**The Christian's Daily Delight!**

William Nicholson, 1838

PREFACE
The heart of man, in its natural condition, may be compared to a wilderness; but when renewed by divine grace, it may be compared to the garden of the Lord, and to a vine of his own right hand planting. God himself is the Great Gardener, who cultivates the heart of man, and makes it bring forth the fruits of holiness.

The means which he adopts to exchange the thorns and briers of sin for the flowers of grace, and to render the heart prosperous and happy, is his Holy Word; which he has declared shall not return to him void, but shall accomplish that which he pleases, and make the desert to rejoice, and to blossom as the rose.

This Word being the seed which is to produce the fruit of immortality, it is desirable to have it richly sown in the heart of all those who hope to be, when life shall terminate, transplanted into the eternal Paradise above.

With this design, has the *Sacred Garland*been, principally, culled from the Bible—the field of promise—the Garden of the Lord, that its fragrance and delicious nourishment may daily delight the soul of the Christian, and enable him to adorn the doctrine of God his Savior in all things; that his soul may be enriched as a well-watered garden, and made to resemble that tree which bears twelve manner of fruits; fruit for every month; the fruit of *gratitude*for the summer of prosperity; and the fruit of *resignation*and *prayer*for the winter of adversity; and the fruit of *activity*through the day of life, and peace and triumph as the night of death approaches.

The portions contained in this volume, on account of their conciseness, interest, and variety, are calculated to arrest the attention, and engage the mind. And by thus captivating their attention, some of the following portions may, through the Spirit's influence, become conducive to the reader's spiritual welfare.

It is calculated to promote the profit of all true believers. The man of piety, though characterized by superior intelligence, may see the dealings of the Lord in various providences, the excellency of his Word in its influence upon the hearts of men, and the sweetness of true religion, which is profitable for all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and also of that which is to come.

**2 Peter 3:18** "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

The growth of a believer is not like a mushroom, but like an oak, which increases slowly indeed, but surely. Many suns, showers, and frosts pass upon it before it comes to perfection; and in *winter*, when it seems dead, it is ever gathering strength at the root.

**Luke 18:1** "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint."

Prayer is a haven to the shipwrecked mariner, an anchor to those who are sinking in the waves, a staff to the limbs that totter, a mine of jewels to the poor, and a guardian of spiritual health. Blessed prayer! You are the unwearied conqueror of human woes, the firm foundation of human happiness, the source of ever-during joy, the mother of true wisdom. The man who can sincerely pray, though languishing in external indigence, is richer than all others! While the wretch who never bowed the knee, though proudly seated as monarch of nations, is of all men most destitute!

**Proverbs 11:2** "When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom."

Pride, like the magnet, constantly points to one object, SELF.
But unlike the magnet, it has no attractive pole, but at all points repels.

**Romans 12:3** "Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought."

Mr. Hervey being in company with a person who was paying him some compliments on his writings; replied, laying his hand on his bosom, "O sir, you would not strike the sparks of applause, if you knew how much *corrupt tinder*I have within!"

**1 John 3:1** "How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!"

The love of Christ appears in his amazing sufferings for rebellious sinners. That love is immense and unsearchable! The inexpressible wrath of God fell upon him as a tremendous thunder-storm from which there could be no flight nor shelter; so that it entirely crushed his human nature; and the extremity of pain and anguish dissolved the bond between his innocent soul and body. He was brought into the blackest regions of death and darkness, (and his love for us brought him there,) that the sinner might be brought to the regions of light above. His *love* and his *sufferings* were beyond all parallel, and from the one you may well take the dimensions of the other.

O my soul, see your Savior agonizing in the garden, bleeding on the cross, and weep tears of gratitude and joy! On that cross, what love was displayed! Every thorn, was a pencil, and every groan was a trumpet—to publish abroad his love to man!

Could we with ink the ocean fill,
Was the whole earth of parchment made,
Was every single stick a quill,
Was every man a scribe by trade!

To write the love of God above,
Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor would the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky!

**Philippians 4:5** "Let your moderation be known unto all men."

Real needs are few, but imaginary needs innumerable. A real needs is cheaply satisfied, but a useless vanity is very costly. To contract the desires is the grand principle of human happiness! When once we give the reins over to vain desires, we know no end. The gratification of one inordinate pursuit paves the way for another. No sooner is the present vain wish indulged, than a future imaginary necessity arises, equally unsatiable.

Teach me, my God, all earthly joys
Are but an empty dream;
And may I seek my bliss alone
In thee, the great Supreme!

**John 6:37** "All whom the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away."

William Jay one day attended the dying bed of a young woman, who addressed him thus: "I have little to relate as to my experience. I have been much tried and tempted, but this is my sheet-anchor: Christ has said, 'All whom the Father gives Me will come to Me, and whoever comes to Me I will never drive away.'

I know I have come to him, and I expect that He will be as good as His word. As poor and unworthy as I am, He will not trifle with me; it would be beneath his greatness, as well as his goodness. I am at his feet, and He will not let me fall."

**Psalm 85:10** "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

The person and the work of Christ afford matter for eternal meditation and joy. Here shine spotless justice, incomprehensible wisdom, and infinite love, all at once. None of them darkens or eclipses another; each one gives a luster to the rest. They mingle their beams and shine with united splendor. He is just Judge, the merciful Redeemer, and the wise Governor. No other object gives such a display of all these perfections. Nowhere does justice appear so awful, mercy so amiable, or wisdom so profound, as in a crucified Christ! The cross of Christ was the noontide of everlasting love; the meridian splendor of eternal mercy!

In every feature of his face,
Beauty her fairest charms displays;
Truth, wisdom, majesty, and grace,
Shine thence in sweetly-mingled rays!

**Proverbs 22:2** "The rich and poor meet together; the Lord is the Maker of them all."

The difference of high and low, rich and poor—are only calculated for the present world, and cannot outlive time. In the grave, at the day of judgment, and in Heaven—there are no such distinctions. The grave takes away all differences. Skulls wear no wreaths and marks of honor. "The small and the great are there, and the servant is free from his master."

**Ecclesiastes 11:1** "Cast your bread upon the waters, for after many days you will find it again."

It is said that in the hand of one of the mummies found in a pyramid, was discovered a bulbous root, which being placed in the earth, grew and bloomed a beautiful, but unknown flower, after having been buried for many hundred years.

Just so may the good seed of the word of God spring up after many years.

We mention a case in point. Some years ago, a venerable man, upwards of one hundred years old, was the subject of converting grace. The cause of his conversion was hearing a text of scripture, which his pious mother had taught him in England a hundred years before!

**1 John 5:21** "Little children, keep yourselves from idols!"

*Wooden*idols are easily avoided, but take heed of the idols of *gold*. It is no difficult matter to keep from *dead*idols, but take heed that you worship not the *living*ones, and especially yourself! For as soon as you arrogate to yourself, either honor, or praise, or knowledge, or power, or might, you set yourself in the place of God—heinous idolatry! God declares that he will not give his glory to another, nor his praise to graven images. Worship and praise are due to none but himself. He is the Most High, the Most Holy One, and the Sovereign and everlasting God.

**1 John 4:16** "God is love."

All of God's attributes and are but so many manifestations of his love!

What is his omnipotence, but the arm of his love?

What is his omniscience, but the medium through which he contemplates the objects of his love?

What is his wisdom, but the scheme of his love?

What are the offers of the gospel, but the invitations of his love?

What the threatenings of the law, but the warnings of his love? They are the hoarse voice of his love, saying, Man! do yourself no harm! They are a *fence*thrown round the pit of perdition, to prevent rash men from rushing into eternal ruin!

What was the incarnation of the Savior, but the richest illustration of his love?

What were the many miracles of Christ, but the condescensions of his love?

What were the sighs of Christ, but the breath of his love?

What were the prayers of Christ, but the pleadings of his love?

What were the tears of Christ, but the dew-drops of of his love? What is the earth, but the theater for the display of his love? What is Heaven, but the Alps of his mercy, from whose summit his blessings, flowing down in a thousand streams, descend to water and refresh his redeemed people situated at its base!

**Psalm 19:10** "They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb."

Lady Jane Grey was once asked, in a tone of surprise, how she could consent to forego the pleasures of wealth which her parents ever enjoyed; and prefer sitting at home, reading her Bible. She smilingly replied, All amusements of that description are but a shadow of the pleasure which I enjoy in reading this book!

**Job 8:14** "The hypocrite's hope shall be cut off; what he trusts in is a spider's web!"

THE spider's web is wrought with the most intricate art. In the same way, the religious hypocrite spins his hope with an art hardly to be conceived. This good thought, that good word, and work—are curiously interwoven to make a covering for his hypocrisy.

And, as the spider draws all her flimsy threads from her own belly, so the hypocrite weaves all his confidence out of his own inventions and imaginations.

The spider's web, and the hypocrite's hope, agree in point of weakness; both are too finely spun to last long. How easily is the spider's web dislodged and swept away forever! Just so, the hypocrite may hang his hope upon the beams of God's house, but when God comes to cleanse and sweep his sanctuary, such cobwebs will be soon fetched down. Hypocrites, take warning in time!

**Jeremiah 25:6** "I will do you no hurt."

A military officer being in a dreadful storm, his wife was filled with alarm for the safety of the vessel. She was so surprised at his composure and serenity, that she cried out, "My dear, are you not afraid? How is it possible you can be so calm in such a storm?"

He arose and pointed his sword at his wife, exclaiming, "Are you not afraid!"

She instantly replied, "No, certainly not!"

"Why?" said the officer.

"Because," rejoined his wife, "I know the sword is in the hand of my husband, and he loves me too well to hurt me."

"Then," said he, "Remember that I know in whom I have believed, and that he holds the winds in his fist, and the waters in the hollow of his hand."

**Psalm 84:11** "The LORD gives grace and glory. No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly."

The Lord will give glory! And what is glory? Glory is . . .
the completion of grace,
the consummation of all our wishes,
the grand end of our creation,
the grand design of our Savior's death for his people.

Glory is deliverance from all that is annoying or distressing.

It is a state of moral perfection.

It is a state of the most ravishing pleasure and delight.

It is a state of everlasting blessedness.

It is a state of union to the eternal God.

A poor wicked man, being visited when he was dying, said, that he would not have Heaven as a gift—he trusted in his good works. Ah, reader, *those who will not have Heaven as a gift, shall have Hell as a reward!*

**1 John 3:2** "Beloved, now are we the sons of God."

A missionary reported the following:

A native employed in the translation of the scriptures at a station where I resided, on arriving at the passage,*'Beloved, now are we the sons of God'*came running to me in great haste exclaiming, "No, no, it is too much! It is too much! Allow me to render it, 'Now are we permitted to kiss His feet.' "

This is a simple and beautiful representation of those feelings with which Christians should ever contemplate the dignity of their character, and the wondrous blessings conferred on them!

**Hebrews 11:13** "They confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."

Had our heavenly father intended this world for his children's portion, their accommodations would be better; but they are strangers and pilgrims on earth, traveling to their heavenly home. They must expect travelers' fare; and the lowly accommodations which they meet with along the way, is intended to make Heaven more desirable, and to urge them forward with greater speed.

**Romans 8:13** "If you through the Spirit *mortify*the deeds of the body, you shall live."

The sharpest, the most afflicting, and at the same time, the most interesting part of a Christian's duty, is the mortification of sin. This is, as it were, a man's weeding out sin from his heart; and heart-work is always hard work. He will find innate corruption to be a growing evil; an evil, which, by a curse of fertility, will sprout out after cutting. Scarcely any weed is fetched up at once; the gardener's hand and hook must be continually at the work, and he accounts his ground preserved if it is not over-run.

**Malachi 3:3** "He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver."

Christ sees it needful to put His children into the furnace, but He is seated by the side of it. His eye is steadily intent on the work of purifying; and His wisdom and His love are both engaged to do all in the best manner for them. When He sees His image in His people, his work of purifying is accomplished.

**1 John 1:7** "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses us from all sin!"

A poor man on the coast of Maladar had inquired of various priests how he might atone for his sins. At last he was directed to drive iron spikes, sufficiently blunted, through his sandals, and to walk four hundred and eighty miles. If, through loss of blood, etc. he was obliged to halt, he might wait for healing and strength.

He undertook the journey, and while he rested under a shady tree, a missionary came and preached in his hearing from the above words, "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses us from all sin!" While he was preaching, the man rose up, threw off his torturing sandals, and exclaimed, "This is what I need!" He afterwards became a lively witness of the efficacy of Christ's blood.

**Colossians 1:10** "Being fruitful in every good work."

Have you ungodly neighbors, whose misery calls for your compassion and relief? Speak to them, and help them with prudent diligence. Lose not your opportunities. Wait not until *death*has stopped their ears. Wait not until they are in Hell, before you warn them of it. Wait not until Heaven is lost, before you have seriously called them to remember it.

Go to their houses; take all opportunities; stoop to their infirmities; bear with unthankful unkindness: it is for men's salvation that you labor.

Remember there is no place for your instructions or exhortations in the grave, or Hell. Your dust cannot speak, and their dust cannot hear. Up, therefore, and be doing with all your might!

**2 Corinthians 4:18** "But the things which are not seen are eternal."

What a scene does eternity present!

The years of life, past;
the secrets of all hearts laid open;
souls saved or lost;
Christ, a frowning Judge, or a welcome Savior;
every false hope destroyed;
a world in flames, and consumed, as though it had never been;
time itself, no more;
eternal ages of ages rolling on in ceaseless bliss or woe!

Who is sufficient even to speak of these things? Let every one regard the apostolic injunction, "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil!"

**Galatians 1:23** "He who formerly persecuted us, now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy."

How rich the grace displayed in the conversion of the apostle Paul! The following case is similar:

The ardent zeal of Mr. Bradbury, formerly an eminent minister in London, exposed him to the hatred of the papists, who hired a man to murder him. To make himself fully acquainted with Bradbury's person, the man frequently attended where he preached, and placed himself in the front of the gallery, with his countenance fixed on the preacher. Mr. Bradbury's forcible manner of presenting Divine truths to his hearers, attracted the man's attention, entered his understanding, and became the means of changing his heart. He came to the preacher with trembling and confusion, told his affecting tale, gave evidence of his conversion, became a member of the church, and was to the hour of his death an ornament to the gospel which he professed.

**Song of Songs 3:4** "I found him whom my soul loves! I held him, and would not let him go."

Christians, if you have found Jesus, you will not be able to bear the idea of parting with him. One moment at your feet, O my Savior, one whisper of your love, one smile of your face, is worth all that the earth contains.

Leave you! sooner would I part with my right hand; sooner would I part with light, with liberty; sooner would I part with the vital blood of my heart, than forsake and renounce you.

I can see, in all the agonies of a sick-bed, in all the gloom of a dungeon, in all the horrors of the grave—nothing so terrible to my heart as separation from you! No Hell but this, would be necessary to make me completely wretched.

Though I had the world in my grasp, I would give it up without a sigh, and forever, rather than part with you. I cannot let go my hold of the hem of your garment. I cannot unloose the grasp by which I hold you by the feet, and worship you!

**James 5:16** "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much."

No sooner is the child born, than he breathes. No sooner is Paul converted, than behold! he prays. O incomparable privilege! To be allowed to pour our hearts into the ear of God; to cast our cares on him; to plead the performance of the promise; to devolve the burden of our sorrows and necessities over on his sympathy and all-sufficiency! The *prayer of faith*has won more numerous and more noble victories, than all the mighty conquerors, since war was taught among the nations.

Prayer returns not empty. Some prayers, indeed, have a longer voyage than others, but then they return with a richer lading at last!

**Genesis 18:19** "For I know him (Abraham) that he will command his children, and his household after him."

What is more interesting than a well-disciplined Christian family! How delightful and influential its order! The parents walking in all the commandments of the Lord blameless; the children, like olive plants in the garden of the Lord, under the dew of Heaven, growing up in the knowledge of the Lord. In the morning assembled to listen in profound attention to the words of the Almighty Father, and to bow at his footstool before the throne of grace. The affectionate parents mingling the reading of the word with questions, explanations, etc. and holding up to the admiration of the children the holy men and women of eternal renown, and occasionally calling their attention to the causes of the ruin of nations, families, and individuals. Thus are they taught to say with David, "My voice shall you hear in the morning, O Lord: in the morning will I direct my prayer unto you, and will look up."

The influence of this morning's worship and instruction pervades the day, and at every meal the Father of mercies is invoked, and his name adored: the business of the day is dispatched in harmony and affection, with all diligence and propriety.

In the evening they again assemble around the family Bible, and take another lesson from the Spirit of God. The intelligent and affectionate father, the priest of the family, helps them understand the reading, and pours the heavenly instructions into their minds with all prayer and supplication. They raise the hymn of thanksgiving, and mingle their voices in celebrating the faithfulness of God every evening.

Thus they grow in divine wisdom every day, and lay themselves down to sleep under the protection of the Almighty. Their children rise up and call them blessed, and are thus prepared to hand down to their children, and generations yet unborn, the faith and knowledge which dwelt in their parents; and thus they scatter the seeds of truth and piety far and wide throughout society.

**1 Corinthians 2:12** "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is of God."

The vanity of the world, which leads captive so many hearts, takes no hold of the Christian's heart. For where would it enter? All his senses are locked up in his soul, and that is full of Christ, who keeps out all things else from coming in.

His *eyes*are like the sun-flowers which do not open to every blaze, but only to the light and heat of the Sun of righteousness.

His *ears*are stopped from hearing any sound with delight, but the speakings of God, and the secret whisperings of his Spirit.

His *palate*can relish nothing like the heavenly manna, the feast of fat things which is in Christ Jesus.

There is no fragrance to him, like the smell of Christ's garments.

He is not at leisure to trifle away his time in playing with pebbles—having spiritual jewels and pearls to look after.

Delusive world, farewell!

**1 Timothy 6:11** "Follow after patience."

Patience is . . .
the guardian of faith,
the preserver of peace,
the cherisher of love,
the teacher of humility.

Patience . . .
governs the flesh,
strengthens the spirit,
sweetens the temper,
stifles anger,
extinguishes envy,
subdues pride,
bridles the tongue,
refrains the hand,
tramples upon temptations,
endures persecutions.

Patience produces . . .
unity in the church,
loyalty in the state,
harmony in families and societies.

Patience comforts the poor and moderates the rich.

Patience makes us humble in prosperity, cheerful in adversity, unmoved by calumny and reproach.

Patience teaches us to forgive those who have injured us, and to be the first in asking forgiveness of those whom we have injured.

Patience delights the faithful, and invites the unbelieving.

Patience adorns the woman, and approves the man.

Patience is beautiful in either gender, and every age.

Behold her appearance and her attire:
Her *countenance*is calm and serene, and no wrinkle of grief or anger is seen in her forehead.
Her *eyes*are as the eyes of doves for meekness, and on her eyebrows sit cheerfulness and joy.
Her *mouth*is lovely in silence.
Her *countenance*is that of innocence and security.
She shakes her head at the adversary, despising and laughing him to scorn.
She is clothed in the robes of the martyrs, and in her hand she holds a scepter in the form of a CROSS.
She rides not in the whirlwind and stormy tempest of passion, but her throne is the humble and contrite heart, and her kingdom is the kingdom of peace.

**1 Timothy 2:9-10** "I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God."

A lady once asked a minister whether a person might not be fond of fashion and ornaments without being proud.

"Madam," replied the Minister, "when you see the fox's tail peeping out of the hole, you may be sure the fox is within!"

Another lady asked John Newton what was the best rule for female dress and behavior.

"Madam," said he, "so dress and so conduct yourself, that persons who have been in your company shall not recollect what you had on."

This will generally be the case where singularity of dress is avoided, and where intelligence of mind and gentleness of manners are cultivated.

A minister calling to visit a lady, was detained a long time while she was dressing. At length she made her appearance, bedecked in all the frippery of fashion and folly. The minister was in tears. She asked the cause of his grief; when he replied, "I weep, madam, to think that an immortal being should spend so much of that precious time, which was given her to prepare for eternity, in thus vainly adorning that body which must so soon become a prey to worms!

**Psalm 15:1-3** "LORD, who may dwell in your sanctuary? Who may live on your holy hill? He whose walk is blameless and who does what is righteous, who speaks the truth from his heart and has no slander on his tongue, who does his neighbor no wrong and casts no slur on his fellow-man."

There is a powerful propensity in human nature to what is properly denominated *backbiting*, that is, to make the faults of an absent person the subject of conversation. This is a vice so base, so mischievous, so cowardly, so characteristic of littleness, as well as malignity—that every holy man should hate it, and every wise man should be ashamed of it.

O what wisdom, majesty and beauty is there in this direction, "Do unto others whatever you would like them to do unto you." If this rule were universally obeyed, three-parts of the feuds and quarrels which destroy the peace, and desolate the temporal interests of mankind would be cut off.

Turn a deaf ear to the backbiter!

**Lamentations 3:39** "Why should any living man complain when punished for his sins?"

In this passage, there are mighty arguments to demonstrate the unreasonableness of complaining against God. Why should any one complain of his Benefactor? And is not God such in a thousand instances? Should a guilty person complain against his judge, who compassionates his condition, and punishes him much less than his iniquity deserves? In every circumstance of trial and affliction, there is more reason to be thankful than to complain. When he chastises with whips, he might as justly lash us with scorpions! When he only corrects us, he might as justly damn us.

One argument for humble submission to the will of God in circumstances of adversity, is his absolute dominion and sovereignty over all things.

It is highly reasonable that the Creator should on that very account be the Supreme Governor, and whatever has been made and preserved by God, should be also commanded and controlled by him. It becomes us to say at all times, "May the will of the Lord be done!'

**Luke 12:15** "Take heed and beware of covetous!"

Covetousness is called by the apostle the root of all evil, and that with great propriety; there being hardly a vice in nature, but what covetousness will adopt to answer its own ends. Various illegal methods have been used to acquire gain, by covetous persons. Estates obtained in this way, are often of a short continuance. In most insurrections, murders, and frauds, covetousness commands. None ever acted the traitor and the *Judas*expertly and to the purpose, but still there was a covetous heart behind the curtain. Covetousness has been all along, even in the most base designs, the principal, though hidden spring of motion. Chicanery is a fruit of covetousness.

In short, the covetous person puts on all forms and shapes, runs through all trades and professions, haunts all places, and makes himself expert in the mystery of all vices—that *he may the better pay his devotions to his god, mammon!*

**1 Thessalonians 4:14** "Those who have *fallen asleep*in him."

DEATH is the friend of grace, a *sweet sleep*to a Christian. If parents tell their children who have played all the day that they must go to bed, they are ready to cry; but a laboring man is glad when night comes, that he may go to rest.

To the wicked, death is unwelcome; but a child of God who has labored and suffered, is glad when death comes, that he may rest from his labors. *Sleep*is the soft representation given of the believer's death in the scriptures.

**Proverbs 31:30** "Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised."

A young lady, about twenty, had been born to a rich inheritance, and was the only child of parents who were exceedingly fond of her. Nothing was spared to make her education, as a lady of fashion, complete; but dress was the idol of the mother's heart. The daughter was mirthful, and answered all the mother's hopes in making a *display*in the fashionable world. But the hour of sickness came—and it was a dreadful hour, for it was the termination of all her worldly hopes.

The minister was called in. He talked of death, judgment, and eternity. She had never heard such language addressed to her, and she trembled.

In the dying hour, she called for some of her fine clothes. When they were brought, she looked up to her mother, and said, "These have ruined me. You never told me I must die. You taught me that my errand into this world was to be mirthful and proud, and to enjoy the vanities of life. You knew I must die and go to judgment. You never told me to read the Bible, or go to church, unless to make a *display*of some new finery. Mother, you have ruined me. Take them away, and keep them as a remembrance of your sin, and my sad end!" She died in a few moments after.

**Psalm 145:11** "They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom, and talk of Your power!"

The plan of the kingdom of Christ was devised before the morning stars sang together in sweet concert in honor of the Creator, at the commencement of ages. Infinite and unerring wisdom was employed in contriving the plan of an empire which shall last forever. The first convert on earth, was the first subject of this kingdom; and the first subject advanced to the glories of Heaven was the pious Abel, whose blood was cruelly shed by the hands of an inhuman brother.

The Founder of this kingdom died for its security, and that all its subjects might be invested with celestial and imperishable honors. This kingdom never lost a subject; and when its subjects die, they only die to live; they die to be removed to the immediate presence of its glorious Head. This kingdom shall overspread the earth; and the earth will be too small to contain its subjects. This kingdom shall remain for ever the glory of God, and the joy of the universe!

**Psalm 97:1** "The LORD reigns! Let the earth rejoice!"

Christians, in your darkest hours you may derive comfort from the universal dominion of God as your security and triumph. When Satan tempted and tried Job, he could not go beyond the limits prescribed by the Almighty. He is an enemy doubtless, but then he is *an enemy in chains*. Yes, Christians, Satan, and wicked men, who are his agents—are all under the control of your best Friend. All the miseries you so much fear are entirely at God's disposal. He holds the stars, the seas, and the hearts of men in his own hand.

All the kings of the world are only the sword-bearers of the great King. Now it would be highly absurd in us to conclude, that because they bear the sword they have a right or power to use it independent of God. They have not. Let this allay your fears, and compose your hearts to rest.

Consider that your greatest enemies can do no more than your best Friend permits! A child is not when he sees a sword in his father's hand. Be it a mercy, or be it a judgment—why should we be troubled about it? The whole is under the management of our heavenly Father!

It afforded David the highest satisfaction, that "his times were in the hands of God." All his concerns, whether in prosperity or in adversity; his banishment from house and home, as well as his advancement to the kingdom—-were all regulated by the wise appointment of God. In circumstances of affliction, "You have done it (says David) therefore I kept silence."

It is an argument sufficient, not only to silence our murmurings, but our complaints; not only to convince our reason, but to confute our fears: it is God who does it! He says to this affliction, go—and it goes! He says to this enemy, persecute—and he persecutes! He says to another, kill—and he kills. All things attend the nod and the control of his sovereign will and pleasure. This, therefore, affords solid comfort, that in all the miseries which befall us, still God, our God, is the great agent!

Proverbs 18:24 "There is a friend who sticks closer than a brother."

Reader, if Jesus Christ is your friend, he will . . .
own you in your lowest condition,
speak comfort to you in all your sorrows,
counsel you in all your doubts,
supply your every need, and, in a word,
will never leave you nor forsake you.

This is a divine promise—here you may rest with confidence.

The promises of men, even warm friends, are but a thin sort of diet, by which few men have ever thrived. Good looks and fair speeches are cheap things: but when did they feed the hungry or clothe the naked? These are but thin garments to keep out the cold, and but a slender meal to subdue a craving appetite.

One there is above all others,
Well deserves the name of friend!
His is love beyond a brother's,
Costly, free, and knows no end!

They who once his kindness prove,
Find it everlasting love!
Which of all our friends to save us,
Could or would have shed their blood?

But our Jesus died to have us
Reconciled in him to God:
This was boundless love indeed!
Jesus is a friend in need.

**Psalm 147:1** "Praise the LORD. How good it is to sing praises to our God, how pleasant and fitting to praise him!"

When man is brought to acknowledge his entire dependence on the Deity, he is divested of presuming pride, of arrogant self-sufficiency. He shrinks, as it were, into nothing, before his Creator, and is conscious he is but as dust, when weighed in the balance. To his God he flies for support and for aid; on his Savior alone he relies for acceptance. Convinced of his demerits, he hopes for nothing but mercy at the hands of Christ, and truly finds it is a good thing to praise the Lord, by thus laying the foundation-stone of Christian piety and humility.

Yes, in the last place, he finds it to be a joyful and pleasant thing to be thankful. Sweeter than the honey comb, are the feelings of a grateful heart; but doubly sweet, when God is its object. There are no joys like those we feel, when we raise our hearts in thankful adoration to the King of kings and Lord of lords! No fears need assail us, that our duty of gratitude should ever cease, that he will confer favors at one time, which at another he will refuse, to our necessities. No! God is unchangeable; he may at times withhold what we may imagine to be bless; but, if we trust in him, he will ever grant us such things as shall really prove so.

**Job 9:12** "If he snatches away, who can stop him? Who can say to him, 'What are you doing?'"

JOB was an example of human vicissitudes, as well as of patience.

View him in his *private*estate: he heaps up silver as the dust; he washes his steps in butter, and the rock pours out rivers of oil.

View him in his *public*character. Princes revere his dignity; the aged listen to his wisdom; every eye beholds him with delight; every tongue loads him with blessing.

View him in his *domestic*circumstances: on one hand, he is defended by a troop of sons; on the other, adorned with a train of daughters; and, on all sides, surrounded with "a very great household."

Never was human felicity so consummate; and never were disastrous changes, so sudden. The lightning which consumed his cattle was not more terrible, and scarcely more instantaneous: the joyful parent is bereft of his offspring, and his children are "buried in death." The man of affluence is stripped of his abundance; and he who was clothed in scarlet embraces the dunghill. The venerable patriarch is the derision of wicked men; and the late favorite of an indulgent Providence has become "I have become a brother of jackals, a companion of owls."

Nor need we go back to former ages for proofs of this afflicting truth. In our times in all times—the wheel continues the same incessant whirl. And frequently those who are triumphing today in the highest elevations of joy, tomorrow are bemoaning the instability of mortal affairs, in the very depths of poverty.

**Numbers 32:10** "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

In the article of death, the righteous have glorious advantages. The truth of this principle is generally admitted.

We do not hear men exclaiming, "Let me die the death of the philosopher!" in whatever terms they express their admiration of his talents, his experiments, and his discoveries admitted.

We do not hear men exclaiming, "Let me die the death of the warrior!" with whatever ardor they celebrate his martial virtues, and his military achievements admitted.

We do not hear men exclaiming, "Let me die the death of the statesman!" whatever praise they may be disposed to pass on his political abilities.

No, their language is, "Let me die the death of the RIGHTEOUS, and let my last end be like his."

**Zechariah 3:2** "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?"

A PLAIN countryman, who had been effectually called by Divine grace, by means of a sermon from the above verse, was sometime afterwards solicited by an old companion to accompany him to the alehouse. But the good man strongly resisted every persuasion, saying, "I am a brand plucked out of the fire." His old companion not understanding this, he explained it to him thus: "Look," said he, there is a great difference between a brand and a green stick. If a spark flies upon a brand, that has been partly burnt, it will soon catch fire again; but it is not so with a green stick. I tell you I am that brand plucked out of the fire, and I dare not venture into the way of temptation, for fear of being set on fire again."

How wise and safe are those who are concerned to keep out of the way of danger! and how careful should we be that our conduct is strictly consistent with the prayer we have often offered, "Lead us not into temptation."

**Song of Songs 1:3** "Your name is as ointment poured forth!"

When the pious Bishop Beveridge was on his death-bed, he did not know any of his friends or relatives. A minister, with whom he had been well acquainted, visited him; and when conducted into his room, he said, "Bishop Beveridge, do you know me?" "Who are you?" said the Bishop. Being told who the minister was, he said that he did not know him.

Another friend came who had been equally well known, and addressed him in a similar manner, "Do you know me, Bishop Beveridge?" "Who are you?" said he. Being told it was one of his intimate friends, he said he did not know him.

His wife then came to his bedside, and asked him if he knew her. "Who are you?" said he. Being told she was his wife, he said he did not know her.

'Well," said one of them, "Bishop Beveridge, do you know the Lord Jesus Christ?" 'Jesus Christ?" said he, reviving, as if the name had produced upon him the influence of a charm, "O! yes, I have known Him these forty years. Precious Savior, he is my only hope!"

**Psalm 119:67** "Before I was afflicted, I went astray: but now have I kept your word."

Sarah Howard, a poor old widow, who had been bedridden fourteen years, when visited by her minister, thus spoke of her afflictions: "I can set to my seal, that the Lord has chastened me sorely, but he has not given me over unto death."

I have been chastened in my *person*, and am quite helpless by long and severe illness.

I have been chastened in my *circumstances*ever since I was left a widow. Yes, I know what oppressing a widow, what bad debts, and hard creditors are.

I have been chastened in my *family*, by a son, whom I was dotingly fond of, running away and going to sea.

Besides all these, I have been chastened in *mind*, 'walking in darkness and having no light.'

Yet after all, I trust I can say with David, 'Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept your word!' And I hope I can say that I have now returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of souls," 1 Peter 2:25.

**Proverbs 22:6** "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

There is hardly anything of greater importance than the bringing up of children in the way they should go. This is a duty which cannot be undertaken too early, nor too strictly performed. The minds of children must be engaged. As soon as reason begins to dawn, the mind begins to expand, and cannot remain unemployed. If good things are not carefully instilled, it will occupy itself in trifles. And when a child is permitted to furnish its mind with things of little importance, or, what is worse, with evil habits, it will be no easy task to root them out. Whatever takes first possession of the unfurnished and unjudging mind, is most commonly the foundation of its future conduct.

Therefore, when the seeds of piety are early sown, when the infant mind is seasonably and properly cultivated, there is good reason to hope it will produce plenty of good fruit. Good impressions, when early made, most commonly prove lasting, increase as children grow in years, and the effects are both pleasing and useful. They promote the present welfare of the children themselves, render them real blessings to their fond parents, and make them respected as worthy members of society.

But above all, by leading a life of piety, they gain the approbation of their heavenly Father, and prepare them for the enjoyment of a glorious eternity!

**Proverbs 10:18** "Whoever spreads *slander*is a fool."

Against *slander*there is no defense. Hell cannot boast a fouler fiend, nor man deplore a fouler foe. It stabs with a word, with a shrug, with a look, with a smile! It is the pestilence walking in darkness, spreading contagion far and wide, which the most wary traveler cannot avoid. Slander is the heart-searching dagger of the dark assassin. It is the poisoned arrow whose wound is incurable. It is the mortal sting of the deadly adder. Murder is its employment, innocence is its prey, and ruin is its sport.

The most pious have generally been the most slandered. And God has sometimes overruled it for their benefit. Perhaps he saw that the *breath of popular applause*was becoming infectious, and threatening to injure the better part. Pride and vain-glory had mounted them too high, and, therefore, it was necessary to humble them, to prevent a greater fall.

**1 Peter 5:5** "Be clothed with humility."

Pride, in some shape or other, is the common and universal sin of our fallen human nature.

Humility is the grand mark and characteristic and grace of Christianity.

An excellent divine being asked what was the first grand principle of religion? answered, "Humility."

And what was the second? "Humility."

And the third? "Humility."

Without this, though a man may possess the talents, the abilities, and the knowledge of the greatest of men—he is in the sight of God but as "sounding brass, and a tinkling cymbal."

Humility is essential to all true religion. It consists not in empty words, in a dejected countenance, or in outward garb and appearances—but in a proper estimation of ourselves in the sight of God, and in thorough conviction of our own unworthiness.

**Proverbs 5:11-12** "At the end of your life you will groan, when your flesh and body are spent. You will say, 'How I hated discipline! How my heart spurned correction!'"

Men may now trifle with the great concerns of piety and of their souls, but the time will come when they can trifle no longer. If they are not brought to love the gospel, their circumstances will soon be deplorable indeed! Providence and death will soon bereave them of all which they now hold dear.

The present delight of their eyes, and joy of their hearts, will soon be no more forever. And when these fail, where will the sinner find a refuge?

Many a proud pharisee, many a careless professor, now pretends love to God, and esteem for Jesus Christ—but God knows how soon all these pretenses may be brought to the severest trial. It is in the moments of affliction and death, that men begin to feel the absence of those inward supports which nothing but the religion of Christ can administer. Now the soul is beaten off from all its former strongholds, now it is bereft of every supply, and everything on this side eternity seems to inspire terror. In such moments, it has been found that the gospel is not a fantasy, and that the true believer has a principle within him which makes him hold up his head in those circumstances in which others sink in despair.

**Psalm 57:10** "For your *mercy*is great unto the heavens!"

The bronze altar, the showbread, the sweet incense, the smoke of the sacrifices, Aaron's breast-plate, the preaching of the cross, the keys of the kingdom of Heaven—do not all these proclaim mercy? Who could enter a sanctuary, search conscience, look up to Heaven, pray or sacrifice, call upon God, or think of the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God—if there were no divine mercy? Do not all visions, covenants, promises, messages, mysteries, legal purifications, confirm this?

Yes, mercy is the air in which we breathe, the daily light which shines about us, the gracious rain of God's inheritance. Mercy is the public spring for all the thirsty. Mercy is the common hospital for all the needy. All the streets of the church are paved with these stones of mercy.

What would become of the redeemed, if there were not these breasts of divine consolation? How should the bride, the Lamb's wife, be trimmed, if her bridegroom did not deck her with these habiliments of mercy? How should Eden appear like the garden of God, if it were not watered by these rivers of mercy? It is Mercy that takes us out of the womb, feeds us in the days of our pilgrimage, furnishes us with spiritual provisions, closes our eyes in peace, and translates us to a secure resting place. Mercy is the confidence of Abraham, the theme of prophetic songs, and the glory of all the apostles. Mercy is the plea of the penitent, the ecstasies of the reconciled, the believer's *Hosannah*, the Angel's *Hallelujah*.

Ordinances, oracles, altars, pulpits, the gates of the grave, and the gates of Heaven—all depend upon mercy. Mercy is the north star of the wandering, the ransom of the captives, the antidote of the tempted, the prophet of the living, and the effectual Comforter of the dying! There would not be one regenerate saint upon earth, nor one glorified saint in Heaven, were it not for divine mercy!

**Revelation 14:13** "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."

Relying on his grace, they are blessed because they are in the company of him whom they love and served on earth. Here on earth they served him imperfectly, but now they serve him perfectly: and they are blessed because they are engaged in occupations congenial with their wishes, forever ascribing glory to God, and to him who bled on Calvary's hill.

Through his merits they have passed the barrier of the grave; they have been wafted to the desired haven; they have gained admission into the heavenly Eden: there they flourish in immortal youth; there sin and sorrow no more disturb their services; they are pure and happy; they join the song above, with the spirits of just men made perfect; and their faith is exchanged for sight. Here on earth they could not see Heaven, but now they see and enjoy it. Happy are they on whom this eternal day dawns. Their pleasures never tire, never diminish, and never die. They are with God, and will continue with him forever, and be forever like him. Their bliss is everlasting; it will continue when the heavens shall melt with fervent heat, when the stars shall cease to roll, when the great luminary of light shall be turned to blackness, and the moon to blood, and when these lower worlds shall be enveloped in flames.

Happy souls whose days are ended, and who now enjoy the blessedness of Heaven! "O that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away and be it rest!" Ought not we who are still in the land of the living, to lay aside every weight, and the sin that does most easily beset us, and to run with patience the race that is set before us? May we be guided by Christ; and when the last enemy lays his cold hand upon us, may we be cheered by the prospect of immortality!

All their toils and conflicts over,
Lo! they dwell with Christ above:
O what glories they discover
In the Savior whom they love!

**Matthew 7:3** "And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye?"

There is an unaccountable propensity among mankind, to judge the conduct of others unkindly, and to deduce inferences with unwarrantable authoritativeness, as if each possessed the eye of Omniscience, and could at a glance detect the secret springs of action, and ascertain the thoughts of the heart of others with unquestionable accuracy.

It is neither just nor manly to assume a critical knowledge of motives which may have influenced the conduct of others, seeing that even in affairs of personal management, our endeavors to act with prudence are often defeated.

This common failing of human nature the heathens imaged in the following manner: "Every man carries two wallets with him, hanging the one before, the other behind him; into that before, he puts the faults of others—into that behind, he puts his own; by which means he never sees his own failings, while he has those of others always before his eyes."

Did we rightly know ourselves, we should turn this wallet, keeping our own faults in view, and those of others in the rear—for we must not expect that others will be as blind to our delinquencies as we ourselves are. They will perceive them, whether we do or not; and to imagine that the world is unobservant because we shirk them, is just as wise as to imagine that others do not see because we shut our eyes.

**1 Peter 1:3-4** "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in Heaven for you!"

All the redeemed will soon be gathered in this eternal inheritance, and the perfect union between them and the Savior will commence. They will begin to behold his glory, and to possess the glory which he has given them. That manifestation of the sons of God will then be made, which the whole creation has earnestly and anxiously expected to this time. That will be the period in which all things will begin to be theirs: the things of this world, by an instructive and delightful recollection; the things of that which is to come, by exquisite and unlimited enjoyment.

Of course, whatever material beauty, greatness, and glory, can furnish; whatever their luminous minds can understand, or enjoy, of this nature—will now begin to be lavished on them with a bounty, becoming the character of God. Perfectly correspondent with these views of the subject is the description of the New Jerusalem, Revelation 21. The foundations of the heavenly city are garnished with all manner of precious stones. Its dimensions are wonderfully great. Its wall is of jasper. Its buildings are of pure and clear gold; its gates are pearls; its watchmen are angels. The throne of God, and the Lamb, is in the midst of it.

Out of this throne proceeds the river of life, and on its banks stands the tree of life, yielding the various fruits of immortality. No temple is found here. No night overcasts the sky. No moon shines. No sun arises. The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of this divine residence—the Sun which shines with the splendor of everlasting day.

**1 John 5:14** "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us."

Lord Bolingbroke once asked Lady Huntingdon how she reconciled prayer to God for particular blessings, with absolute resignation to the Divine will.

"Very easily," answered her ladyship; "just as if I were to offer a petition to a monarch, of whose kindness and wisdom I have the highest opinion. In such a case, my language would be, I wish you to bestow on me such or such a favor; but your majesty knows better than I, how far it would be agreeable to you, or right in itself to grant my desire. I therefore content myself with humbly presenting my petition, and leave the event of it entirely to you."

**Revelation 21:27** "But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life."

In Heaven, there will be nothing to deceive, nothing to pollute, nothing to awaken disgust. Every sinner, and every sin, will be finally excluded. Rebellion will have spent its force, the iron rod of oppression will be broken; the trumpet of war will have blown its final blast; the last shout of battle will have expired; destructions will have some to a perpetual end. Tumult, suspense, and fear, will be no more. The minds of these happy inhabitants will never more be assailed by temptation. No lust will rankle within; no enemies will seduce without. Universal love will allure every eye, engross every heart, and move every hand. Peace, therefore, not in word, nor in tongue, but in deed, and in truth; the peace of minds, the harmony of views, the unison of affections—will spread over all the millions who inhabit this land of promise; and diffuse a universal, and eternal serenity within and without the soul.

Here, also, all things will live. Death and sorrow, disease and pain, crying and tears, will have fled forever. There will be nothing to destroy, nothing to impair, nothing to lament. Everything will live; and not merely live, but grow, and flourish, and bloom, without interruption. Life in a sublime and superior sense, life immortal will saturate the streams and trees, the leaves and fruits; and animate the minds and bodies of the first-born.

**Isaiah 35:9-10** "Only the redeemed will walk there, and the ransomed of the LORD will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away."

The present world is justly styled a*valley of tears*. Distress awaits us here in a thousand forms. Within us, it dwells; without, it assails. We are sinners, and hence the subjects of ungratified desire, disappointment, discontent, reproaches of conscience, and distressing apprehensions concerning the anger of God.

At the same time, our frail bodies are subjected to the evils of hunger and thirst, of cold and heat, of weariness and languor, of sickness and pain, of decay and death.

Our friends and families are in want, pain, and sorrow: they sicken and die: their sins disgrace them, and wound us; and awaken excruciating fears concerning their destiny beyond the grave.

War, also, frequently spreads wide the miseries of dismay, plunder, slaughter, and devastation.

To beings habituated to a state of existence, so extensively formed of these distressing materials—how welcome must be the change which transports them from this poor world to Heaven. When the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs, then all sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Heaven is created to be the residence of happiness. Everything which it contains will be . . .
beauty, grandeur, and glory to the eye;
harmony to the ear;
and rapture to the heart: rapture which admits no mixture, and knows no termination!

**John 5:39** "Search the Scriptures!"

Here we are often in want: the Bible contains the "bread of life."

Here we are strangers: the Bible points to Heaven as our home.

Here we are in an enemy's country: the Bible directs us to "fight the good fight of faith," under the guidance of "the Captain of our salvation."

Here we are exposed to temptations, even to all "the fiery darts of Satan:" the Bible furnishes us with the "whole armor of God," and exhorts us to "put on the breast-plate of righteousness, and the shield of faith, to take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit."

Here we are often in distress, and always in want: the Bible cheers us with the prospect of "a better and an enduring substance."

Here we may be poor, destitute, and despised; but, if we are Christians indeed, the Bible assures us that we are heirs of an invaluable and indestructible inheritance, "an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in Heaven for us!"

Precious Bible! what a treasure
Does the word of God afford!

**Proverbs 15:33** "Before honor is humility."

*Pride*aims at the utmost pitch of honor—yet undermines what it would advance.

Humility on the contrary, leads us to the bottom of our condition, and gives us the true sight of our own vileness—yet raises hereupon a most magnificent structure out of emptiness and darkness. Humility is . . .
solid and real,
just and reasonable,
wise and holy,
beautiful and amiable,
peaceable and righteous,
good and profitable, and
there is no end of recounting its excellencies.

Humility is . . .
suitable to all objects,
agreeable to all the end and cause of human life,
fitted to all the circumstances of our present condition.

Humility is . . .
full of grace and truth;
the ground of all the Divine works,
the mirror of God's greatness,
the magnet of all his glories and beauties.

In a word, humility is most agreeable
to all the principles of nature and of grace,
to all the desires of angels and of men,
to all the designs of God himself.

So that nothing is more true than that, "Before honor is humility."

Was pride, alas, e'er made for man?
Blind, erring, guilty creature he;
His birth so mean, his life a span,
His wisdom less than vanity!

**James 4:4** "You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God."

That man who places his confidence in, and derives his principal comfort from his estate, his friends, or his greatness in this world; and when these fail, desponds as if his all was lost—I say, that man deifies objects as really as if he erected a temple to, and bowed down before them and worshiped them! Let every man, therefore, lay his hand upon his heart, and *consider what object engrosses his supreme affections*; and he may rest assured that very object is his God! And, if he does not renounce it, he must die as an idolater, and perish in his sin!

Some men have so set their heart and soul upon the things of this world, that it is death to them to think of dying. They do not so much *depart*out of this world, as that they are *torn*from it; and the separation between the world and them, is harder than the separation between their soul and body.

How insupportable is the idea of parting with worldly possessions: a flourishing family, and a high dignity! How ill-disposed do they feel themselves to exchange their heaven below for one above! Let such persons be assured, that whatever pretenses they may make of love to Christ, they certainly love that most which they wish to relinquish last.

**Isaiah 53:10** "Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer; and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand."

In the sufferings of our great and adorable Friend, there was a sword which reached to his spirit, and penetrated to his very soul, till that soul bled through his body! It was the struggles of the inner man which produced that crimson perspiration recorded by Luke. It was herein that he trod the wine-press of the wrath of God, till he became red in his apparel, and all his garments stained with blood!

What tongue can express, what thought can conceive the amazing agony the Son of God sustained at that ever-memorable season! Sin and the wrath due to sin, appeared in all their tremendous circumstances! The dishonor done to God, and the injury sustained by man; together with every awakening consideration uniting in one tremendous effort to overwhelm his immaculate soul!

Say, you astonished angels! Say, you trembling worlds—was ever any sorrow like unto his sorrow? Oh! what a memorable day was that when the Lord Almighty afflicted our beloved substitute, that we might be redeemed and restored to the joys of eternal paradise!

**James 3:16** "For where ENVYING and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work."

When a man cannot vent his rage outwardly, he is sure to grieve and bleed inwardly; like a wretch falling on his own sword, because he cannot thrust it into the body of one whom he hates. Envy hates abroad, and grieves at home. Guilt and sadness are its inseparable companions; it being impossible for an envious man to possess either a good conscience or a cheerful mind. It is the great and good that are envied. *Envy sucks poison out of the finest and sweetest flowers.*It is not safe for any one to be much commended, to be borne on the wings of fame, and to ride in triumph upon the tongues of men: for the tongues of some do but provoke the teeth of others. Men generally detract more heartily than ever they commend. Shadows do not more naturally attend shining bodies, than envy pursues merit. Envy is a sharp blighting east wind, killing the noblest productions of virtue, grace, and good sense.

**Philippians 2:9** "God has highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name."

Jesus Christ now enjoys universal sovereignty. He is now King of kings and Lord of lords. He sways the scepter of Heaven and earth, and wears the imperial crown of the universe. Heaven is his throne, and the thrones of earthly kings form his footstool. He now shines at the head of the noble army of martyrs, wearing the trophies of conquered sin and death. He possesses the kingdoms of the world by the two unquestionable titles of *conquest*and *inheritance*. The immortal hosts of angels, and ministers of providence are his attendants: they hear his will, and execute his commands with a winged alacrity.

Learn, O Christian, learn obedience to your Savior from these vigilant spirits. Every element and the whole retinue of nature are subservient to his pleasure, and are so many various instruments used by him to accomplish his wise purposes. All the stars fight in their courses under his banner, and are subject to the dictates of his will. The heavens rule everything in the world beneath them by their unsearchable influence, but themselves are ruled by him. He, the Lord of glory, can command nature out of its course, and reverse the great ordinances of the heavens.

The heathens have been told of an Atlas that shoulders up the heavens; but we know that he who supports the heavens, is not under them, but above them. Believer, this illustrious personage is your Savior. Never be ashamed of him, nor afraid to confess him before a scoffing world.

**Proverbs 1:10** "My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent!"

When sin entices, it never apprizes the soul how it interrupts enjoyment. No, it speaks in lofty terms, promises high satisfaction, and raises high expectation, until eager desires will admit of no objection and hear no reason. Sin entices by making large offers of riches, honor, etc. but always pays in disappointment; and then he finds how much he was bedazzled and deceived. Stand upon your guard, Christian, and consider that *sin never entices but with an intention to deceive, and then to destroy*.

The Christian in his proper frame of mind, (when tempted by sin,) will say, "I will not venture into such a company, I will not use such a recreation, etc. for I know not how I may act under such circumstances. God may leave me to myself, and my strength may fail me, and my own heart betray me! If I tempt God by such a bold and heedless venture, he may permit the devil to tempt me, in a manner I am not able to resist; and*the serpent may slide into my bosom before I am aware!*

A Christian will avoid those pest-houses, where scarcely anything is to be heard or seen, but what tends to the corruption of good manners. *He who has no intention to trade with the devil, should be so wise as to keep away from his shop!*In vain does any man pretend to sincerity in his religion, who voluntarily puts himself into the tempter's way.*Can anyone hate to be defiled, and yet handle pitch?*Can anyone abhor impurity, and yet plant himself in the very neighborhood of it? A *sincere*heart is a *tender*heart, and feels the least contagious breath that may blow upon it. And this breath has been found by fatal experience, to prevail more at plays, at balls, and taverns, than any where else. *He who would not fall into sin, must not pass by the door of temptation!*

**2 Corinthians 13:5** "Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves."

Many professors sit down and dole away hours in what they call "self-examination," which is nothing more than trying to find some hope that they are safe, instead of looking for evidence that they love Christ in a holy devoted life of activity in his service. If any person wishes to know whether he is a Christian, let him inquire what he is doing for the Lord's cause; and if he finds a soul full of love to God and his cause, a willingness, yes, delight to do his will, a spirit to concentrate all his property, time, talents, and influence to his service—then let him hope, yes, rejoice in the Lord always, and again, I say, rejoice.

But if he find no evidence of the kind and character as above-named, let him conclude it is best to repent, and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that without delay, before it be forever too late!

**Psalm 116:15** "Precious in the sight of the Lord, is the death of his saints."

A young preacher named Maccail was horrendously tortured by his persecutors, but died in a rapture of joy. Notwithstanding the extremity of his bodily pain, his dying language was triumphant: "Farewell, sun, moon, and stars! Farewell, world and time! Farewell, weak and frail body! Welcome, eternity! Welcome, angels and saints! Welcome, precious Savior! Welcome, God, the Judge of all!"

"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" 1 Corinthians 15:55

**Proverbs 3:17-18** "Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who embrace her; those who lay hold of her will be blessed."

A man who had been very much connected with infidels, was taken dangerously ill; and feeling that he could not recover, became alarmed for the safety of his soul. He found that his infidel principles gave him do comfort. He began, for the first time, to examine into the Christian religion. He embraced it, and found it to be the power of God to his salvation, enabling him to triumph over the fear of death.

In the mean time, his infidel friends hearing of his sickness, and that he was not expected to recover, showed a degree of feeling and integrity, which, it was hoped, might prove the first step towards their conversion. They were not aware that their dying friend had become a Christian. They called to see him, and actually told him that they came on purpose to advise him now to embrace Christianity: "Because," said they, *"If it is false, it can do you no harm; but if it should prove true, you will be a great gainer."*

This, reader, is a fact. It was the united advice of a number of unbelievers to their dying friend.

**Philippians 2:15** "Among whom you shine as lights in the world."

Jesus Christ requires believers to be lights, to enlighten others. He was himself, while on earth, the light of the world, and he intended that his disciples, after his departure, should, in some measure, be what he was. They are the stars which he lights up in the church, to do in some measure what he did; to point out the right road to men, and to serve them as guides in the midst of darkness.

It is well known that lights and light-houses are sometimes placed on rocks in the sea, which serve, particularly in dark nights, to point out both the sand-banks and rocks which the mariners should avoid, and the course which he ought to steer.

Jesus Christ recommends to believers to be engaged in a similar office; he would have them resemble such light-houses, and show others how they are to direct their course in such a manner as to avoid the rocks, and so to conduct themselves in dangerous passages, that they may finally arrive safe in port. "Let your light shine before men!" What our Savior here requires, is both easy and certain of success. A vessel full of liquor, when placed over a fire, soon rises, and runs over. So a heart, inflamed with the love of God, cannot conceal the fire which burns within it. Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.

**1 Corinthians 3:22** "All things are yours, whether life or DEATH."

Mr. Hervey was attended, during his last illness, by Dr. Stonehouse, who, seeing the difficulty and pain with which he spoke, and finding by his pulse that the pangs of death were coming on, desired that he would rest and not speak.

"No, doctor, no!" said he: "You tell me I have but a few minutes to live. O let me spend them in adoring our great Redeemer! Though my flesh and my heart fail me, yet God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever."

He then expatiated, in the most striking manner, on the words of Paul: "All things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or *death*or the present or the future—all are yours, and you are of Christ, and Christ is of God." "Here, he exclaimed, "is the treasure of a Christian, and a noble treasure it is. *Death*is reckoned in this inventory: how thankful am I for it, as it is the passage through which I get to the Lord and Giver of eternal life. Death also frees me from all the misery you see me now endure, and which I am willing to endure as long as God thinks fit! I know he will, by and by, in his good time, dismiss me from the body. These light afflictions are but for a moment, and then comes an eternal weight of glory! O welcome, welcome, death! you may well be reckoned among the treasures of the Christian. To live is Christ, but to die is gain!"

May you, Christian reader, possess the same faith in the Redeemer, both in life and death!

**Psalm 76:10** "Surely the wrath of man shall praise you!"

*Gibbon*, who in his celebrated History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, has left an imperishable memorial of his enmity to the gospel, resided many years in Switzerland, where, with the profits of his works, he purchased a considerable estate. This property has descended to a gentleman, who, out of its rents, expends a large sum annually in the promulgation of that very gospel which his predecessor insidiously endeavored to undermine.

*Voltaire*boasted that with one hand he would overthrow the edifice of Christianity, which required the hands of twelve apostles to build up. At this day, the press which he employed to print his blasphemies, is actually employed at Geneva in printing the holy scriptures. Thus the printing press, which he set to work to destroy the credit of the Bible is engaged in disseminating its truths.

It is a remarkable circumstance also, that the first provisional meeting for the Bible Society at Edinburgh, was held in the very room in which the staunch atheist Hume died.

**Ecclesiastes 12:7** "Then the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it."

In spite of precaution and medicine, "the days of trouble come and the years approach when you will say: I find no pleasure in them." Pains and sorrows will follow each other, as the clouds return after the rain, darkening the sources of light and joy.

The *hands*, those once active and vigorous "keepers of the house," grow weak and shall tremble; and the "strong men," those firm and able columns which supported it, shall bow themselves, and sink under the weight. The "grinders" of the food, the teeth, "shall cease, because they are few." The organs of *sight*shall dim, "those who look out of the windows shall be darkened." Sleep, if it comes upon the eyelids of old age, will quickly remove again, and he will rise up at the time when the first "voice of the bird" proclaims the approach of the morning. "But all their songs grow faint;" he will hear no more the voice of singing men, and singing women. Timidity and distrust will predominate, and he will be alarmed at everything, "He shall be afraid of heights and of dangers in the streets." As the early "almond tree," when it flourishes in full blossom, his hoary head shall be conspicuous in the congregation, the sure prognostic, not of spring, alas, but of winter. He who, like the grasshopper, in the season of youth, was so sprightly in his motions, now is scarcely able to crawl upon the earth, and "shall be a burden" to himself. The organs of sense being vitiated and impaired, "desire" and appetite shall fail. The spinal marrow, that "silver cord," with the intricate network of nerves, will lose its tone; "and the golden bowl," the receptacle of the brain, from which it proceeds, "shall be broken."

The vessel, by which, as a "pitcher," the blood is carried back to the heart for a fresh supply, "shall be broken at the fountain, and the wheel," or instrument of circulation, which circulates it forth again, to the extremities of the body, "shall be broken at the cistern."

When this highly finished piece of mechanism shall be thus disjointed and dissolved, "Then the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it."

**Isaiah 32:17**And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever."

Colonel Allen of Vermont was an avowed deist, and the author of several works against the Christian religion. But how little faith he possessed in his own tenets in the hour of danger and of death, is evinced by the following fact.

While reading some of his own writings to a friend who was on a visit to his house, he received information that his daughter was at the point of death. His wife was a pious woman, who had instructed the daughter in the principles of Christianity. When the father appeared at the bedside, his daughter said to him, "I am about to die; shall I believe in the principles you have taught me, or shall I believe in what my mother has taught me?" On hearing this question, he became much agitated, and after waiting a few minutes, replied, "Believe in what your mother has taught you."

**2 Timothy 2:3**"Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."

Christians, your contest with your spiritual enemies is arduous. A mind torn with anxiety, a pillow watered with tears, and the scoffs of cruel pride, are often the attendants of this conflict. Satan adapts his temptations with the utmost skill to the constitutional bias, proposes them in the most plausible manner and in the most urgent form. How painful is the struggle with *pride*and *envy*, so apt to rise in the heart; with that *indolence*which makes duty a burden, and with that carnality which cleaves to the dust!

How difficult it is to struggle with unreasonable men; to dispel the darkness of prejudice; and to prefer the afflictions of the saints to all that the world can offer! But O how serious the conflict with the *last enemy!*The sweat bursting through every pore; the convulsive shaking of every limb; the earnest elevation of the failing eye, and the trembling hand; and the often repeated cry, "Help us, O God of our salvation" prove that this is no easy struggle.

But rejoice, good soldiers of Jesus Christ, in the hope of victory and reward! "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. And, forget not, that a crown will be the reward of your struggles below!

**Romans 8:34** "Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us."

Lift up your eyes, O Christians, to the world of glory! See the blood sprinkled by the Savior's hands before the throne of grace! Lay eyes on your names shining on his breastplate! Behold compassion for your infirmities swelling in his heart; and listen to that voice, which, while the sorrows of calvary rise in memorial before God, again proclaims, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased!" Delightful truth! those sorrows plead for his redeemed people's acceptance! The merits of his sacrifice perfume your prayers, and render them acceptable to God. And should you sometimes, in your prayers, offer up improper petitions, your Intercessor will separate the precious from the vile, that the will of God may be done.

As one beautifully observes: Christ's prayer takes away the sin of our prayers. As a child that presents his father with a bouquet, enters the garden, gathers flowers and weeds together; but returns to his mother, who plucks out the weeds, binds up the flowers, and then it is presented to the father.

Thus, when we have put up our prayers, Christ comes and removes the weeds, (the sin of our prayer,) and presents only flowers to his Father, which are of a sweet smelling savor.

**Exodus 14:13** "The Egyptians you see today you will never see again."

Yes, soldiers of Christ, very soon you shall be beyond the power of all your foes. At death you shall be set completely free from them, and this shall be your triumph, "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that has loved us!"

*Sin*you shall see no more, until that day when you shall behold it charged upon the wicked, and borne away thence to the place of eternal torment.

*Devils*you shall behold no more, until you see them driven away from the conqueror's throne, as the associates of impenitent men in misery.

Soon shall you see the *earth*and its works burnt up; the world and its fashion pass away; and death and Hell cast into the lake of fire!

But when you see the Captain of salvation coming in glory from Heaven, you will say, "Behold! this is our God, we have waited for him; we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation!" Happy and glorious shall he be in you, and you in him. Your *heads*shall be crowned with everlasting glory, and your *hands*shall wave the unfading palm, and your *lips*be devoted to eternal praises. Let such hopes arm you with fortitude in the hour of temptation, and make you willing to resist unto blood, striving against sin!

**Matthew 6:26** "Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?"

Mr. Nosworthy was an amiable and excellent man, but, by the persecution of the times, was imprisoned at Winchester, where he was cruelly treated. After he was released, he was occasionally reduced to great straits. Once, when he and his family had breakfasted, they had nothing left for another meal, and his wife asked, "What shall I do for our poor children?" He persuaded her to take a walk with him, and seeing a little bird, he said, "Take notice how that bird sits and chirps, though it knows not from whence it shall have a dinner. Therefore, be of good cheer, and do not distrust the providence of God; for are we not more valuable to him than many sparrows? They returned, and before dinner-time they had plenty of provisions brought to them. Thus was the promise fulfilled, "They who trust in the Lord shall not lack any good thing."

**Romans 1:20** "For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse!"

See here, says Mr. Robinson, I hold a Bible in my hand, and you see the cover, the leaves, the letters, the words; but you do not see the writers or the printer, the letter-founder, the ink-maker, the paper-maker, or the binder. You never did see them; you never will see them; and yet there is not one of you who will think of disputing or denying the being of these men. I go further. I affirm that you see the souls of these men in seeing this book, and you feel yourselves obliged to allow that, by the contrivance, design, memory, reason, and so on, you perceive. In the same manner, if you see a picture, you judge there was a painter; if you see a house, you judge there was a builder of it; and if you see a room contrived for this purpose, and another for that, a door to enter, a window to admit light, a chimney to hold fire, you conclude that the builder was a person of skill and foresight, who formed the house for the accommodation of the inhabitants.

In this manner examine the world, and pity the man who, when he sees all the intricate things in creation, concludes that there is no Creator!

**Romans 8:29** "For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son."

If I could obtain a true painting of the face of Jesus Christ as man, I should preserve it as a very precious treasure, not preferring it to every other picture only, but as an object far exceeding all others.

Nevertheless, I would always esteem the poorest Christian far beyond such a portrait. For a real Christian is a better representation of Jesus Christ than any picture. Therefore, Christians, let the same mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus.

**Psalm 17:13-14** "Deliver my soul, O Lord, from men of the world, who have their portion in this life."

The late Earl of A. felt great pleasure and some pride in leading his visitors over his extensive park, and pointing out its beauties. One gentleman, fatigued with viewing the arbor, walks, orchards, rivulets, waterfalls, etc., sat down in one of the pleasure-houses along with his lordship, to whom he said, "Well, my lord, all this and Heaven would be noble; but this and Hell would be terrible!"

The vanity of life is expressed by the following lines written by the late Princess Amelia, daughter of George III.

Unthinking, idle, wild, and young,
I laughed, and talked, and danced, and sung;
And, proud of health, of freedom vain,
Dreamed not of sorrow, care, or pain,
Concluding in those hours of glee,
That all the world was made for me!

But when the days of trial came,
When sickness shook this trembling frame;
When folly's gay pursuits were o'er,
And I could dance and sing no more,
It then occurred how sad 'twould be
Were this world only made for me.

**Jeremiah 10:23** "O LORD, it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps."

In the dispensations of Providence, God acts sovereignly, not arbitrarily. Yet "he gives no account of his matters." Suspend your opinion; never set his sun by your dial; but always your dial by his sun. You can see his heart, if you cannot see his hand. Do you ask where? Why at CALVARY. "He who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up freely for us all; how shall he not with him freely give us all things?" And will you doubt of his wisdom and love?

Alfonsus, king of Castile, used to employ his leisure hours in the study of Astronomy; and having seen what he supposed to be an irregularity, said, "If I had been there when the Maker of the world was at work, I would have given him some good advice."

Reader, you shudder! And yet have not *you*sometimes thought that you could have given God some good advice as to your own affairs.

You should learn to judge by his views, and by his testimony, and not by other things. You know not what is good for you; you may judge wrong. Look back and see how often you have desired what would have been your injury and ruin, if you had obtained it. And how often have you sought to escape, from what you now see to be your chief blessing.

You have charged God almost with wickedness, where you have now reason to believe that his kindness was peculiarly at work for your happiness.

*Is it for you to judge of the skill of the artist from the first rough sketch?* Should you not wait till it has received his masterly touches? Should you judge of a building while all the materials are crudely scattered about, especially if you had never seen the plan? No! You would wait till the top stone is laid on!

The saints above shout, "He has done all things well! Just and true are your ways, O King of saints!"

**Ecclesiastes 5:13** "I have seen a grievous evil under the sun: wealth hoarded to the harm of its owner"

It is recorded of Ben Franklin, that, when a young man expressed his surprise that a gentleman well known to them, of unbounded wealth, should appear more anxious after business than the most assiduous clerk in a counting-house; he took an apple from the fruit-basket, and presented it to a little child, who could just totter about the room. The child could scarcely grasp it in his hand; and then Franklin gave it another, which occupied the other hand. Then choosing a third apple, remarkable for its size and beauty, he presented that also to the child. The child, after many ineffectual attempts to hold the three, dropped the last on the floor, and burst into tears.

"See there," said Franklin, "there is a little man with more wealth than he can enjoy."

The increase of painful care, anxiety, and trouble, generally bear at least an equal proportion to the increase of riches. The peace of the child was not broken until the attempt was made to obtain the grasp of the third apple; had but two sufficed him, his happiness would have been great.

**Hebrews 11:6** "Without faith it is impossible to please God."

How important is faith! Faith is the *tree*that bears all the fruits of holiness! Faith is the *spring*from whence all holiness flows. No Christian is so celebrated for his faith as was Abraham; and there are none so celebrated for obedience. We read of:
the "word of faith"
the "law of faith"
the "work of faith"
the "obedience of faith"
the "fight of faith"
the "prayer of faith"
the "righteousness of faith".

Everything has to do with faith.

In proportion as we believe, God is glorified. In proportion as we believe, we are filled with all joy and peace.

Are we sanctified? It is by faith.

Are we purified? "Purifying their hearts by faith."

Do we conquer? "This is the victory that overcomes—even our faith!"

Do we stand? "We stand by faith."

Do we walk? "We walk by faith."

Do we live? "We live by faith."

Have we access to God? It is by faith!

What did Paul say to the Ephesians? "Above all, taking the shield of faith!"

What did Christ say to Peter? "I have prayed for you that your faith does not fail."

Here we see what it is that the enemy aims to injure, and what Christ has appointed to save; it is faith; and thus Christ and Satan proclaim the importance of faith!

**Matthew 26:39** "Not my will, but may your will be done."

It is of great importance that we should entreat the Spirit of God to enable us to pray as we ought. It is possible to ask for what may appear to us good things, but which, if we had them, would prove evil.

Rachel, indulging a petulant disposition, said, "Give me children, or I will die!" Her desire was granted, and as the result she died.

A minister, praying over a child apparently dying, said, "If it be your will Lord, spare this child."

The poor mother's soul, yearning for her beloved, exclaimed, "It must be his will, I cannot bear *ifs*."

To the surprise of many the child recovered; and the mother lived to see him hanged before he was two-and-twenty!

Oh! it is good to say, "Not my will, but may your will be done."

**Proverbs 3:17** "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

The Emperor Charles V., after many conquests and triumphs, finding no happiness in the world, resigned all his pomp and honors to his son, and retired from the world, and afterwards gave this as the result of his own experience: "The sincere study and practice of the Christian religion gives that joy and sweetness of life, and blessed serenity in the hour of death, which courts are strangers to, and guilty pleasures can never yield."

**1 Timothy 6:20** "Science, falsely so called"

Every system of science is little in comparison of Christianity. Science may expand our ideas of creation, but it neither inspires a love to the moral character of the Creator, nor gives us a well-grounded hope of eternal life.

It is the province of Christianity to add, "All is yours!" When you have ascended to the heights of human discovery, there are things, and things of infinite consequence too, that are utterly beyond its reach. Scripture revelation is the medium, and the only medium by which we discover things which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, and of which it has never entered into the heart of man to conceive.

**Matthew 10:22 "**He who endures to the end shall be saved!"

Believers! You shall soon reach the Celestial City; and then the wanderings of the wilderness—its solitude, its tempests, its privations, shall be forgotten. Or, if they are remembered, remembered to make Heaven its perpetual sunshine, its fulness of joy, the more enrapturing.

When Joseph's two sons were presented to his father, the old man said, "I had not thought to see your face, and lo! God has showed me your children." Similar to his will be the feelings of men in Heaven: I often thought it very doubtful if ever I would arrive at paradise, but you have brought me to a glory, and to a happiness, which it never entered into my heart to conceive! I thought I would be blessed indeed, if but admitted within its gates, and in the portion adjudged to one who was less than the least of all saints; but you have set me among the princes of the people; and from the threshold where I wish to kneel, you have called me to your throne!"

"Your thoughts are not as my thoughts, nor your ways as mine."

**Matthew 5:3** "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven."

When a man is possessed of real poverty of spirit, he becomes thoroughly sensible of his deplorable condition by nature as a fallen creature. The dignity of human nature is a doctrine no longer believed by him, and from which he turns with aversion, as it positively contradicts his experience. In this, as in most cases, experience is the best teacher. The man feels that he is in a miserable condition, and is unable to recover himself from it. He finds his *understanding*much darkened so that he cannot perceive and understand the things of God, and that his *will*is averse and disinclined to those things. Thus he is made acquainted with himself, and that he certainly must be renewed in the spirit of his mind, if ever he is fit for Heaven.

**Joshua 24:15**"But as for me and my house we will serve the Lord!"

In the life of Philip Henry, it is said, "He and his wife constantly prayed together, morning and evening." He also made conscience of closet-worship, and abounded in it. It was the caution and advice which he frequently gave to his children and friends, "Be sure you look to your secret duties; keep those up, whatever you do; the soul cannot prosper in the neglect of them. Apostasy generally begins at the closet door."

Besides these, he was uniform, steady, and constant in family worship to his dying day. He would say, "If the worship of God is not in the house, write, 'Lord, have mercy on us!' on the door; for there is a plague, in it," alluding to an inscription put on the doors of houses in which the plague appeared.

**Isaiah 8:13**"The LORD Almighty is the one you are to regard as holy, he is the one you are to fear, he is the one you are to dread!"

A poor Christian man was the subject of much profane jesting and ridicule among his fellow-workmen and neighbors. On being asked if these daily persecutions did not sometimes make him ready to give up his profession of attachment to Divine truth, he replied, "No! I recollect that our good minister once said in his sermon, that if we were so foolish as to permit such people to laugh us out of religion, till at last we dropped into Hell, they could not laugh us out again."

**Luke 16:25** 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented!"

How will all the present scenes change in the eternal world? The epicure shall pass from his bed of roses, to a bed of flames! And the poor distressed and tried saint shall be translated from his prison and his oppressors, into joys which are unspeakable and glorious, which cannot be described. Be not discouraged, poor wearied pilgrim, hold on your way; there awaits a crown of righteousness for you; and what you must be immortalized to bear, *an eternal weight of glory*.

**1 Peter 2:23** When He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;

Meekness and patience well befit the Christian. Moses and Jesus Christ were eminent for both. They were of too great a mind to do any violence, but not too great to suffer. Both of them discover their magnanimity in this, that being reviled they reviled not again. The royal diadem never sat so gloriously, or shone with equal splendor on any prince's brow, as did the crown of thorns upon the brow of the Savior!

The manner in which Christ suffered demands our admiration! You see a series of accumulated woes, but you hear not a murmuring word. The achievements of passive valor, are more glorious than those of active courage. There is an inclination in nature pushing the man forward to action, but nothing to dispose it to suffer; this nature abhors. However, in favor of passive fortitude, let it be remembered that it was *suffering*which redeemed the world.

**2 Timothy 4:8** Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

The Reverend Annesley lived to a good old age in the service of God. In his last illness he was full of comfort, and could say, "Blessed be God! He had kept me faithful in the work of the ministry for more than fifty-five years." Some of his last words were the following: "Come, my dearest Jesus! the nearer, the more precious, the more welcome."

Another time, his joy was so great, that in an ecstasy he cried out, "I cannot contain it! What manner of love is this to a poor worm! I cannot express the thousandth part of what praise is due to you! It is but little I can give you; but, Lord, help me to give you all! I shall be satisfied with your likeness. Satisfied! Satisfied! O my dearest Jesus, come!"

**John 14:23** "If a man loves me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

"And will God in very deed dwell with man upon the earth?" But will Christ take up his abode in a place so unworthy of him, and where corruptions so offensive to him abound? What is a prince's reposing in a mean cottage compared to this? Christ comes to his people's hearts, and dwells there, like the sun surrounding himself with clouds, that he may deck them with the most beautiful colours. They are not the place of his transient visits, but of his permanent abode. Light, life, and peace, attest his presence. "Thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity: I dwell in the humble and contrite spirit." I scorn not that abode. The life of God is there. Will Christ take such creatures as we are, to dwell with him? He will; for "He brought me into his banquetinghouse;" there I am at present, and his banner over me is love.

"God is love, and he who dwells in love, dwells in God, and God in him." I deserved to dwell with devouring fire, and to abide in everlasting burnings, but to me it is given in behalf of Christ, to dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and to abide under the shadow of the Almighty. The godly man's heart is Jehovah's temple; Jehovah's altar is the saint's home. No novelty of events or scenes can exclude you from his thoughts; no obscurity can hide you from his eye. No art can induce him to leave you; nor can even your ingratitude and folly efface you from his heart. You dwell on his heart amidst all the attractions of the Heaven of heavens!

**Hebrews 13:5** "He Himself has said: I will never leave you or forsake you!"

"I will never leave you!" How often is this word spoken to disappoint the fond expectations of the simple and affectionate heart!

Riches say, "I will never leave you!" but they make themselves wings and flee away!

Honors say, "I will never leave you!" but they pass away like the glistening dew on the grass in the morning.

Friends say, "I will never leave you!" yet as a spring brook, they dry up and pass away.

Your hand may have felt affection's last grasp; your ears may have heard affection's last farewell.

But *God*will never leave you. His heart will not leave you, "My kindness shall never depart from you."

His *Spirit*will never leave you, "for the Spirit of glory, and of God, rests upon you."

His *care*will never leave you, his peace will never leave you.

"I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good!"

**Genesis 28:15** "I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go."

You may not be like Jacob in the midst of a journey to a strange land; but you know not where divine providence may yet lead you. Yet go where you may, the Lord is your keeper. His protecting arm, his fatherly care, his unremitting watchfulness, shall be with you. How safe will you be under such a Guardian—a Guardian . . .
ever present,
whose eye never slumbers,
and whose arm is Almighty.

He is a wise Guardian who can guide you through the dark wilderness, and animate you amid the languors of disease and death. In the hour of temptation, he will keep you from falling. In the scene of solicitude you shall say,"I am not alone, for the Father is with me." In the place of danger, the eternal God shall be your refuge. He will keep your feet from being ensnared. He will keep your hearts, that they may not turn away from him!

**Hebrews 4:12** "For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."

Sir William Jones, "I have regularly and attentively read the holy scriptures; and am of opinion that this volume contains more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, purer morality, more important history, and finer strains of poetry and eloquence, than are to be collected from all other books, in whatever age or language they may have been written."

**1 Thessalonians 4:1** "Finally, brothers, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more."

Christians, "Let patience have its perfect work in you, that you may be perfect and entire, lacking nothing;" and let it appear in submission to God, and in gentleness to man.

Let *faith*trust in God's love, when his words are bitter and his strokes are heavy.

Let *love*welcome the rod that is wielded by the hand of mercy.

Let *generosity*not only suppress harsh reflections against those who have been the instruments of your calamity, but dictate fervent prayers for their forgiveness and salvation.

Let *repentance*acknowledge the justice of your Father's corrections.

Let *gratitude*bless him, that his chastenings are so beneficial in their influence, and that the chastening blow is directed, not at all your comforts, but at one, or at a few of them.

Glorify God in the fire! Like gold that brightens in the furnace, so are the saints in affliction. As the wind opens the rose-buds to beauty and fragrance, so is sorrow to the godly; not like the blast that strews them on the ground.

**1 Samuel 3:18** "It is the Lord. He will do what He thinks is good."

A most remarkable instance of Christian resignation was manifested by Mr. Fenelon. When his illustrious and hopeful pupil, the duke of Burgundy, lay dead in his coffin, and the nobles of his court, stood weeping round, Fenelon came into the room and having fixed his eyes for some time on the corpse, exclaimed, "There lies my beloved prince, for whom my affections were equal to the tenderest regard of the tenderest parents. Nor were my affections lost: he loved me in return with all the ardour of a son. There he lies—and all my worldly happiness lies dead with him. But if the turning of a straw would call him back to life, I would not for ten thousand worlds be the turner of that straw in opposition to the will of God."

Some time afterwards, when he saw his library on fire, instead of repining, he exclaimed, "God be praised that it is not the habitation of some poor man."

With silent and submissive awe
Adore a chastening God;
Revere his judgments, trust his word,
And humbly kiss the rod!

**John 8:24** "I told you that you will die in your sins. For if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."

*Voltaire*spent his whole life in malignant but vain attempts to ridicule and overturn Christianity. He was the idol of a large portion of the French nation; but just when they were decreeing new honors for him, and loading him with applause, the hour of his ignominy and shame arrived. In a moment the approach of *death*dissipated his delusive dreams, and filled his soul with inexpressible horror. Conscience started from her long slumbers, and unfolded before him the broad extended scroll of his sins. Where could he fly for relief? Fury and despair succeeded each other by turns, and he had more the appearance of a demon than a man.

To his physician he said, "Doctor, I will give you half of what I am worth if you will give me six months of life."

The doctor answered, "Sir, you cannot live six weeks!"

Voltaire replied, "Then I shall go to Hell, and you shall go with me!" and soon after expired.

**Luke 23:42** "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom."

Behold here the fullness of Divine grace! Who can tell the number, the enormity, and all the aggravated circumstances of the dying thief's crimes? Society had cast him off from her embrace as a wretch not fit to live. But as his tongue cleaved to the roof of his mouth in the agonies of dissolution, he turned to the expiring Son of God, and he said, Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom!"

And Christ stretched out his hand, strong in death, and he snatched the brand from the burning, just as he was sinking into the flames, and he took him with him from the cross on which he agonized, to the throne on which he reigns!

Ah, dear reader, if there is joy in the presence of God over one sinner that repents, what do you think must have been the transport—how would they strike their harps in tunes of still deeper harmony, when the inhabitants of the celestial world saw the Redeemer enter fresh from the conquest of mount Calvary, bearing with him the dying thief, as a example, a specimen of his ability and his willingness to save!

**Revelation 12:11** "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death!"

When the cruel Bonner told John Ardly of the pain connected with burning, and how hard it must be to endure it, with a view of leading the martyr to recant, he nobly replied, "If I had as many lives as I have hairs on my head, I would lose them all in the fire, before I would lose Christ!"

**2 Peter 1:4** "He has given us his very great and precious promises!"

When near death, Isaac Watts said, "I remember an aged minister used to say that the most learned Christians, when they come to die, have only the same plain promises for their support, as the unlearned; and so I find it. It is the plain promises of the gospel that are my support; and I bless God that they are plain promises, which do not require much labor to understand them; for I can do nothing now but look into my bible for some promise to support me."

**2 Corinthians 6:2** "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation!"

Procrastination has been the ruin of multitudes, especially young people. This is the great citadel which the soul has erected, to which it may repair after the commission of sin. Most men know that if they die without repentance, they will certainly perish eternally. But then they venture upon sin with a design to repent; they look forward to distant advanced years, and in their deluded imagination, see themselves become Christians.

But let us take a nearer view of the old man. His memory is weak and treacherous; his apprehension are slow, and his judgment is infirm. And, perhaps all these natural impediments may be heightened by the pressure of disease. Lethargies may enervate all his powers: or some acute disease divert his attention, and enrage his passions. Pain and weakness may arrest him at the same time. The vigor of his intellect forsakes him; a fever scorches him; life is troublesome, and death is terrible.

Now, is such a one in a fit condition to seek the blessing, or to exercise the duty of repentance? It is probable that multitudes die with the forced sorrows of fear, instead of repentance; and so die rather terrified than sanctified. Hence, in advanced years, and on a death-bed, a man has every indisposition both of body and mind to prevent repentance. In short,*a death-bed repentance* is most difficult, doubtful, and dangerous.

**Philippians 4:6-7** "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

My mother, says the late Legh Richmond, had six children; three of whom died in infancy. A very affecting circumstance accompanied the death of one of them, and was a severe trial to her maternal feelings. Her then youngest child, a sweet little boy, only just two years old, through the carelessness of his nurse, fell from a bed-room window upon the pavement beneath. I was at that time six years of age, and happened to be walking upon the very spot when the distressing event occurred. I was, therefore, the first to take him up. I delivered into our agonized mother's arms the poor little sufferer. The head was fractured, and he survived the fall only about thirty hours. I still preserve a very lively and distinct remembrance of the struggle between the natural feelings of the mother, and the resignation of the Christian. She passed the interval of suspense in almost continual prayer, and found God a present help in time of trouble. Frequently during that day did she retire with me; and, as I knelt beside her, she uttered her feelings and desires of her heart to God. I remember her saying, "If I cease praying for five minutes, I am ready to sink under this unlooked-for distress; but, when I pray, God comforts and upholds me. May his will, not mine, be done."

**2 Peter 1:16** "We have not followed cunningly devised fables."

A Christian minister was traveling in a stage coach, with five other persons. One of the gentlemen was an admirer of a noted infidel orator, whom he greatly commended to his opposite fellow-traveler, as a prodigy of wisdom and knowledge, and likely to be a public blessing. He denounced Christianity as a cunningly devised fable, and reprobated those who, by their prayers, he said, deluded the people.

In the course of his observations, he eulogized Sir Isaac Newton, with whom he compared the infidel orator. The minister remarked, that Sir Isaac Newton was certainly one of the greatest of men, but that he was a firm believer in Christianity, and a man of habitual, fervent prayer. The gentleman appeared exceedingly mortified by this remark, and even called Sir Isaac a fool! The minister stated to the objector, that there were between three and four hundred public institutions in London, designed to instruct the ignorant, to clothe the naked, to relieve the sick and aged, to support the orphan, the deaf, and dumb, and blind, and to send the glad tidings of salvation to all the miserable children of men. But all these institutions were founded and supported by believers in Christ, or those who made such a profession; while not a benevolent society existed, formed by avowed unbelievers. The infidel was confounded, and in a rage he left the coach.*The fruits of Christianity prove its divinity.*

**1 Corinthians 4:2** "It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful."

In the life of the late Rev. John Townsend, the following affecting fact is recorded, which is adapted to impress the minds of ministers with the importance of faithfully reproving sinners, without respect of persons:

A dying nobleman sent for the clergyman on whose ministry he had attended, and said to him, "Do you not know that my life has been wicked, and that I have violated the commandments of God? Yet you never warned me of my danger." The clergyman was silent: when the nobleman repeated the question, he replied, "Yes, my lord, your manner of living was known to me; but your kindness, and my fear of offending you, deterred me from reproving you."

"How cruel! how wicked!" said the dying man. "The provision I made for you and your family ought to have induced care and fidelity. You have neglected to warn and to instruct me, and now my soul will be eternally lost." These were the last words of one whose situation, it is greatly to be feared, has too many parallels.

**Song of Songs 2:16** "My beloved is mine, and I am his!"

A nobleman in the north of England once said to a gentleman who accompanied him in a walk, "Those beautiful grounds, as far as your eye can reach, those majestic woods on the brow of the distant hills, and those extensive mines belong to me; and those ships convey my wealth to other parts of the kingdom."

"Well, my lord," replied the gentleman, "do you see yonder little hovel that seems but a speck? There dwells a poor woman who can say more than all this, for she can say, 'Christ is mine.' In a very few years your lordship's possessions will be confined within the scanty limits of a tomb; but she will then have entered on a far nobler inheritance than your lordship now possesses—an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in Heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation."

**Hebrews 11:16** Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

The ordinary traveler expects a good home. But here the Christian pilgrim has most decidedly the advantage. However long he may be on his journey—however rugged some of the paths—though he may sometimes meet with rough usage, he will at length arrive at the end, and find that end unspeakably glorious. He whose firm step has traveled on to the grave, shall find that grave to be "the golden gate that opens on eternity!" The straight and narrow way has conducted him to the fountain of life!

The *feet*that traveled on the blessed path, now tread the streets of the heavenly Jerusalem;
the *hand*that grasped the staff of the pilgrim, shall seize the palm of victory;
the *head*that was weary and furrowed with care, shall be encircled with a diadem of glory;
the *tongue*that was accustomed to make the wilderness resound with moanings, shall make the heavenly arches echo with songs of praise;
and he who sojourned on earth with poor frail creatures, like himself, shall find his companions to be the spirits of the just made perfect; and angels, and Jesus his Redeemer, and God his portion, and there shall he remain forever!

**Psalm 84:2** "My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God."

The genuine Christian delights in the ordinances of God's house, because God is there by his Spirit and word, to enliven and comfort his mind. There the *promises*are received by him in all their preciousness. There he obtains *mercy*, and finds *grace*to help in every time of need. There his affections are transferred from earth to Heaven. There he has communion with the Father and he Son. There he will enter that upper temple, where the worship will be pure, uninterrupted, and eternal. If these, and other advantages are to be enjoyed in God's house—then will not every inconvenience be overcome, in order to obtain them?

**1 Peter 2:7** "Unto you, therefore, who believe, he is precious!"

A martyr on the way to the stake was asked whether he did not love his wife and children, who stood weeping by him? "Love them!" said he, "yes, if all the world were gold, and at my disposal, I would give it all for the satisfaction of living with them, though it were in prison. Yet, in comparison with Christ, I love them not."

**Hebrews 2:15** "Free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death."

The fear of death does not show any lack of genuine piety. You see the aversion there is to death even in birds and beasts, as well as in you; though they have no dread with regard to a future state. The fear of death is as natural to us as hunger, or thirst, or sleep; the object is only to have it properly guided and regulated.

Adam in his state of innocence, felt this fear of death, and therefore the threat was addressed to it, "In the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die!" Unless he had feared death, this would have been no threatening at all.

And Christ who was without sin, himself felt this; for he said, "Father if it be possible let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will."

Reader, cannot you conceive that a man may be attached to a thing, and not like the *way*by which it is to be obtained? Suppose a man has a diseased limb, and the removal of it is essential to his recovery. What does the man want? Not amputation, you may be sure, but recovery. And can you question his desire for the one, because he shrinks from the other? No; he longs for the cure, and only dreads the operation.

A man may have a lovely family in America; he may long to be with them; but when he comes down, and sees the Atlantic, he may shudder. You do not question his wishing to be with them, because he dreads the sea.

Just so, in a spiritual sense, you long to be in a country, even Heaven, where God, and Christ, and your best kindred dwell, while you shudder at Jordan's stream that rolls between! O Christian, love the company and the enjoyments that are there.

**Psalm 37:3** "Trust in the LORD, and do good. Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness."

The Rev. Samuel Welles, a Christian minister of the seventeenth century, constantly trusted the good providence of God, and was once told by a doctor of divinity that he lived better on Providence, than the doctor himself with all his income.

Though this good man had ten or eleven children, he declared that he had no anxiety about their support, for God would surely provide. On this principle he acted in leaving a situation which brought him £200 a year for one that yielded only £100 per annum, that his usefulness might be increased; and afterwards for the same reason he refused a living of £300.

**1 Kings 19:10** "I have been very zealous for the LORD God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword."

One principal evidence of a sincere love to Christ, is zeal for his honor. The godly man is grieved to see or hear an indignity offered to the Savior; and is ready to render every assistance in his power to promote his interest in the world. A pious soul will mourn as well for other men's sins as for his own. "My eyes run down with tears, because men keep not your commandments." He is grieved because God is dishonored. The wicked lives of others cannot wound his conscience, but they can distress his heart. The honor of religion becomes his personal concern, and when religion is wounded, he feels the injury. That professor is an unfeeling wretch, with whom it is otherwise.

When a zealous disciple hears the name of God profaned, religion abused, his heart grows hot within him, and he cannot but vindicate the honor of his Maker, in reproving the blasphemer to his face.

Never did our Savior express so strong an indignation, as when he saw men profaning the temple, and turning his Father's house into a house of merchandise and a den of thieves. He then zealously drove out those hucksters in the face of danger, and in spite of resistance.

**John 5:14** "See, you have been made well again! Do not sin any more, so that nothing worse happens to you."

Whence, O Christians, came the balm that gave ease so sweet, and so immediate to your wounds? It came from Calvary. That balm is the blood of the cross. The fountain of Christ's blood is the true pool of healing, and every disease must yield to its virtue. Nor is it at one, but at all seasons that its streams are curative!

How sweet is bodily health! You can talk of its value who are rising from the bed of languishing to mingle in the pursuits of life. You can tell its sweetness, who are saying, "In the prime of my life must I go through the gates of death and be robbed of the rest of my years?" "My spirit is broken, my days are cut short, the grave awaits me." What would I not give for the fullness of health to these wasted limbs, for the rest of health to these vexed bones, for the freshness of health to this ashen cheek!

But infinitely more precious is the health of the **soul**. It is the pledge of life eternal. It is a likeness to the Savior's image. How admirable is its beauty! How delightful is its enjoyment. When it is perfect and liable to no decline, as it will be in Heaven—your joy will be full! But, alas! while here, we live in an unfavorable climate, and from our want of caution, our spiritual health is endangered. Dwell constantly near that tree whose leaves are for the healing of the nations.

**Romans 7:13** "That sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful."

The sufferings and sorrows of Christ, shows you the horrors that sin deserves. The evil of sin is written with Christ's sin-atoning blood. Whatever enjoyment sin promises, whatever appearances it puts on, whatever argument it urges—you will find an antidote to sin in the scene of the Father's wrath poured out upon his Son. Sin gave my Savior killing sorrow—and can it give me enjoyment? It came to him in its undisguised deformity—and can its appearance to me be a pleasing show. Its flatteries and pleadings may be sweet and soft; but while I hear my Savior's groans, and their sound shall never leave me—can I listen to anything sin has to say? Shall the feet which have carried me to Gethsemane, ever bear me to the chamber of wicked indulgence? or the heart that has melted in sacred pity, be set on fire by the malice and envy of Hell? God forbid!

**Job 1:21** "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord!"

During the siege of Barcelona, in 1705, Captain Carleton witnessed the following affecting fact, which is related in his memoirs: I saw an old officer, having his only son with him, a fine man about twenty years of age, going into their tent to dine. While they were at dinner, a shot took off the head of the son. The father immediately rose up, and first looking down upon his headless child, and then lifting up his eyes to Heaven, while the tears ran down his cheeks, only said, "Father, may Your will be done." Hushed be the murmuring thought!

**Luke 23:29** "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father has appointed unto me!"

Behold here the reward of every Christian conqueror! A throne, a crown, a scepter, a palace, incorruptible treasures, an inheritance that fades not away are yours! Christ's throne, crown, scepter, palace, treasures, robes, heritage, are yours. Far superior to the jealousy, selfishness, and scorn, which admit no participation of their advantages, Christ deems his happiness completed by his people sharing it. "The glory which you gave me I have given them." "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

The smiles of my Father are sweeter to me, because my people shall share them. The honors of my kingdom are more pleasing, because my people appear with me in glory. More valuable to me are my conquests, since they have taught my people to overcome. I delight in this throne, because on it there is a place for them. I delight the more in this joy, because I can call them to enter into it!

**Hebrews 4:16** "Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

When the Redeemer poured out his soul unto death, he purchased unsearchable and inexhaustible riches for his redeemed people. These he wishes, and delights, to bestow upon them. Never is he so honored as when they ask an abundance of grace to make them eminent for piety and usefulness. He places before them the treasures of his love, and says, "Ask, and you shall receive."

Let us go to the throne of grace, and put up such petitions as may show that we have honorable views of the riches and bounties of our king.

**John 19:5** "Behold the man!"

What a spectacle to Heaven and earth! His sacred body, bearing visible impressions of torture and outrage, is so extended on the fatal tree, as to be convulsed and filled with agony in every part: his flesh torn by the brutal chastisement he received at the bloody pillar; his sacred temples lacerated by that disgraceful crown, the thorns of which by their pungency, made the blood in numerous gushing streams flow from his head; his face bearing the marks of that extravagant and vulgar brutality, that dared smite a countenance, the lineaments of which were calculated to command respect, or charm the beholder with every lovely expression of lamb-like meekness and patience. Such in the moment of his ignominious suspension on the accursed tree, was the affecting spectacle, which the crucified Jesus exhibited to men and angels.

Gracious Philanthropist! O lovely Friend of humankind! in vain had malice and torture united their efforts to fasten you to the cross, if your love to sinners, stronger than death, had not previously formed the indissoluble bond that was to bind you there, and constrained you to endure, with inimitable patience, all the horrors of Golgotha!

**Exodus 33:18** "I beseech you to show me your glory!"

Let this prayer be used constantly: in the closet, in the sanctuary, in meditation, and in the perusal of the Scriptures; then, Christians, you shall see . . .
new charms in your Lord's character,
new glory in his doctrines,
new value in his promises,
new influence in his precepts,
new brightness in his hopes.

And what is Jesus seen through a glass darkly, compared to Jesus seen face to face? What is the communion table, compared to the marriage supper of the Lamb? What is the ministry of angels, compared to the Man of Sorrows, to the songs of loftiest adoration with which they surround his throne? And soon shall you lift up your voices in that anthem, which shall proclaim the glory of him who has completed your happiness, and added to it a note higher and sweeter than is to be found in the brightest angel's praise. "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation!" Revelation 5:9

As sublime as this song is, it rises not to his merits. As unceasing as it is, it exhausts not either the worshipers or the theme. Soon shall you see Jesus coming in the glory of all the holy angels. A spectacle how grand! It is the signal of ruin to the unbelieving world, but of salvation to you. Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus.

**Revelation 21:4** "God will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever!"

Not one of the long train of diseases and calamities introduced into the world by sin, can enter Heaven. The glorious body of the saints will not be subject to sickness, or weakness, or weariness, or decay—it shall bear the bloom of immortal youth. And when myriads of ages, beyond the power of angelic calculation, shall have passed away, it shall be as strong and vigorous as ever. The trembling limb, the shattered frame, the quivering lip, the emaciated countenance, the wasted form, the furrowed cheek, the hoary head, the deep sunk eye, and the faltering voice—the rheumatism, and pain, and palsy, and fever, and all the dread diseases that prey upon the vitals, and strike the clay tenement with a sudden blow that shakes it ito its foundation, or that brings it to the grave by a slow and almost imperceptible decay—all those maladies that fill our families with gloom, our streets with mourners, and all our places of interment with the ashes of our friends, will be banished from that kingdom where the redeemed shall reign. There every eye sparkles with delight, every countenance beams with the smile of delight, every tongue drops manna, every pulse beats high with immortality, and every frame is built to sustain, without weariness, an eternal weight of glory! There shall be no bitter regrets, no sad recollections, no anxious desires, no harassing fears—for theirs is an incorruptible, undefiled, and unfading inheritance!

Theirs is . . .
a sun that never sets,
a river of pleasure that ever flows,
an ocean of felicity that cannot be exhausted,
a day without night,
a spring without winter,
pure, spiritual, unmingled, never-ending felicity!!

**Psalm 89:47-48** "Remember how short my life is, how empty and futile this human existence! No one can live forever; all will die. No one can escape the power of the grave."

When I look upon the tombs of the great, every emotion of envy dies in me;
when I read the epitaphs of the beautiful, every inordinate desire goes out;
when I meet with the grief of parents upon a tomb-stone, my heart melts with compassion;
when I see the tombs of parents themselves, I consider the vanity of grieving for those whom we must quickly follow;
when I see kings lying by those who deposed them;
when I consider rival nobles placed side by side, or the men that divided the world with their disputes, I reflect with sorrow and astonishment on the little competitions, factions, and debates of mankind;
when I read the several dates of the tombs, of some that died yesterday, and some six hundred years ago—I consider that great day, when we shall all of us be contemporaries, and make our appearance together.

**Ephesians 2:8** "By grace are you saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God!"

Mr. M'Laren and Mr. Gustart, were both ministers in Edinburgh. When Mr. M'Laren was dying, Mr. Gustart paid him a visit, and put the question to him, "What are you doing, brother?"

His answer was, "I'll tell you what I am doing; I am gathering together all my prayers, all my sermons, all my good deeds, all my evil deeds; and I am going to throw them all overboard, and swim to glory on the plank of Free Grace!"

**Mark 8:36-37** "What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

A young man celebrated for his knowledge of mathematics, settled in a village where a faithful minister of the gospel was stationed. The clergyman met him on one of his evening walks, and after some conversation, as they were about to part, addressed him as follows:

"I have heard that you are celebrated for your mathematic skill; I have a problem which I wish you to solve."

"What is it?" eagerly inquired the young man.

The clergyman answered, with a solemn tone of voice, "What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

The youth returned home, and endeavored to shake off the impression fastened on him by the problem, but in vain. In the giddy round of pleasure, in his business, and in his studies, the question still forcibly returned to him, "What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" It finally resulted in his conversion, and he became an able advocate and preacher of that gospel which he once rejected.

**Romans 10:3**For, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God.

Many measure their own piety and moral goodness, not by the sure standard of God's word, but by the impiety and immorality of other men. And, because they do not revel with the drunkard, swear with the profane; or with some lordly tyrant, grind the faces of the poor—they will conclude themselves in a fair way to Heaven. Thus they delude themselves; and *because they are not so bad as the worst, conclude themselves very good*. To argue by comparison in this concern, is the most ready and effectual way for a man to argue himself into a delusion. The hypocrite thinks himself pious, not from any goodness of his own, but from the badness of others. He entertains both hope and comfort not upon the judgment of Scripture, but in comparison with others. Beware then of self-righteousness as a rock upon which many have split!

**Lamentations 1:12** "Look around and see. Is any suffering like my suffering that was inflicted on me, that the LORD brought on me in the day of his fierce anger?"

Men may paint Christ's outward sufferings, but not that inward excellency from whence their virtue flowed; namely, his glory in himself, and his goodness to us.

Men may paint one crucified; but how can that distinguish the Savior from the criminals?

We may paint his hands and his feet fixed to the cross; but who can paint how those hands used always to be stretched forth for relieving the afflicted, and curing the diseased—or how those feet went about doing good?

We may paint the outward appearance of his sufferings; but not his soul overwhelmed with sorrow.

Men can paint the cursed tree, but not the curse of the law that made it so.

Men can paint Christ bearing the cross to Calvary, but not Christ bearing the sins of his people.

We may paint the nails piercing his sacred flesh, but who can describe eternal justice piercing his soul?

We may paint the soldier's spear, but not the arrows of the Almighty.

We may paint the cup of vinegar which he tasted, but not the cup of wrath which he drank to the lowest dregs.

We may paint the derision of the Jews, but not the desertion of the Father forsaking his Son, that he might never forsake us, who were his enemies.

The sorrows he suffered, and the benefits he purchased, are equally beyond description!

Though we can describe his hands and his feet mangled and pierced, who can describe how in one hand, as it were, he grasped multitudes of souls ready to sink into Hell, and in the other hand an everlasting inheritance to give them?

Who can describe how those bruised feet crushed the old Serpent's head, and trampled on Death, and Hell, and Sin?

We may describe the blood issuing from his spear-wound, but not the waters of life streaming from the same source—oceans of spiritual and eternal blessings.

We may paint how that blood covered his body, but not how it sprinkles the scarlet-stained souls his people, snow white.

We may paint the crown of thorns he wore, but not the crown of glory he purchased.

Happy were it for us, if our faith had as lively views of this wondrous object, as our imaginations often have of incomparably less important objects; then would the ashen face of our Savior show more powerful attractives than all the brightest objects in nature besides. Notwithstanding the gloomy aspect of death, it would discover such transcendent majesty as would make all the glory in the world lose its relish with us! We should see then, indeed, the awful frowns of justice; but these frowns are not at us, but at our enemies, our murderers—that is, our sins! The cross shows Christ's pitying his own murderers, but it shows no pity to our murderers; therefore we may see the majesty of eternal justice tempered with the mildness of infinite compassion.

Isaiah 53:5 "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."

**1 Peter 2:21** "For even hereunto were you called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that you should follow his steps."

Christian, in your severest trials, behold the suffering Redeemer! Observe what patience and fortitude he displayed under trials, compared with which yours are light indeed! Gaze upon him; and as you behold, let this be your prayer: Lamb of God, let the same mind exist also in me!

Some years ago a slave boy in one of our West India Plantations became a new creature in Christ Jesus. His master was incensed with his profession of religion, and frequently flogged him in a very cruel manner. At length this unmerciful man resolved either to make his poor slave renounce Christianity, or to flog him to death. While this manifestation of horrible cruelty was proceeding, the master, tauntingly, inquired, "What does your Jesus do for you now?"

The boy replied, "He helps me to bear dese strokes, massa, with patience."

Again, when in the very agony of death, he was asked by the same wicked man, "And now what has your Jesus done for you?" With a faltering voice, he replied, "Even dis, massa, dat me can pray for you, and forgive you!"

**Zechariah 4:6** "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

For a man to have (and every true Christian has) an ear to hear, and a heart to perceive, is to have a true spiritual light introduced into the mind by the Holy Spirit: by which alone the soul is enabled to apprehend the things of God spiritually, and to practice them effectually. And without this, we may see and see, and never perceive; and hear again and again, and never understand. Christ may discourse with us, as he did with his disciples going to Emmaus, and yet our eyes may be held in such darkness, as not to discern him. For the natural man cannot, while he remains a natural man, apprehend these things, because they are spiritually discerned.

And the reason of this is clear even from nature; because in order to apprehension, there must be a peculiar suitability between the object and the faculty: things sensible must be apprehended by sense; things intelligible must be apprehended by the understanding; and so things spiritual must be apprehended by some spiritual principle inspired from above.

**1 Thessalonians 5:25** "Brethren, pray for us."

A worthy minister of the gospel in North America, was pastor of a flourishing church. He was a popular preacher, but gradually became less acceptable to his hearers, and his congregation very much decreased. This was solely attributed to the minister; and matters continuing to get worse, some of his hearers resolved to speak with him on the subject. They did so; and when the good man had heard their complaints, he replied, "I am quite sensible of all you say, for I feel it to be true; and the reason of it is, that I have lost my prayer book." They were astonished at hearing this, but he proceeded: "Once my preaching was acceptable, many were edified by it, and numbers were added to the church, which was then in a prosperous state—but we were then a praying people. There were many who joined together in fervent prayer that my preaching might be blessed for the conversion of sinners, and for the edification of the saints. It was this that, by the blessing of God, made us prosper. But as prayer began to be restrained, my preaching became less acceptable, the church declined, and things became as they now are. But let us have recourse to the same means, and the same effects may be expected to follow."

They took the hint. Prayer meetings were begun, and punctually attended. Exertions were made to induce those who were without to attend the preaching of the word. And the result was, that the minister became as popular as he had been before, and in a short time the church was in as flourishing a state as ever.

**Romans 5:20** Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.

An Indian and a white man, being at worship together, were both brought under conviction by the same sermon. The Indian was soon led to rejoice in pardoning mercy.

The white man was long under distress of mind, and at times was almost ready to despair, but at length he was also brought to experience forgiving love. Some time after, meeting his red brother, he thus addressed him: "How is it that I should be so long under conviction, when you found comfort so soon?"

"O brother," replied the Indian, "me tell you: there come along a rich prince, he propose to give *you*a new coat; you look at your coat and say, I don't know; my coat pretty good; I believe it will do a little longer. He then offer *me*new coat; I look on my old blanket; I say, this good for nothing; I fling it right away, and accept the new coat. Just so, brother, you keep your own righteousness for some time; you loath to give it up. But I poor Indian, had none; therefore I glad at once to receive the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ."

**Acts 19:20**"So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily."

The cardinal fact of Christianity is the resurrection of Christ, as the prelude, the pattern, and the pledge of the resurrection of believers to life eternal. But against this great fact, the children of disobedience, from the Pharisees of the primitive age down to the scoffers of modern times, have leveled their batteries. Yet with such doctrines and facts, did the religion of Jesus make her way through the world. Against the superstition of the multitude against the interest, influence, and craft of their priesthood—against the ridicule of wits, the reasoning of sages, the policy of cabinets, and the prowess of armies—against the axe, the cross, and the stake, she extended her conquests from Jordan to the Thames. She gathered her laurels alike upon the snows of Alaska, the green fields of Europe, and the sands of Africa. The altars of impiety crumbled before her march—the glimmer of the schools disappeared in her light. Power felt his arm wither at her glance; and, in a short time, she who went, forlorn and insulted, from the hill of Calvary to the tomb of Joseph, ascended the imperial throne, and waved her banner over the palace of the Caesars. Her victories were not less benignant than decisive. They were victories over all that pollutes, degrades, and ruins man; in behalf of all that purifies, exalts, and saves him. They subdued his understanding to truth, his habits to rectitude, and his heart to happiness.

The Christianity of the New Testament is impregnable and imperishable. It is indeed a pyramid, whose base covers the earth—whose summit penetrates the skies—and upon whose sides stand enrolled, in illuminated characters, legible to all the inhabitants of the globe: "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

**Numbers 23:23** "Be sure your sin will find you out!"

When the late Rev. John Townsend was minister at Kingston-on-Thames, a young man, who contemplated the commission of a very awful crime, passing along the street, had his attention excited by the lighted chapel; he strolled in at the very moment the minister was reading his text, "Be sure your sin will find you out." His conscience became alarmed; the violated law of God pronounced its curses, while it bore a terrified aspect to the listening sinner, who believed detection must follow if the intended sin was committed. The good impression remained, and a holy life was the result.

**Job 2:10** "Shall we receive good at the hands of God, and shall we not receive evil?"

Be patient and submissive under severe dispensations of providence. Those trials are not joyous, but grievous; yet they will soon yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Your Heavenly Father, who knows what will best promote your sanctification, does all in wisdom and in love.

Look back, and see how he has always been doing you good. Behold him on the cross purchasing for you unsearchable riches!

Look forwards, and observe the unspeakable glory of the kingdom, prepared for you, and then ask, "Shall we receive good at his hand, and shall we not receive evil"—when that evil, properly endured, will lead to an eternal weight of glory!

**2 Chronicles 20:20** "Believe in the LORD your God, and you shall be established."

"There is one thing," said a professed infidel to one of his companions in sin, "which mars all the pleasures of my life."

"Ah," replied his companion, "What is that?"

"Why, I am afraid that the Bible is true. If I could but certainly know that death is an eternal sleep, I would be happy, and my joy would be complete. But here is the thorn that stings me! This is the sword that pierces my very soul. If the Bible is true, I am lost forever! Every hope is gone, and I am lost forever!"

This unhappy man, soon after undertook a voyage, was shipwrecked, and drowned.

SEP, 25—But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy. Acts xx. 24.

An ancient father, (Basil) was assailed by the threatenings, and allured by the promises of a Roman emperor, to abandon the truth of the gospel. Dignities and riches were offered—"Alas!" said the faithful confessor, speeches are fit to catch little children who look after such things; we are otherwise taught by the Scriptures, and are ready to suffer a thousand deaths rather than forsake

**1 Timothy 1:14** "The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly!"

When a moral man is converted, the change is not so visible, neither to himself nor to others—just as a bright line does not show itself upon a light wall.

But when the grace of God lays hold of a vile and immoral man, everyone sees the new creature. All behold it, and say, "He is a new man! The Ethiopian's skin is changed! The leopard's spots are removed! The wolf is turned into a lamb!"

When they see a Magdalen, once possessed with seven devils, now sitting at the feet of Jesus;
when they see the woman of Samaria convinced of sin and pardoned by Christ;
when they see the drunkard no more filled with wine, but filled with the Spirit;
when they see the voluptuous become self-denying;
when they see the revengeful, meek and patient;
when they see the proud, humble and lowly;
when the Divine pencil lays such bright colors and lovely features upon so dark a background
—this shows the grace of God to the greatest advantage!

**Proverbs 23:17** "Do not let your heart envy sinners, but always continue in the fear of the LORD."

Believers, submit with calmness to the afflictive dispensations of life.

There is ruin in a wicked man's *prosperity*, "The prosperity of fools shall destroy them."

There is ruin in a wicked man's *profits*, "What is a man profited if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul?"

There is ruin in a wicked man's *honors*, "Assuredly you set them on slippery places, you cast them down to destruction!"

There is ruin in a wicked man's *death*, "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness."

But there is gain in a godly man's *persecutions*, "Blessed are you when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake, for great is your reward in Heaven."

There is gain in a godly man's *afflictions*, "for our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

There is gain in a godly man's *losses*. "Truly I say unto you, there is no man that has left houses, or lands, or parents, or wife, or children for my sake, but shall receive in this life an hundred fold, and in the world to come life everlasting;'.

There is gain in a godly man's *death*. "To me to die is gain."

**Job 3:17** "There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary are at rest!"

A few more watchings, a few more fightings, a few more weeping days—and all your tears, Christians, will be wiped away!

You will then see that all your *sorrows*were mercies in disguise; that the *thorns*which hedged up your way only hindered your roving, and turned your feet into the paths of peace; that the *storm*which beat upon you wrecked you unexpectedly on a happy shore, of which before you were entirely thoughtless, and careless.

Ah, Christians! No tears then! None arising from worldly things; no cares in business; no perplexities in trade.

No tears then! None arising from bereavements of friends and relations.

No tears then! None arising from bodily sickness, accident, and infirmity. The heart will heave a sigh no more, nor the head ache again.

No more tears from the imperfection of your graces.

No more tears from the sad scenes around you.

you will be no more vexed with the filthy conversation of the ungodly.

"We know that when He appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is!"

**Psalm 119:24** "Your testimonies are my delight and my counselors."

The Bible, which contains the gospel of our salvation, is a letter from the high court of Heaven, sent to us on concerns of eternal consequence.

It is the last will and testament of the dearest friend we ever had or can have.

It is a plan of the road to glory above.

It is the precious healing balm of Gilead.

It is the invaluable treasure hid in a field; and happy is that merchant who sells all that he has, and makes it his own.

In a word, what is there not in the Bible?

Are we poor? Here is a treasury of riches.

Are we soul-sick? Here is a collection of soul-medicines.

Are we fainting? Here is a cabinet of cordials.

Are we Christless? Here is the star that leads to Christ.

Are we afflicted? Here is our solace.

Are we persecuted? Here is our protection.

Are we deserted? Here is our recovery.

Are we tempted? Here are our sword and victory.

Are we young? Here is our beauty.

Are we old? Here is our wisdom.

While we live, here is the rule of our conduct.

When we die, here is the hope of our glorification!

**Proverbs 14:32**"The righteous has hope in his death!"

The righteous has hope in his death; a hope that springs from faith in the atoning Savior; a hope that bears him up in that trying hour, and embalms him in his grave.

His is the death of the conquering hero, which secures immortality. His is the sleep from which he shall awake to immortal vigor.

The promises of God are the pillows on which he sinks to rest; and the arm of the Redeemer shall, in due time, roll away the stone from the sepulcher.

He dies to sin—to corruption—to weakness—to imperfection—to sorrow and sighing. He casts away all that is encumbering and impure.

Faith and hope are the attendants on his bed of sickness, and death lifts the veil which severed him from his God, and breaks down the barriers between him and his eternal blessedness.

People may enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; the pleasures of iniquity may be, to the vitiated taste of corrupted nature, neither few nor small; but sin is no companion for a dying bed, and the *cup of death*must be tinctured by the hope of a blessed immortality, before the trembling mortal dare raise it to his lips!

**Hebrews 12:5** "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when you are rebuked by him."

Bear cheerfully, Christian, whatever burden your Lord imposes upon you.

What is your burden compared to the load which Christ bore for you?

And *who*lays your burden on you? Is it a merciless tyrant, a hard master? No! it is one who will not break the bruised reed. "He does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." The hand that lays on your burden, will lighten it. He will not allow you to be tempted above what you are able to bear; and he will remove it at the proper season. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all." There is not a single sorrow in your lot more than is necessary; nor could an hour have been taken from your months of affliction, without injury to your best interests.

**Matthew 8:20**"The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man has nowhere to lay his head."

As a poor pious man was sitting by his little fire, one cold evening, with his wife and children, he said to them, "I have been thinking a great deal today about that Scripture, 'The Son of man has nowhere to lay his head.' How astonishing it is that we, who are unworthy, should be more favored than he was!"

"It is astonishing, indeed, father," said the eldest girl; "for though our house is poor, and our food is scanty, compared with those of rich folks—yet it seems that Jesus Christ was not so well provided for as us."

"I am glad to hear you speak in that way, Sarah," said the wife. "How happy we all are in our little dwelling this cold night, and as soon as we wish, we have beds to rest ourselves upon. As sharp and piercing as the frost is, and as bleak and stormy as the wind blows outside—we shall be comfortable and warm. And yet the Lord Jesus had nowhere to lay his head. O that this thought may make us thankful for our many mercies!"

**Zechariah 9:17** "How great is his goodness!"

How great were the **sacrifices**which Christ's goodness made!

From riches, he stooped to poverty,
from happiness, he stooped to the curse,
from glory, he stooped to shame,
from the throne, he stooped to the cross!

The dearest and sweetest of all his enjoyments, was his Father's smile; yet to save his people, he bore his Father's wrath!

He gave not the armies of Heaven, nor the riches of the universe, but *himself*for us!

How great are the **gifts**which his goodness bestows!

Pardon to the chief of sinners.

Adoption to the children of wrath.

Liberty to the captives.

Wisdom to babes.

Healing to wounded hearts.

Holy beauties to the deformed and leprous.

What are the gifts he bestows, but the liberality of goodness?

What are the consolations he imparts, but the sympathy of goodness!

What is the protection he affords, but the shield of goodness!

What is the watchfulness which he exercises, but the care of goodness!

What are the checks by which he stops us in the career of folly, but the restraints of goodness!

What is the glory he is preparing, but the crown of goodness!

And, how great is the **duration**of his goodness! Our goodness is often as the morning cloud and as the early dew; but the goodness of our Lord endures forever.

This *earth*, which is so full of his mercy, shall pass away.

*Time*, whose rolling tide spreads its bounties from day to day, shall sink into eternity.

But the Savior's goodness shall fill a nobler sphere, with blessings suited to a state of perfection, by a stream ever flowing, and ever full.

**Isaiah 33:17** "Your eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is afar off. Isaiah 33:17

Our enjoyment of God in the kingdom of Heaven is expressed by one grand striking idea—that of *seeing him*.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall *see*God."

"We shall *see*him as he is."

"Your eyes shall see the king in his beauty."

Sight is superior to every other sense, in that it is the most comprehensive and insatiable. "The eye, says Solomon, is not satisfied with seeing." It could run over and survey the beauties of one world, and be ready to travel to another. The more it takes in, the greater is its capacity to take in. In a word, sight is the only sense, to which gratification procures an appetite. It is, therefore, most judiciously chosen to communicate to our minds an idea of our future enjoyment of God.

God, is a good of that infinite and inexhaustible fullness, as to satisfy the warmest wishes and the most comprehensive desires of the soul. He alone can supply the wants of an immortal appetite. From him, as our covenant God and father, there will flow in such a torrent of delight upon all our faculties, that the soul will be even overcome, and, as it were, lost in the blissful enjoyment. As when a vessel is thrown into a river, the river first fills it, and then swallows it up. This is that ineffable and everlasting happiness which is provided for the faithful disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. O when shall I come and appear before God!

**Romans 12:12** "Continuing steadfastly in prayer."

What encouragement the Scriptures present to you, Christians, to continue steadfastly in prayer. Jesus is at the right hand of his father to present your petitions, making them acceptable by the incense of his merits. He has also promised his Holy Spirit to make intercession in you, to teach you what to ask, and in what manner to solicit his blessings.

Young disciples, prayer will be an excellent monitor against those levities and indiscretions by which many, in early life, have made both themselves and their profession the object of contempt. Will the voice of temptation be listened to by him who hears it as he comes from, or goes to, the throne of grace?

Aged saints, prayer will gladden your solitude by fellowship with Jesus. I call upon you, who have been enjoying communion with God, to love prayer, for it will dispose you to walk humbly with him. As for you who are mourning his absence, I exhort you to pour out your hearts before the Lord. Prayer will calm your impatience and animate your hope. Continue steadfastly in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.

**Ephesians 2:12-13** "Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ!"

The following custom is said to prevail in one of our European cities. Every child found begging in the streets is apprehended and carried to a charitable establishment. The moment he enters the establishment, and before he is cleaned and gets the new clothes, his portrait is painted in his ragged clothes, and precisely as he was found begging.

When his education is finished, this portrait is given to him; and he promises by an oath, to keep it all his life, in order that he may be reminded of the abject condition from which he has been rescued, and of the obligations he owes to the charitable establishment which saved him from misery, and gave him the means by which he was enabled to avoid it in future.

Just so, let the Christian often compare, or contrast rather, his former with his present state, and be excited to gratitude and praise for the happy change God has wrought upon him.

**Numbers 23:10** "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"

"I am no longer disposed," says a Jew, in writing to another, "to laugh at religion, or to plead that Christianity has no comforts in death. I witnessed the last moments of my Christian gardener, and wish I may die his death. When the physician told him he was in extreme danger, he said: 'How can that be, when God is my Father, when Jesus is my Redeemer, when Heaven is my home, and when death is the messenger of peace! The greatest risk I run is to die, but to die is to enter into complete and endless bliss!' "

**Luke 8:35** "Sitting at the feet of Jesus."

When the Rev. James Hervey lay on his death-bed, he thus wrote to a friend:

Now I apprehend myself near the close of life, and stand, as it were, on the brink of the grave, with eternity fully in my view, perhaps my dear friend would be willing to know my sentiments in this solemn situation. At such a juncture the mind is most unprejudiced, and the judgment not so liable to be dazzled by the glitter of worldly objects.

I have been too fond of reading every thing valuable and elegant, and have been peculiarly charmed with the historians, orators, and poets of antiquity. But were I to renew my studies, I would put aside these *accomplished trifles*; I would resign the delights of modern wits, amusements, and eloquence, and devote my attention to the scriptures of truth. I would sit with much greater assiduity at my Divine Master's feet, and desire to know nothing but Christ and him crucified.

**2 Corinthians 5:1-2** "Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in Heaven, not built by human hands. Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling."

Christians are not satisfied with their abode; they are aspiring after their Father's house where sin and sorrow can never come. Jesus, when he left the world, ascended to that house to prepare for them mansions of glory. Heaven, therefore, is their home. The world knows them not—it knew him not. They are only strangers and pilgrims on earth. They take many a weary step; and often meet with rough usage and trying weather. But when tempted to complain, they are prevented by the reflection that this poor world is not their home—better accommodation awaits them at their journey's end. Heaven will make amends for all!

Rowland Taylor, when going to be martyred at the stake—being asked how he was, answered:*"Never better; for I know that I am almost home!"*And looking over the meadow between him and the place where he was to be immediately burnt, he said,*"Only two stiles more to get over, and I am at my Father's house!"*

**Revelation 1:7** "Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him!"

Look at that point, far away in the ethereal regions, where the gradually lessening form of our Savior disappeared from the gaze of his disciples when he ascended to Heaven. In that point see an uncommon, but faint and undefined brightness, just beginning to appear.

It has caught the roving eye of yon careless gazer, and excited his curiosity. He points it out to a second, and a third. A little circle soon collects, and various are the conjectures which they form respecting it. Similar circles are formed, and similar conjectures made, in a thousand different parts of the world.

But conjecture is soon to give place to certainty—awful, appalling, overwhelming certainty. While they gaze, the appearance, which had excited their curiosity, rapidly approaches, and still more rapidly brightens. Meanwhile the light of the sun begins to fade before a brightness superior to his own. Thousands see their shadows cast in a new direction, and thousands of hitherto careless eyes look up at once, to discover the cause.

Now all see it, and new hopes and fears begin to agitate their hearts. The afflicted and persecuted servants of Christ begin to hope that the predicted, long-expected day of their deliverance is arrived. The wicked, the careless, the unbelieving begin to fear, that the Bible is about to prove no idle tale.

Now fiery shapes, moving like streams of lightning, begin to appear indistinctly amidst the bright dazzling cloud, which comes rushing down, as on the wings of a whirlwind. At length it reaches its destined place. Then suddenly unfolding, discloses at once a great white throne, where sits, starry resplendent, in all the glories of the Godhead, the man Christ Jesus. Every eye sees him, every heart knows him!

Too well do the wicked now know what to expect; and one universal shriek of despair rises up to Heaven, and is echoed back to earth.

But louder, far louder than the universal cry, now sounds the last trumpet—and far above all is heard the voice of the Omnipotent, summoning the dead to judgment.

New terrors now assail the living! On every side, nay, under their very feet, the earth heaves as in convulsions; graves open and the dead come forth! While, at the same time, a momentous change is effected by Almighty power on the bodies of the living. Their mortal bodies put on immortality, and are thus prepared to sustain a weight of glory, or of wretchedness, which flesh and blood could not endure.

Meanwhile, legions of angels are seen, darting from pole to pole, gathering together the faithful servants of Christ from the four winds of Heaven, and bearing them aloft to meet the Lord in the air, where he causes them to be placed at his own right hand, preparatory to the sentence which is to award to them everlasting life!

**1 Corinthians 7:29**"The time is short!"

*"Time, how short! Eternity, how long!"*Time is passing away continually. During the silent hours of night, it steals from us imperceptibly. It lessens, even while we are complaining of its shortness. There is nothing we can think, speak, or do, but it takes away some time. Our moments are gone, before we are aware. Our time is elapsed, before our designs are accomplished. "To redeem the time," should be our daily task. He is the wisest scholar who learns it best.

O fathomless Eternity!