false professors   
—all striving to throw down or entangle our steps!  
  
Consider also, what helplessness, inability, and miserable   
impotency **in ourselves** to all that is good; and what headlong   
proneness to all that is evil.  
  
We have also to ponder over **what we have been and what   
we still are**, since we professed to fear God—and how, when   
left to ourselves, we have done nothing but sin against and  
provoke God to His face!  
  
And thus as read over article by article, this long dark catalogue,   
still to have a sweet persuasion that the life of God is in our soul  
—we realize, believe, and feel, and bless God for His surpassing,   
superabounding grace, in **maintaining** this divine life in our soul.  
  
"Where **sin** abounded, **grace** did much more abound!" Rom 5:20

**The miserable dregs of self!**  
  
"**Accepted in the Beloved**." Eph 1:6  
  
We are ever looking for something in SELF to make   
ourselves acceptable to God. We are often sadly cast   
down and discouraged when we cannot find in ourselves . . .  
that holiness,  
that obedience,  
that calm submission to the will of God,  
that serenity of soul,  
that spirituality,  
that heavenly-mindedness,  
which we believe to be acceptable in His sight!  
  
Our crooked tempers,   
our fretful, peevish minds,   
our rebellious thoughts,   
our coldness and barrenness,   
our alienation from good,  
our headlong proneness to evil,   
with the daily feeling that **we get no better,   
but rather worse**—make us think that God   
views us just as we view ourselves!  
  
And this brings on great darkness of mind and bondage  
of spirit, until we seem to lose sight of **our acceptance   
in Christ**, and get into **the miserable dregs of self**—almost  
ready to quarrel with God because we are so vile, and only  
get worse as we get older!  
  
Now the more we get into **these dregs of self**, and the more   
we keep looking at the dreadful scenes of wreck and ruin   
which our heart presents to daily view—the farther do we   
get from the grace of the gospel—and the more do we lose   
sight of the only ground of our acceptance with God. It is   
"in the Beloved" that we are accepted—and not for any . . .  
good words,  
good works,  
good thoughts,  
good hearts, or  
good intentions of our own!   
  
If our acceptance with God depended on anything   
**in ourselves**, we would have to believe we might   
be children of God today and children of the devil   
tomorrow!  
  
What, then, is to keep us from sinking altogether   
into despair, without hope or help? Why, a knowledge   
of our acceptance "in the Beloved," independent of   
everything in us—good **or** bad!  
  
"And you are complete in Him!" Col 2:10

**I am full of confusion!**

"**I am full of confusion!**" Job 10:15  
  
God is the great Ruler, Director, and Controller of all things!   
  
We must not look on the varied events that are ever taking   
place in this world, as a mere matter of 'chance'—a confused   
medley—as though these multitudinous circumstances were   
all thrown like marbles into a bag, and thrown back out   
without any order or arrangement.   
  
God is a God of order.   
  
In the **natural** world, the world of creation—all is in order.   
  
In the **spiritual** world, the world of grace—all is in order.   
  
And in the **providential** world, the world of providence—all is order also.   
  
To our mind, indeed, all often seems disorder. But this   
arises from our ignorance, and from not seeing the whole  
as one definitely arranged plan.   
  
If you were to see a **weaver** working at a loom, and saw   
nothing but the threads and needles jumping up in continual   
motion, you would see nothing but confusion. Nor could you   
form the slightest conception of the pattern which was being   
worked. But when the whole was completed, and the silk   
taken off the roller—then you would see a pattern arranged   
in beautiful order—every thread concurring to form one   
harmonious design. But all this was known beforehand   
by the artist who designed the pattern, and every   
arrangement was made in strict subserviency to it.   
  
But if this is the case as to Gods appointments in   
providence, how much more is it true of His glorious   
designs in grace. Every . . .  
trial,  
temptation,  
affliction,  
sorrow,  
are but the result of a definite plan in His eternal mind!  
  
Yet to us how often all seems confusion! This confusion  
is not so much in the things themselves—as in our mind.   
Job, when surrounded by trouble, cried out, "**I am full of   
confusion!**" Yet we can see in reading his history that all   
his trials were working toward an appointed end. So every   
trial, sorrow, temptation or affliction, which has ever lain,   
or ever will lie, in your path—has been **marked out by   
infinite, unerring wisdom!**  
  
Is not the commonest road laid out according to a   
definite plan? And does not the surveyor, when he   
lays it out, put every mile-stone in its proper place?   
  
So, does not the Lord lay out beforehand the road in   
which His people should walk? And does He not put a   
**trial** here and a **sorrow** there—an **affliction** at this   
turning and a **cross** at that corner? All is definitely   
planned in His infinite wisdom, to bring the traveler   
safely home to Zion!

**What vain toys!**  
  
"This world is fading away, along with everything   
it craves! But the man who does the will of God  
lives forever." 1Jn 2:17  
  
Compared with spiritual and eternal blessings, we   
see **how vain and empty are all earthly things**.   
  
**What vain toys!**   
 **What idle dreams!  
  
What passing shadows!**   
  
We wonder at the folly of men in hunting after   
such vain shows—and spending **time**, **health**,   
**money**, and **life** itself, in a pursuit of nothing   
but misery and destruction!We care little for the opinion of men as to what   
is good or great—but much for what God has   
stamped His own approval upon, such as . . .  
a tender conscience,  
a broken heart,  
a contrite spirit,  
a humble mind,  
a separation from the world,  
a submission to His holy will,  
a meek endurance of the cross,  
a conformity to Christ's suffering image,  
and a living to God's glory.

"This world is fading away, along with everything   
it craves! But the man who does the will of God  
lives forever." 1Jn 2:17

**Dying**  
  
"As **dying**, and, behold, we live!"   
2Co 6:9  
  
Though we die, and die daily, yet, behold,   
we live. And in a sense, the more we die,   
the more we live.   
  
The more we die to self,   
the more we die to sin.   
  
The more we die to pride and self-righteousness,   
the more we die to creature strength.   
  
The more we die to sinful nature,   
the more we live to grace.   
  
This runs all the way through the   
life and experience of a Christian.   
Nature must die—that grace may live.   
  
The weeds must be plucked up,   
that the crop may grow.   
  
The flesh be starved,   
that the spirit may be fed.   
  
The old man put off,   
that the new man may be put on.   
  
The deeds of the body be mortified,   
that the soul may live unto God.   
  
As then we die—we live.   
  
The more we die to our own strength,   
the more we live to Christ's strength.   
  
The more we die to creature hope,   
the more we live to a good hope through grace.   
  
The more we die to our own righteousness,   
the more we live to Christ's righteousness.   
  
The more we die to the world,   
the more we live to and for heaven.   
  
This is the grand mystery, that the Christian   
is always **dying**—yet always living. And the   
more he dies—the more he lives.   
  
The death of the flesh,   
is the life of the spirit.   
  
The death of sin,   
is the life of righteousness.   
  
The death of the creature,   
is the very life of God in the soul.  
  
"As **dying**, and, behold, we live."   
2Co 6:9

**If you are at home in the world**

"We are here for only a moment, **sojourners and   
strangers in the land** as our ancestors were   
before us. Our days on earth are like a shadow,   
gone so soon without a trace." 1Ch 29:15  
  
If you possess the faith of Abraham, Isaac, and,   
Jacob, you, like them, confess that you are a   
stranger; and your confession springs out of a   
believing heart and a sincere experience.   
  
You feel yourself a stranger in this ungodly world.  
  
It is not your element.   
  
It is not your home.   
  
You are in it during God's appointed time, but  **you wander up and down this world . . .**  
a stranger to its company,  
a stranger to its maxims,  
a stranger to its fashions,  
a stranger to its principles,  
a stranger to its motives,  
a stranger to its lusts,   
a stranger to its inclinations, and all in which   
this world moves as in its native element.   
  
Grace has separated you by God's sovereign power,  
that though you are *in* the world, you are not *of* it.   
  
I can tell you plainly—**if you are at home in the   
world**; if the things of time and sense are your   
element; if you feel one with . . .  
the company of the world,   
the maxims of the world,   
the fashions of the world, and   
the principles of the world   
—grace has not reached your heart, the faith   
of God's elect does not dwell in your bosom.   
  
**The first effect of grace is to separate.**   
  
It was so in the case of Abraham. He was called   
by grace to leave the land of his fathers, and go   
out into a land that God would show him. And so   
God's own word to His people is now, "Come out   
from among them, and be separate, says the Lord,   
and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive   
you, and will be a Father unto you, and you shall   
be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."   
  
Separation, separation, separation from the world   
is the grand distinguishing mark of vital godliness.   
  
There may be indeed separation of **body** where there   
is no separation of **heart**. But what I mean is . . .  
separation of **heart**,  
separation of **principle**,  
separation of **affection**,  
separation of **spirit**.   
  
And if grace has touched your heart, and you are   
a partaker of the faith of God's elect, you are a   
stranger in the world, and will make it manifest   
by your life and conduct that you are such.

**O what crowds of pitiable objects!**

"Let us then approach the throne of grace with   
confidence—so that we may receive mercy and   
find grace to help us in our time of need!"   
Heb 4:16  
  
What heart can conceive, or tongue recount—the   
daily, hourly triumphs of the Lord Jesus Christ's   
all conquering grace?   
  
We see scarcely a millionth part of what He, as a   
King on His throne, is daily doing. What a crowd of   
needy petitioners every moment surrounds His throne!  
  
What urgent needs and woes to answer!   
  
What cutting griefs and sorrows to assuage!   
  
What broken hearts to bind up!   
  
What wounded consciences to heal!  
  
What countless prayers to hear!   
  
What earnest petitions to grant!   
  
What stubborn foes to subdue!   
  
What guilty fears to quell!   
  
What grace,   
what kindness,   
what patience,   
what compassion,   
what mercy,   
what love,   
what power,  
what authority,  
does this Almighty Sovereign display!  
  
No circumstance is too trifling;   
no petitioner too insignificant;   
no case too hard;   
no difficulty too great;   
no seeker too importunate;   
no beggar too ragged;   
no bankrupt too penniless;   
no debtor too insolvent,   
for Him not to notice and not to relieve.   
  
Sitting on His throne of grace . . .  
His **all seeing eye** views all,  
His **almighty hand** grasps all,  
and His **loving heart** embraces all whom the  
Father chose—whom He himself redeemed by   
His blood—and whom the blessed Spirit has   
quickened into life by His invincible power!  
  
The hopeless;   
the helpless;   
the outcasts whom no man cares for;   
the tempest-tossed and not comforted;  
the ready to perish;   
the mourners in Zion;   
the bereaved widow;   
the wailing orphan;   
the sick in body;   
the still more sick in heart;   
the racked with hourly pain;   
the wrestler with death's last struggle.  
  
**O what crowds of pitiable objects**   
surround His throne—and all needing . . .  
a look from His eye,   
a word from His lips,  
a smile from His face,  
a touch from His hand!   
  
O could we but see what His grace **is—**what His   
grace **has—**what His grace **does—**and could we   
but feel more what it is doing in and for **ourselves**,   
we would have more exalted views of the reign of   
grace now exercised on high, by Zion's enthroned   
King!  
  
"Let us then approach the throne of grace with   
confidence—so that we may receive mercy and   
find grace to help us in our time of need!"   
Heb 4:16

Have we not leaned upon a thousand things?  
  
"You are **depending** on Egypt, that splintered reed  
of a staff, which pierces a man's hand and wounds  
him if he **leans** on it!" Isa 36:6  
  
**Have we not leaned upon a thousand things?**   
And what have they proved? Splintered reeds   
that have run into our hands, and pierced us!   
  
Our own strength and resolutions,   
the world and the church,   
sinners and saints,   
friends and enemies,   
have they not all proved, more or less, splintered reeds?   
  
The more we have **leaned** upon them, like a man   
leaning upon a sword, the more have they pierced   
our souls!  
  
The Lord Himself has to wean us . . .  
from the world,  
from friends,  
from enemies,  
from self,   
in order to bring us to **lean** upon Himself. And   
every prop He will sooner or later remove—that   
we may **lean** wholly and solely upon His Person,  
love, death, and righteousness!

Nothing but this can really break the sinner's heart!  
  
To view **God's mercy** in its real character, we must   
go to Calvary! We must go by faith, under the secret   
teachings and leadings of the Holy Spirit, to see   
Immanuel, God with us, groveling in Gethsemane's   
garden. **We must view Him . . .**  
naked upon the cross,  
groaning,   
bleeding,  
agonizing,  
dying!  
  
We must view **that wondrous spectacle of love and   
suffering**—and feel our eyes flowing down in streams   
of sorrow, humility, and contrition at the sight—in order  
to enter a little into the depths of the tender mercy   
of God.   
  
**Nothing but this can really break the sinner's heart!**  
  
Law terrors, death and judgment, infinite purity, and   
eternal vengeance will not soften or break a sinner's   
heart. But if he is led to view a suffering Immanuel,  
and a sweet testimony is raised up in his conscience   
that those sufferings were for him**—this, and this   
alone will break his heart all to pieces!  
  
  
  
The flesh**  
  
"That which is born of **the flesh** is flesh." Joh 3:6  
  
There is no promise made that in this life, we shall be   
set free from the indwelling and the in-working of sin.   
  
Many think that their flesh is to become "progressively   
holier and holier"—that sin after sin is to be removed   
gradually out of the heart—until at last they are almost   
made perfect in the flesh. But this is an idle dream,   
and one which, sooner or later will be crudely and   
roughly broken to pieces.   
  
**The flesh** will ever remain the same—and we shall ever   
find that the flesh will lust against the Spirit. Our fleshly   
nature is corrupt to the very core. It cannot be mended.   
It cannot be sanctified. It is the same at the last, as it   
was at the first—inherently evil, and as such will never   
cease to be corrupt until we put off mortality—and with   
it the body of sin and death.  
  
All we can hope for, long after, expect, and pray for—is   
that this evil fleshly nature may be subdued, kept down,   
mortified, crucified, and held in subjection under the power   
of grace. But as to any such change passing upon the flesh  
—or taking place in the flesh as to make it holy—it is but a   
pharisaic delusion, which, promising a holiness in the flesh,   
leaves us still under the power of sin.  
  
The true sanctification of the new man of grace—which is   
wrought by a divine power—is utterly distinct from any   
imagined holiness in the flesh—or any vain dream of its   
progressive sanctification.

**Only one hand can ease the trouble**  
  
"The Lord is a **refuge** for the oppressed,  
a **refuge** in times of trouble!" Psa 9:9  
  
Do you not see how the Scriptures always put   
together the **malady** and the **remedy**? How they   
unfold the promises as suitable to certain states   
and cases of soul? And how all the perfections of   
God are adapted to His people only so far as they   
are brought into peculiar circumstances? This vein   
runs through all the Scripture.   
  
So here the Lord is declared to be a refuge. **But when?**   
"In times of trouble!" We do not need Him to be a refuge   
when there is no trouble. Shall I use the expression   
without irreverence—'We can do without Him then.'   
**We can . . .**  
love the world,   
amuse ourselves with the things of time and sense,  
let our heads go astray after perishing, transitory vanities,  
set up an idol in our heart,  
bow down before a 'golden god',  
have our affections wholly fixed on those naturally dear to us,  
get up in the morning, pass through the day,   
and lie down at night—very well without God.   
  
But when times of **trouble** come, when **afflictions** lie   
heavily upon us, when we are brought into those scenes   
of **tribulation** through which we must pass to arrive at   
the heavenly Canaan; then we need something more   
than flesh and blood; then we need something more   
than the perishing creature can unfold; then we need   
something more than this vain world can amuse us with!  
  
**We then need God!** We need His everlasting arms to   
be underneath our souls; we need His consolations;   
we need something from the Lord's own lips dropped   
with the Lord's own power into our hearts!  
  
These times of **soul trouble** make God's people know   
that the Lord is their refuge. If I am in soul trouble;  
if my heart is surcharged with guilt; if my conscience   
is lacerated with the pangs of remorse—  
Can the creature give me relief?   
Can friends dry the briny tear?   
Can they still the convulsive sigh?   
Can they calm the troubled breast?   
Can they pour oil and wine into the bleeding conscience?  
  
No! They are utterly powerless in the matter!  
  
They may **increase** our troubles, and they often, like   
Job's friends, do so! But they cannot alleviate it!  
  
**Only one hand can ease the trouble**—the same hand   
which laid it on! **Only one hand can heal the wound**;  
the same which mercifully inflicted it!  
  
Now, in these times of soul trouble, if ever we have   
felt them—we shall make the Lord our refuge.   
  
There is no other to go to! We may try every arm but   
His—we may look every way but the right way—and   
we may lean upon every staff but the true one. But,   
sooner or later, we shall be brought to this spot—that   
none but the Lord God Almighty, who made heaven and   
earth, who brought our souls and bodies into being, who   
has kept and preserved us to the present hour, who is   
around our bed, and about our path, and spies out all   
our ways, and who has sent his dear Son to pay for our   
sin—that none but this eternal Creator, Preserver, and   
Redeemer, who made and upholds heaven and earth—  
can speak peace, pardon, and consolation to our hearts!  
  
How sweet it is in these times of trouble to have a God to   
go to; to feel that there are everlasting **arms** to lean upon;   
that there is a gracious **ear** into which we may pour our   
afflictions; that there is a **heart**, a sympathizing heart, in   
the bosom of the Lord of life and glory, which feels for us;   
to know that there is a **hand** to relieve, and to experience,   
at times, **relief from that Almighty and gracious hand!**

**The afflictions the Lord sends on His people**  
  
"**You have afflicted me** with all Your waves." Psa 88:7  
  
Jesus was a man of sufferings—a man of sorrows   
and acquainted with grief. And His people, in their   
measure, must have the same. The Lord has   
appointed it should be so. He has chosen His Zion   
in the furnace of affliction. There is no escape.   
  
**The afflictions the Lord sends on His people** are   
of varied kinds. The Lord sees necessary to send   
afflictions suitable to the case, state and condition   
of each. What might be an affliction to one might   
not be so to another. Each must carry his own   
affliction. Each must bear his own load, and each   
endure his own appointed lot.   
  
So a wise God sees exactly what affliction to   
lay on each and all . . .  
when it shall come,  
where it shall come,  
why it shall come,  
how it shall come,  
how it shall work,   
what it shall work,  
how long it shall last,  
when it shall be put on,  
and when taken off.   
  
In these matters the Lord acts as a sovereign.

We did not choose of what parents we would  
be born, nor our situation in life; neither had   
we any choice of our stature or skin color.

Likewise, the Lord appointed all our afflictions   
for us—and when He puts them on, **no human   
arm can take them off**!  
  
He knows our constitution and troubles—our   
characteristics and the minutest things relating   
to our situation in life. The Lord knows all our   
concerns. Therefore He lays on each individual   
the very affliction He sees that individual needs;   
no greater, no less—exactly the very affliction   
which shall bring about the very appointed purpose   
intended by God to be brought about, which shall   
be for the soul's good and God's own glory.

**Who is this coming up from the wilderness?**  
  
**"Who is this coming up from the wilderness,  
leaning upon her Beloved?"** Son 8:5  
  
A saved sinner is a spectacle for angels to contemplate!  
  
That a sinful man who deserves nothing but the eternal  
wrath of God, should be lifted out of justly merited  
perdition, into salvation to which he can have no claim,  
must indeed ever be a holy wonder!  
  
And that you or I should ever have been fixed on in  
the **electing** love of God; ever have been given to  
Jesus to **redeem**; ever **quickened** by the Spirit to  
feel our lost, ruined state; ever blessed with any  
discovery of the Lord Jesus Christ and of His saving  
grace—this is and ever must be a matter of holy  
astonishment here—and will be a theme for endless  
praise hereafter!  
  
To see a man **altogether so different from what  
he once was—**once so careless, carnal, ignorant,  
unconcerned—to see that man now upon his knees  
begging for mercy, the tears streaming down his  
face, his bosom heaving with convulsive sighs, his  
eyes looking upward that pardon may reach him in  
his desperate state—is not that a man to be looked  
at with wonder and admiration?  
  
To see another who might have pushed his way in  
the busy, bustling scenes of life—who might have  
had honors, riches, and everything the world had  
to bestow heaped upon his head—abandon all for  
Jesus' sake, and with Moses, "esteem the reproach  
of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt,"  
**is not that man a wonder?**  
  
To live while here on earth in union and communion  
with an invisible God—to talk to Jesus, whom the eye  
of sense has never seen, and whose voice the ear of  
sense has never heard—and yet to see Him as sensibly  
by the eye of faith as though the natural eye rested  
upon His glorious Person, and to hear His voice speaking  
into the inmost heart, as plainly and clearly as though  
the sound of His lips met the natural ear—is not that  
a wonder also?  
  
To see a man preferring one smile from the face of  
Jesus, and one word from His peace-speaking lips,  
above all the titles, honors, pleasures, and power   
that the world can bestow—why surely if there is   
a wonder upon earth, that man is one!  
  
May we not, then, say with admiring as well as   
wondering eyes, "**Who is this?**"   
  
"Why, this man I knew—worldly, proud, ambitious,   
self-seeking. That man I knew given up to vanity   
and pride. Another man I knew buried in politics,   
swallowed up in pleasure and gaiety, abandoned   
to everything vile and sensual. But he has now   
become prayerful, watchful, tender-hearted,   
choosing the company of God's people, **giving up   
everything that his carnal mind once approved   
of and delighted in**; and manifesting in his walk,   
conversation, and whole deportment that he is   
altogether a new creature."   
  
Whenever we see any of those near and dear to us . . .  
touched by the finger of this all-conquering Lord,  
subdued by His grace,  
and wrought upon by His Spirit,   
then not only do we look upon such with holy wonder,  
but with the tenderest affection, mingled with the tears   
of thankful praise to the God of all our mercies.  
  
"**Who is this coming up from the wilderness**,  
leaning upon her Beloved?" Son 8:5

**The scale!**  
  
  
"What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole   
world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give  
in exchange for his soul?" Mat 16:26  
  
Put **your soul** in one side of the scale—and put **all that   
the world calls good and great** in the other side. Think   
of everything that the heart of man can desire—riches,   
honor, pleasure, power. Heap it up well! Fill one side of  
the scale until there is no room for more. Put in . . .  
all the **gold** of Australia,  
all the **diamonds** of India,  
all the **delights** of youthful love,  
all the **pleasures** . . .  
of wife and home,   
of children and friends,   
of health and strength,   
of name and fame.   
Put in all that the natural mind of man deems the   
height of happiness, and everything that may weigh   
this side of the scale down.  
  
Now, when you have filled this side of the scale, put your   
soul into the other side—the state of your soul for all eternity.   
Represent to yourself your deathbed—hold the scale with   
dying hands as lying just at the brink of eternity. See how   
the scale now hangs!  
  
What if you had the whole world that you have put into   
the scale, and could call it all your own—but at that solemn   
hour felt that your soul was forever lost—that you were dying   
under the wrath of God—and there was nothing before you but   
an eternity of misery! At such a moment as this, what could   
you put in the scaleequal to the weight of your immortal soul?   
  
Take the scale again. Put into one side, every affliction,   
trial, sorrow, and distress that imagination can conceive,  
or tongue express. Let them all be yours . . .  
distress of mind,  
pain of body,  
poverty of circumstances,  
contempt from man,  
assaults from Satan,  
Job's afflictions,  
Jacob's bereavements,  
David's persecutions,  
Jeremiah's prison,  
Hezekiah's sickness.  
Put into this side of the scale everything that makes life   
naturally miserable—and then put into the other side, a   
saved soul.   
  
Surely, as in the case of worldly honors, and riches,   
and happiness—a **lost** soul must weigh them all down!  
  
So in the case of afflictions and sorrows and troubles  
—a **saved** soul must weigh them all down too!

**We are not to set our affections on them!**  
"**Set your affections on things above, not on things  
on the earth.**" Col 3:2  
  
Naturally we have no affection for anything else.   
  
There is no such thing as a spiritual desire or a   
heavenly affection in our soul, when we are in a   
state of unregeneracy. So fallen are we that we   
love, and cannot but love the world, and the things   
of the world. We have no heart for anything but   
the things of time and sense. No, rather, as our   
carnal mind is enmity against God, **we hate   
everything which is spiritual, heavenly, and holy.**   
  
One main part, therefore, of the work of God upon   
the soul, is to take off our affections from these   
earthly things—and to fix them upon Jesus where   
He sits enthroned above—that we may love and   
hate those same things which He loves and hates.  
  
Our affections are not to be set upon things on the   
earth. Business, worldly cares, the interests of our   
family, the things of time and sense—in whatever   
form they come, whatever shape they may assume,   
must not so entwine themselves around our   
affections as to bind them down to the earth.  
  
We may use them for the support and sustentation   
of our life—but we must not abuse them. **We are not   
to set our affections on them!**   
  
Houses,   
gardens,   
land,   
property,   
friends,   
family;  
all these earthly things we are not to set our affections   
on—so that they become idols. Thus any lovely object   
may be foul—because turned to an idol.   
  
It may be but **a flower—**and yet be an idol.  
  
It may be **a darling child** whom everybody admires for its   
beauty and attractiveness—yet it may be a defiling idol.  
  
A cherished project may be an idol.   
  
A crop of wheat,   
a flock of sheep,   
a good farm,   
a thriving business,   
the respect of the world,   
may all be defiling idols—for all these things, when   
eagerly pursued and loved, draw the soul away from   
God, and by drawing it insensibly from Him, bring   
pollution and guilt into the conscience.  
  
Now we are, or by grace in due time shall be, weaned   
and divorced from earth with all its charms and pleasures   
and all its polluting idols.  
  
"Dear children, keep yourselves from idols!" 1Jn 5:21  
  
"I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from  
all your idols!" Eze 36:25

**Snares, traps, baits!**  
  
The Lord's people are, from time to time, **deeply  
exercised with the power of sin**. They find such  
ungodly lusts—they feel such horrid evils—the   
corruptions of their hearts are laid so naked and   
bare—and they find in themselves such a reckless   
propensity to all wickedness. They feel **sin so   
strong**—and **themselves so weak!**  
  
O how many of the Lord's people are tempted with   
sin morning, noon, and night! How many evils, horrid   
evils, are opening, as it were, their jaws to wholly  
swallow them up! Wherever they go, wherever they   
turn, **snares, traps, baits** seem lying on every side  
—strewed thickly in their path!  
  
They feel so **helpless**—and so inwardly sensible that   
nothing but the almighty power of God can uphold them   
as they walk in this dangerous path—a path strewed with   
snares on every hand—that they are made to cry to the   
Lord, "**Hold me up, and I shall be safe!**" Psa 119:117  
  
Nothing short of God's salvation . . .  
in its freeness,  
in its fullness,  
in its divine manifestation,  
in its sin-subduing, lust-killing influence,   
can save them from the power of sin!  
  
"Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called   
you by name—you are Mine! When you go through deep   
waters and great trouble—I will be with you! When you   
go through rivers of difficulty—you will not drown! When   
you walk through the fire of oppression—you will not be  
burned up—the flames will not consume you. For I am   
the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel—your Savior!"  
Isa 43:1-3

**The wilderness**  
  
"Therefore I am now going to **allure her**; I will lead   
her **into the wilderness**, and speak tenderly to her."   
Hos 2:14  
  
The children of God would not voluntarily go into **the   
wilderness**—it is a place too barren for them to enter,   
except as allured in a special manner by the grace of   
God, and led by the power of God.   
  
Nor do they for the most part know **where** the Lord   
is taking them. They follow His drawings; they are   
led by His allurings; they listen to His persuading   
voice, trusting to Him as to an unerring Guide.   
  
But they do not know the 'place of barrenness' into which   
He is bringing them—this the Lord usually conceals from   
their eyes. He allures and they follow, but He does not   
tell them **what** He is going to do with them, or **where**   
He intends to take them. He hides His gracious purposes,   
that He may afterwards bring them more clearly to light.  
  
Look at the **place** where He brings His people—**the   
wilderness**. This is a type and figure much used by   
the Holy Spirit, and conveys to us much deep and   
profitable instruction.   
  
**The wilderness** is **an isolated, solitary spot**, far, far   
away from cities, and towns, and other busy haunts of   
men—a remote and often dreary abode, where there is   
no intruding eye to mark the wanderer's steps, where   
there is no listening ear to hear his sighs and cries.   
The Lord, when He puts forth His sacred power upon   
the heart, to allure His people into the wilderness,   
brings them into a spot where in solitude and silence   
they may be separated from everyone but Himself.   
  
The 'wilderness', we take as an emblem of being alone   
with God—coming out of the world, away from sin and   
worldly company, out of everything carnal, sensual, and   
earthly, and being brought into that solemn spot where   
there are secret, sacred, and solitary dealings with God.

**Sovereign, supreme disposal**  
  
"And God has put all things under the authority of Christ,  
and He gave Him this authority for the benefit of the  
church." Eph 1:22  
  
God has put **all things, events, and circumstances**  
under the authority of Christ! How vast, how numerous,   
how complicated are the various events and circumstances   
which attend the children of God here below, as they travel  
onward to their heavenly home! What an intricate maze   
they often seem, and how much they appear opposed to   
us, as if we never could get through them, or scarcely live   
under them!  
  
Yet, there cannot be a single circumstance over which   
Jesus has not supreme control. Everything in **providence**   
and everything in **grace** are alike subject to His disposal.   
There is not . . .  
a trial,  
a temptation,  
an affliction of body or soul,  
a loss,  
a cross,  
a painful bereavement,  
a vexation,  
a grief,  
a disappointment,   
a case, state, or condition,   
which is not put under Jesus' authority!  
  
**He has sovereign, supreme disposal over all events   
and circumstances!** As possessed of infinite **knowledge**,   
He sees them. As possessed of infinite **wisdom**, He can   
manage them. As possessed of infinite **power**, He can   
dispose and direct them for our good and His own glory!  
How much trouble and anxiety we would save ourselves,   
could we firmly believe, realize, and act on this! If we   
could see by the eye of faith that . . .  
every foe and every fear,  
every difficulty and perplexity,  
every trying or painful circumstance,  
every looked-for or unlooked-for event,  
every source of anxiety, whether at present or in prospect,   
are all under His dominion, and at His sovereign disposal—what   
a load of anxiety and care would be taken off our shoulders!  
  
"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me."  
Mat 28:18

**Pride, worldliness, and covetousness**  
  
**Pride, worldliness, and covetousness** may reign   
rampant, where grosser sins are not committed,  
or kept hidden from observation.  
  
"The human heart is most deceitful and desperately  
wicked. Who really knows how bad it is? But I know!  
I, the Lord, search all hearts and examine secret  
motives." Jer 17:9-10

**All of us used to live that way**  
  
"Once **you** were dead, doomed forever because of your  
many sins! **You used to live just like the rest of the  
world**, full of sin, obeying Satan, the mighty prince  
of the power of the air. He is the spirit at work in the  
hearts of the children of disobedience. **All of us used  
to live that way**, following the passions and desires  
of our evil nature. We were born with an evil nature,  
and **we were under God's wrath just like everyone  
else!**" Eph 2:1-3  
  
Paul reminds us of **the state and condition in which we   
used to live,** that he may thereby magnify the riches of   
God's grace, and bring before us what should be a matter   
of the deepest humiliation and self-abhorrence. How clearly   
does he show that **there is no difference between the   
saved and the lost**—except what grace makes between   
them; that all, elect and non-elect, are equally dead in   
sin; that all equally live according to the ways of this   
world in their unregenerate condition; and that all are   
equally led and acted upon by Satan, that foul and   
accursed spirit which we see now working everywhere   
around us in the children of disobedience.  
  
If we view the children of God only as they are by nature,   
there is no difference between them and the lost. Their sins   
are as great, if not greater; their nature as corrupt; their   
hearts as evil; the whole bent and course of their thoughts,   
words, and works, were as saturated with sin and crime. And   
all these things deserve wrath, and would draw down wrath   
as their everlasting portion—**but for the sovereign grace of   
God!** The very sweetness of grace lies in this—that it has put   
away **deserved** wrath!  
  
Paul's object is to remind us of our obligations to distinguishing,   
sovereign grace, by showing us that we deserve nothing at God's  
hands but wrath; and that had we our just due, wrath would be   
poured out upon us to the uttermost! Surely every one who has   
felt anything of the wrath of God as his just due, on account of   
his personal sins, will freely acknowledge that he is by nature a   
child of wrath, and that **there are thousands in hell who have  
not sinned as great as he has!**  
  
"But God is so rich in mercy, and He loved us so very much, that  
even while we were dead because of our sins, He gave us life  
when He raised Christ from the dead. **It is only by grace that  
you have been saved!**" Eph 2:4-5

**Fall down in reverent astonishment**  
  
"His great love for us." Eph 2:4  
  
"You love them as much as You love Me." Joh 17:23  
  
The love of God to His dear Son must be so infinite   
as to exceed all conception of men or angels. Now,   
that He should love the people of His choice with the   
same love—the same in nature, the same in degree   
as that with which He loves His dear Son—is one of   
the most overwhelming thoughts which can move   
and stir a human bosom! Indeed, so overwhelming   
is it in its sublime mystery and unapproachable depth,   
that as it can only be received by faith! Faith itself   
can only **fall down in reverent astonishment** and   
admiration before it, and cry out, "O the depth!   
O the blessedness of this love!"  
  
"I love you the same way as My Father has loved Me."  
Joh 15:9

**Don't you realize!**  
  
"**Don't you realize** that you are God's temple and  
that God's Spirit lives in you?" 1Co 3:16  
  
Alas! how little is this truth contemplated and acted upon!  
  
Were we more deeply and powerfully impressed with the   
solemn truth that **God Himself dwells in us** through the   
Spirit, how much more careful we would be to maintain . . .  
truth and reality,  
life and power in experience,   
godliness and holiness in life!   
  
What a reverential fear would possess our minds, that   
we might not defile the Lord's temple, or sin against   
and before, **so holy and all-seeing a Guest!**   
  
If we realized this, and lived under its solemn weight and   
influence, how careful we would be not to defile that **body**   
which is the temple of the Holy Spirit. How desirous and   
anxious we would be not to pollute . . .  
our **eyes** by wandering lusts;  
our **ears** by listening to worldly and carnal conversation;   
our **lips** by speaking deceit, or light and frothy talk;  
our **hands** by putting them to anything that is evil;   
our **feet** by running on errands of vanity and folly.   
  
We are to view our body as God's temple, and therefore   
sanctified to His service and to His glory!  
  
"God bought you with a high price! So you must honor  
God with your body." 1Co 6:20

**Strangers!**  
  
"To God's elect, **strangers** in the world." 1Pe 1:1  
  
"I am a **stranger** with you and a sojourner, as all  
my fathers were." Psa 39:12   
  
"I am but a **stranger** here on earth." Psa 119:19  
  
"They confessed that they were **strangers** and  
pilgrims on the earth." Heb 11:13  
  
The main character of a child of God is that he is a   
**stranger** upon earth. One of the first effects of the   
grace of God upon our soul was to separate us from   
the world, and make us feel ourselves **strangers** in it.   
  
The world was once our home—the active, busy center   
of all our thoughts, desires, and affections. But when   
grace planted imperishable principles of life in our bosom,   
it at once separated us from the world in heart and spirit,   
if not in actual life and walk. We are strangers inwardly   
and experimentally, by the power of divine grace making   
this world a wilderness to us.

**Money!**  
  
"People will be lovers of themselves,  
**lovers of money**." 2Ti 3:2  
  
"For **the love of money** is a root of all  
kinds of evil." 1Ti 6:10  
  
**Money** feeds the **lusts of the flesh** by giving   
its possessor the power to gratify them.  **Money** nurses his **pride** by making its possessor,   
so to speak, independent of the providence of God.  **Money** fosters the **love of the world** by giving  
its possessor a portion in it.  
  
"You cannot serve both God and **Money!**"  
Luk 16:13  
  
"**Not greedy for money.**" 1Pe 5:2  
  
"Keep your lives free from the **love of money**and be content with what you have." Heb 13:5  
  
"The Pharisees, **who dearly loved their  
money**, scoffed at all this." Luk 16:14

All the ravishments of His presence and love!  
  
"Receiving the end of your faith, **the salvation  
of your souls.**" 1Pe 1:9  
  
What is to be compared with the salvation of the   
soul? What are riches, honors, health, long life?   
What are all the pleasures which the world can   
offer, sin promise, or the flesh enjoy? What is all   
that men call good or great? What is everything   
which the outward eye has seen, or natural ear   
heard, or has entered into the carnal heart of man  
—put side by side with being saved by Jesus with   
an everlasting salvation?   
  
Consider what we are **saved from**—as well as   
what we are **saved unto**.

From a burning hell—to a blissful heaven!

From endless wrath—to eternal glory!

From the dreadful company of devils and damned   
spirits, mutually tormenting and tormented—to the   
blessed companionship of the glorified saints, all   
perfectly conformed in body and soul to the image  
of Christ, with thousands and tens of thousands of   
holy angels! And, above all, to seeing the glorious   
Son of God as He is, in all the perfection of His beauty,   
and **all the ravishments of His presence and love!**  
  
To be done forever with . . .  
all the sorrows, troubles, and afflictions of this life;   
all the pains and aches of this poor clay tabernacle;   
all the darkness, bondage, and misery of the body of   
sin and death—to be perfectly holy in body and soul,   
being in both without spot, or blemish—and ever to   
enjoy uninterrupted union and communion with God!  
  
O what a heaven lies before the children of God!

**Fashionable sins**  
  
"As obedient children, do not conform to the **evil lusts**  
you had when you lived in ignorance." 1Pe 1:14  
  
Peter warns us against yielding ourselves to the power   
and practice of any of those lusts which had dominion   
over us in the days of our ignorance—such as the base   
and sensual lusts of the flesh—or **the more refined   
lusts** of . . .  
money,  
power,  
pleasure,  
fashion,  
pride,  
worldliness,  
fleshly ease  
—those more **fashionable sins** in which a man may live   
and walk, and yet preserve his character and good name.  
  
Let the children of disobedience follow after and be   
conformed to all these worldly lusts; but let the   
children of obedience shun and abhor them as . . .  
hateful to God,   
deceitful and dangerous to themselves, and  
contrary to a holy, godly profession.  
  
"But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy  
in all you do." 1Pe 1:15

**At the cross alone**  
  
"Jesus has become our **wisdom** and our **righteousness**and **sanctification** and **redemption**." 1Co 1:30  
  
"May I never boast except in **the cross** of our Lord  
Jesus Christ, through which the world has been  
crucified to me, and I to the world." Gal 6:14  
  
An experimental knowledge of crucifixion with his   
crucified Lord, made Paul preach the cross—not only   
in its power to **save**, but in its power to **sanctify**.  
The cross is not only the meritorious cause of all   
**salvation—**but is the instrumental cause of all   
**sanctification**. As there is no other way of **salvation**   
than by the blood of the cross—sothere is no other   
way of **holiness** than by the power of the cross.  
  
Through the cross, that is, through union and   
communion with Him who suffered upon it, not   
only is there a fountain opened for all **sin**—but   
for all **uncleanness!**  
  
**All our . . .**  
pardon and peace,  
acceptance and justification,  
happiness and holiness,   
wisdom and strength,   
victory over the world,   
mortification of the body of sin and death,  
hope and confidence,  
prayer and praise,  
gracious feelings,  
spiritual desires,  
warm supplications,  
honest confessions,   
godly sorrows for sin,  
**spring from the cross!**   
  
**At the cross alone** can we . . .  
be made wise unto salvation,  
become righteous by a free justification,  
receive of His Spirit to make us holy, and  
be redeemed and delivered from . . .  
sin, Satan, death and hell.  
  
To the cross we are to bring . . .  
our sorrows,   
our trials,   
our temptations,   
our sufferings,   
to get life from His death,   
pardon and peace from His atoning blood,   
justification from His divine obedience, and   
resignation to the will of God from His holy example.   
  
**At the cross alone** is . . .   
the world crucified to us, and we to the world;   
sin mortified, and its reigning power dethroned;   
the old man crucified and put off, and the new man put on.  
  
For the most part, it is only through a long series of . . .  
afflictions,  
bereavements,  
disappointments,  
vexations,  
illnesses,  
pains of body and mind,  
hot furnaces, and  
deep waters,   
as sanctified to his soul's profit by the Holy Spirit,   
that the child of God comes to the cross.

**The kingship of Christ**  
  
"**King of kings and Lord of lords!**" Rev 19:16  
  
**The kingship of Christ** is full of sweet consolation to   
the tried family of God. As Zion's enthroned King, He   
supplies His people out of His own inexhaustible fullness!  
  
To Him, as our enthroned King, we give the allegiance   
of our hearts. Before His feet, as our rightful Sovereign,   
we humbly lie. And we beg of Him, as possessed of all   
power, to subdue our iniquities and rebellious lusts, and   
sway His peaceful scepter over every faculty of our soul.  
  
**The kingship of Christ** is a blessed subject of meditation,  
when we consider its bearing upon our helpless, defenseless   
condition. **We stand surrounded by foes . . .**  
internal,  
external,   
infernal,  
all armed against us with deadly enmity!  
  
Every child of God is surrounded by a multitude of enemies   
without and within, who, unless they are overcome—will   
most certainly overcome him. And to be overcome is to be   
lost, forever lost, and to perish under the wrath of God!  
  
What hope or help can we have, but in . . .  
that all-seeing **eye**, which sees our condition;  
that all-sympathizing **heart**, which feels for us;  
that all-powerful **hand**, which delivers the objects of   
His love from all the snares and traps—and defeats all   
the plans and projects of these mighty, implacable foes?  
  
**We daily and hourly feel the workings of our . . .**  
mighty sins,  
raging lusts,  
powerful temptations,  
besetting evils,   
against the least and feeblest of which, we have no strength!  
  
But as the eye of faith views our enthroned King,   
we are led by the power of His grace to . . .  
look unto Him,  
hang upon Him, and  
seek help from Him.   
  
Trials in providence,   
afflictions in the family,   
sickness and infirmities in the body,   
opposition and persecution from the world,   
a vile, unbelieving heart, which we can neither sanctify nor subdue,   
a rough and rugged path, increasing in difficulty as we journey onward,   
doubts, fears, and misgivings in our own bosom,   
inward slips and falls,   
wanderings,   
startings aside,   
hourly backslidings from the strait and narrow path,   
jealous enemies ever watching for our halting,   
with no eye to pity, nor arm to help—**but the Lord's!**  
  
How all these foes and fears make us feel our need   
of an enthroned King, Head and Husband . . .  
whose **tender heart** is soft to pity,  
whose **mighty arm** is strong to relieve!  
  
We should be ever looking up to our enthroned King,   
not only that He might sway His scepter over our hearts,   
controlling our rebellious wills, and subduing us to His   
gentle might; but as King over all our enemies—of which  
our **internal** foes are much more numerous and mighty  
than any **external** enemies!When we feel the power of sin, the tyranny of our vile   
lusts and passions, and what our nature is capable of  
if left to its own will and way—how sweet and suitable   
is the promise, "You will again have compassion on us;   
**You will subdue our iniquities** and hurl all our sins into  
the depths of the sea!" Mic 7:19  
  
"We are powerless against this mighty army that is   
attacking us! We do not know what to do, but we   
are looking to You for help." 2Ch 20:12  
  
"The Lord your God is with you, He is mighty to save!"  
Zep 3:17

**The chief burden of the Lord's children**  
  
**The chief burden of the Lord's children is sin.** This  
is the main cause of all their sighs and groans, from   
the first quickening breath of the Spirit of God in   
their hearts until they lay down their bodies in dust.

**The wrath of God due to them fell upon Him!**

"God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us." 2Co 5:21

"Christ also has once suffered for sins, **the just for the  
unjust**, that He might bring us to God." 1Pe 3:18  
  
If we would we see, feel, and realize the exceeding   
sinfulness of sin, it is not by viewing the lightnings   
and hearing the thunders of Sinai's fiery top—but in   
seeing the agony and bloody sweat, and hearing the   
groans and cries of the suffering Son of God, as made   
sin for us—in the garden and upon the cross.   
  
To look upon Him whom we have pierced will fill heart   
and eyes with godly sorrow for sin, and a holy mourning   
for and over a martyred, injured Lord. (Zec 12:10.)  
  
To see, by the eye of faith, as revealed to the soul by the   
power of God—the darling Son of God bound, scourged,   
buffeted, spit upon, mocked—and then, as the climax of   
cruel scorn and infernal cruelty, crucified between two   
thieves—this believing sight of the sufferings of Christ,   
will melt the hardest heart into contrition and repentance.  
  
But when we see, by the eye of faith, that this was the   
smallest part of His sufferings—that there were depths of   
**soul trouble** and of intolerable distress and agony from the   
hand of God as a consuming fire, as the inflexible justice   
and righteous indignation against sin, and that our blessed   
Lord had to endure the wrath of God until He was poured   
out like water, and His soft, tender heart in the flames of   
indignation became like wax, and melted within Him—then   
we can in some measure conceive what He undertook in   
becoming a sin offering. For as all the sins of His people   
were put upon Him—**the wrath of God due to them fell   
upon Him!**   
  
No less real, and far more severe, were the agonies of His   
soul—for **the wrath of God in the Redeemer's heart** was   
as real as the nails that pierced His hands and feet!  
  
When the sins of the elect were found on Christ, justice   
viewed Him and treated Him as the guilty criminal. Separation   
from God, under a sense of His terrible displeasure on account   
of sin—that abominable thing which His holy soul hates—is not   
this hell? This, then, was the hell experienced by the suffering   
Redeemer when the Lord laid on Him the iniquities of us all.  
  
What heart can conceive or tongue express what must have   
been the feelings of the Redeemer's soul when He, the beloved   
Son of God, who who had lain in the bosom of the Father from   
all eternity, was by imputation, made a sinner—the deep wounds   
of suffering love felt by the Son of God when His Father, His own   
Father, hid His face from Him?

**A gracious influence**  
  
The love of Jesus has **a gracious influence** on the life,   
conduct, and conversation of a true believer. The tree   
is known by its fruit; and those branches alone which   
bring forth fruit unto God, are in manifest union with   
the only true Vine.  
  
**Love to Jesus is the constraining principle of all holy   
obedience.** "If you love Me, keep my commandments,"   
was His dying injunction to His disciples. As, then, His   
bleeding love is experimentally known, there will be . . .  
a conformity to His image,  
an obedience to His will,  
a walking in His footsteps.

**At the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ**  
  
By the death Jesus, all our horrible filth and defilement,   
however black, monstrous, aggravated and abominable,   
however deep and dreadful, was thoroughly and forever . . .  
put away,  
cast behind God's back,  
blotted out as a thick cloud, and  
drowned in the depths of the sea!   
  
In the pierced hands, and feet and side of Immanuel,   
a fountain was opened for all sin and uncleanness!  
  
**At the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ** . . .  
**justice** and mercy met together,  
**righteousness** and peace kissed each other,  
**mercy** rejoiced over judgment,  
**grace** abounded over sin!  
  
**Justice**, with all its inflexible requisitions, was thoroughly   
satisfied; the **law**, with all its holy, unbending demands   
fully magnified; every **perfection** of God eternally glorified;   
every apparently barring **attribute** entirely harmonized; so   
that Jehovah, in all the blaze of ineffable purity, majesty,   
power, and holiness—can now be just, infinitely just—and   
yet the justifier of those who believe in Jesus.  
  
Here, then, at the foot of the cross, is **pardon** and **peace**   
for guilty criminals! Here is thorough **justification** for the   
self-condemned and self-abhorred! Here is **salvation**,   
complete and everlasting, for all the redeemed family of   
God! Here is a **fountain**, ever open, full and free! Here is   
a **robe**, in which the spouse of Jesus stands without blemish   
and without spot before the throne of God! Here **mercy** is   
magnified forever! Here dying **love** displays itself in all its   
breadth, and length, and depth, and height! Here **grace**,   
all-glorious, all-triumphant grace, reigns unto eternal life,   
by Jesus Christ our Lord!

**Authority, glory and sovereign power!**  
  
"Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns!" Rev 19:6  
  
The **unlimited dominion** of King Jesus extends over . . .  
all things,  
all events,  
all circumstances,  
all people!  
All are subjected to the **sovereign control** of the King   
of kings and Lord of lords!  
  
Everywhere on this earthly globe—as far as waves roll,   
winds blow, sun shines, or stars hold on their nightly   
courses—does the scepter of Jesus sway the destinies,  
and control the designs and actions of men.   
  
"He was given **authority, glory and sovereign power**;   
all peoples, nations and men of every language obey  
Him. His dominion is an **everlasting dominion** that will  
not pass away, and His kingdom is one that will never  
be destroyed!" Dan 7:14

**Pilgrims and strangers on this earthly ball**  
  
"To God's elect, **strangers** in the world." 1Pe 1:1  
  
"Live your lives as **strangers** here in reverent fear."   
1Pe 1:17  
  
Our life on earth is but a vapor! We are but **pilgrims   
and strangers on this earthly ball**, mere sojourners,   
without fixed or settled habitation, and passing through   
this world as not our home or resting-place. The Apostle,   
therefore, bids us pass this time, whether long or short,  
of our earthly sojourn under the influence, and in the   
exercise, of reverent fear.   
  
We are surrounded with **enemies**, all seeking, as it   
were, our life; and therefore we are called upon to   
move with great caution, knowing how soon we may   
slip and fall, and thus wound our own consciences,   
grieve our friends, gratify our enemies, and bring   
upon ourselves a cloud of darkness which may long   
hover over our souls.   
  
Our life here below is not one of ease and quiet—but   
a warfare, a conflict, a race, a wrestling not with flesh   
and blood alone, but with principalities and powers   
and spiritual wickedness in high places. We have to   
dread **ourselves** more than anything or anybody else,   
and to **view our flesh as our greatest enemy!**  
  
"Dear friends, I urge you, as **pilgrims** and **strangers**in the world, to abstain from fleshly lusts, which  
war against your soul." 1Pe 2:11

**In this scene of confusion and distraction**  
  
"The Spirit helps us in our infirmities. We do not  
know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit  
Himself intercedes for us with groans that  
words cannot express." Rom 8:26  
  
"We do not know what we ought to pray for."   
How often do we find and feel this to be our case.   
Darkness covers our mind;   
ignorance pervades our soul;   
unbelief vexes our spirit;   
guilt troubles our conscience;   
a crowd of evil imaginations, or foolish or worse   
than foolish wanderings distract our thoughts;   
Satan hurls in his fiery darts thick and fast;   
a dense cloud is spread over the mercy seat;   
infidelity whispers its vile suggestions,   
until, amid all this chaos, such confusion and  
bondage prevail that words seem idle breath, and   
prayer to the God of heaven but empty mockery.   
  
**In this scene of confusion and distraction**, when all   
seems going to the wreck, how kind, how gracious   
is it for the blessed Spirit to come, as it were, to the   
rescue of the poor bewildered saint, and to teach him   
how to pray and what to pray for.   
  
He is therefore said "to help us in our infirmities,"   
for these evils of which we have been speaking are   
not willful, deliberate sins, but **wretched infirmities**   
of the flesh. He helps, then, our infirmities . . .  
by subduing the power and prevalence of unbelief;  
by commanding in the mind a solemn calm;  
by rebuking and chasing away Satan and his fiery darts;  
by awing the soul with a reverential sense  
of the power and presence of God;  
by presenting Jesus before our eyes and   
drawing forth faith upon His Person and work;   
and, above all, by Himself interceding for us and in  
us "with groans that words cannot express."  
  
When the soul is favored thus to pray, its petitions are   
a spiritual sacrifice, and its cries enter the ears of the   
Lord Almighty, for "He who searches our hearts knows   
the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for   
the saints in accordance with God's will." Rom 8:27

**That is what some of you were!**  
  
The Holy Spirit undertakes to **sanctify** the objects  
of the Father's eternal choice, and of the Son's  
redeeming death.   
 **Sanctification is as needful, as indispensable   
for the Church's salvation, as redemption!**  
For O! how low was the Church sunk in the Adam fall! The   
image of God, in which she was created—how defaced and   
as if blotted out! **Death** spreading itself with fatal effect   
over her every mental and bodily faculty! **Sin**, like a hideous   
leprosy, infecting her to the very heart's core! A thousand   
**base lusts** plunging her deeper and deeper into a sea of   
guilt and crime! **Enmity against God** boiling up in waves   
of ceaseless rebellion! **Satan** tyrannizing over her with   
cruel sway, sometimes drawing and sometimes driving,   
but by one or the other dragging her without hope or   
help towards the brink of the bottomless pit!  
  
Hear that bold blasphemer!  
  
See that drunken, raving prostitute!  
  
Look at that murderer with his blood-red hand   
stealing off from his mangled victim!  
  
Or, if you shrink from such sounds and such sights, picture   
to your imagination the vilest wretch who ever disgraced   
human nature—and you see in that portrait the features of   
the Church as implicated in the Adam fall—and sunk into   
original and actual transgression!  
  
What a work, then, was undertaken by that most gracious   
and condescending Spirit, who solemnly pledged Himself,   
in the eternal covenant, **to sanctify such wretches**, and   
to fit and frame them to be partakers of holiness, and   
live forever in God's spotless presence!  
  
It were easier for the wolf to dwell with the lamb, and   
the leopard to lie down with the sheep—than for ungodly   
sinners, unwashed, unregenerated, unsanctified, to dwell   
forever before the throne of God and of the Lamb!  
  
**But O, the wonders of wisdom, grace, and love!**

Sinners, the vilest sinners, the worst of wretches, the   
basest of mortals—can and will enter through the gates   
into the holy city!  
  
Paul, having enumerated some of the vilest crimes which   
stain human nature and sink it below the beasts that perish,   
says, "And **that is what some of you were!** But you were   
**washed**, you were **sanctified**, you were **justified** in the   
name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God."   
1Co 6:11  
  
To be washed and sanctified is as needful, as indispensable   
as to be justified.  
  
  
 **Hidden treasure!**  
  
"Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all  
day long!" Psa 119:97  
  
"Truly, I love your commands more than gold,  
even the finest gold!" Psa 119:127  
  
"Your decrees are **my treasure**; they are truly  
my heart's delight!" Psa 119:111  
  
To a spiritual mind, sweet and soul-rewarding is  
the searching of the Word as for **hidden treasure**.   
  
No sweeter, no better employment can engage   
heart and hands than, in the spirit . . .  
of prayer and meditation,  
of separation from the world,  
of holy fear,  
of a desire to know the will of God and do it,  
of humility, simplicity, and godly sincerity,   
to seek to enter into those heavenly mysteries which   
are stored up in the Scriptures; and this, not to furnish   
the head with notions, but to feed the soul with the   
bread of life!  
  
Truth, received in the love and power of it . . .  
informs and establishes the judgment,  
softens and melts the heart,  
warms and draws upward the affections,  
makes and keeps the conscience alive and tender,  
is the food of faith,  
is the strength of hope,   
is the mainspring of love.   
  
"My child, listen to Me and **treasure** My instructions.  
Search for them as you would for lost money or  
**hidden treasure!**" Pro 2:1, Pro 2:4

**The kingdom of Christ**  
  
"The kingdom of God is within you." Luk 17:21  
  
A true experimental knowledge of Christ as Lord   
and King, has a holy sanctifying influence over a   
believer's heart and life!  
  
That Christ may reign and rule in the heart, there  
must be a previous breaking to pieces of all other   
authority and power . . .  
the reign of sin must give way to the reign of grace;  
idols must be dethroned;  
rivals banished;  
lusts subdued;  
the flesh mortified and crucified;  
the old man put off, the new man put on.   
  
Pride and self-righteousness,   
unbelief and infidelity,   
hypocrisy and vain confidence,   
carnality and worldly mindedness,  
sin and self in all their various shapes and forms,  
must be smitten as with a deadly blow,  
and scattered to the winds of heaven!  
  
This fall and ruin of **self**,makes way for the  
setting up of **the kingdom of Christ** in the heart.  
Jesus reveals Himself to the soul, thus broken  
and humbled, as its Lord and King.  
  
But who is sufficient for these things? Who will pluck  
out his own right eye, or cut off his own right hand?  
Who will drive the nails of crucifixion into his own  
quivering flesh? No one! The Lord, then, must do it  
all for and in us by His Spirit and grace.  
  
"Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,"  
says the Lord Almighty. Zec 4:6

**It has an influence over the life**  
  
"When you received the word of God, which you heard  
from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but  
as it actually is, the word of God, which **effectually  
works** in you who believe." 1Th 2:13  
  
Where God's word **effectually works** in the heart,   
**it has an influence over the life**. It . . .  
separates from the world and the spirit of it;  
keeps the consciences alive and tender in the fear of God;  
produces uprightness and integrity of conduct;  
extends its influence to the various relationships of life;  
subdues pride, covetousness, and selfishness;  
softens and meekens the spirit;  
gives tender feelings and gracious affections;  
fosters prayer, meditation, and spirituality of mind; and  
makes itself manifest in the life, walk, and conversation.

**The believer's rule of life**  
  
Were there no precepts in the New Testament, we   
would be without an inspired rule of life, without an   
authoritative guide for our walk and conduct before the   
Church and the world. **We rightly discard and reject   
the 'law of Moses' as the believer's rule of life.**   
  
What, then, is our rule? Are we a set of lawless wretches  
who may live as we desire, according to the libelous charge  
of the enemies of truth? God forbid! We have a divine,   
authoritative rule of life, a code of directions of the amplest,   
fullest, minutest character, intended and sufficient to regulate   
and control every thought, word, and action of our lives; and   
all flowing from the eternal wisdom and will of the Father,   
sealed and ratified by the blood of the Son, and inspired   
and revealed by the Holy Spirit.   
  
When, then, it is thrown in our teeth that, by discarding the  
'law of Moses' as our rule of life, we prove ourselves licentious,   
lawless Antinomians; this is our answer, and let God and His   
word decide whether it be not a sufficient one. We have a rule   
of life as far exceeding the 'law of Moses' as the new covenant  
of grace and truth—exceeds and outshines the old covenant of   
works; and as much as the ministration of the Spirit, of life,   
and of righteousness—excels in glory the ministration of the   
letter, of death, and of condemnation. (2Co 3:6-11)  
  
The gospel, not the Mosaic law, is the believer's rule of life.   
  
In a word, **the precepts of the New Testament, in all their   
fullness, minuteness, and comprehensiveness, are the   
believer's rule of life.**

**Is any spot too low for me to creep into and lie in?**

"**Humble yourselves**, therefore, under the mighty hand of   
God." (1Pe 5:6.) I am here directed and enjoined to   
humble myself under the mighty hand of God. But can I do   
so? No, I cannot! I may make the attempt. I may fall on my   
knees, confess my sins, put my mouth in the dust—at least   
do all this in words. **But can I produce in my soul . . .**  
that solemn humbling of my whole spirit before God,  
that self-loathing,  
that self-abhorrence,  
that brokenness and contrition of heart,  
that lying at His feet with weeping and supplications,  
that giving up of myself into His hands,   
without which all my humbling of myself is but lip service?   
**No! I can do none of these things! I am so thoroughly   
destitute and helpless that I cannot produce one grain   
of real humility in my own soul.**  
But let the Holy Spirit graciously work upon my heart;   
let Him fill me with a deep sense of the mighty hand of   
God over me and under me; let Him humble me in my   
inmost soul as the very chief of sinners; let my heart   
be broken and my spirit made contrite under a sight   
of my sins; and a sight, too, of the life and sufferings   
and death of my dear Redeemer—how then, can I **not**humble myself under the mighty hand of God?   
  
**Is any spot too low for me to creep into and lie in?**  
 **Where are my pride and self-righteousness now?  
  
Does not sweet humility fill and possess my soul?  
  
  
  
All doctrine, all experience, all precept**  
**All doctrine, all experience, all precept** center, as one   
grand harmonious whole, in the glorious Person of the   
Son of God. From Him they all come; to Him they all flow.   
  
Severed from Him . . .  
**doctrine** is seen to be but a withered branch;  
**experience** but a delusive dream;  
**precept** but a legal service.   
  
But His light enlightening, His life quickening, His power   
attending the word of His grace—**doctrine** is seen to be   
no longer doctrine dry and dead, but glorious truth;   
**experience** to be not a mere matter of fluctuating feeling,   
but a blessed reality, as the very kingdom of God set up   
with a divine power in the heart; and **obedience** not a   
legal duty, but a high, holy, and acceptable service.  
 **Gospel fruit**  
  
"Make a **tree** good and its **fruit** will be good, or  
make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a  
tree is recognized by its fruit." Mat 12:33  
  
**Gospel fruit** can only grow upon a gospel **tree**,   
and thus the fruits of a holy and godly life must   
spring out of the divine operations of the Holy   
Spirit upon the heart.