**÷**Choice Excerpts from the following books from Thomas Watson:

A Divine Cordial

Body of Practical Divinity

The Beatitudes

The Christian Soldier

The Doctrine of Repentance

The Duty of Self-Denial

The Godly Man's Picture

The Lord's Prayer

The Mischief of Sin

The Ten Commandments

This product compiled and formatted by wlue777

÷ **A Divine Cordial**  
 by Thomas Watson

CHOICE EXCERPTS  
  
  
**If God left us!**  
  
The *sins of the ungodly* are looking-glasses in which we   
may see our own hearts. Do we see a heinous, impious   
wretch? Behold a picture of *our own* hearts! Such would   
*we* be—**if God left us!** What is in wicked men's *practice*  
—is in our *nature*. Sin in the wicked—is like fire which   
flames and blazes forth. Sin in the godly—is like fire hid  
in the *embers*. Christian, though you do not break forth   
into a flame of scandalous sin—yet you have no cause   
to boast, for there is as much sin in the *embers* of your   
nature! You have the root of all sin in you, and would   
bear as hellish fruit as any ungodly wretch—if God did   
not either *curb* you by His power, or *change* you by   
His grace!  
  
Why might not God have left you—to the same excess   
of wickedness? Think with yourself, O Christian—why   
should God be more merciful to *you*, than to another?   
Why should He snatch *you*, as a brand plucked out of   
the fire—and not him? How should this make you to   
adore free grace! What the Pharisee said *boastingly*,   
we may say *thankfully—*"God, I thank you that I am   
not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers, etc."  
  
*If we are not as wicked as others*—we should adore the   
riches of free-grace! Every time we see men hastening   
on in sin—we are to thank God that we are not such!   
If we see a crazy person—we thank God that it is not   
so with us. When we see another infected with the plague—how *thankful* are we, that God has preserved   
*us* from it! Much more when we see others under the   
power of Satan—how thankful we should be, that this   
is no longer our condition!   
  
"For we too were *once* foolish, disobedient, deceived,  
captives of various passions and pleasures, living in  
malice and envy, hateful . . . ." Tit 3:3

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**It is better to go to heaven with the few**  
  
"You can enter God's Kingdom only through the  
narrow gate. The highway to hell is broad, and  
its gate is wide for the *many* who choose the easy  
way. But the gateway to life is small, and the road  
is narrow, and only a *few* ever find it." Mat 7:13-14   
  
**It is better to go to heaven with the few**—than   
to hell in the crowd! We must walk in an opposite   
course to the people of the world.  
  
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**A beast with a man's head!**  
  
Love to God is an expansion of soul, or the inflaming   
of the affections—by which a Christian breathes after   
God as the supreme and sovereign good.   
  
"There is nothing on earth that I desire besides You."   
Psa 73:25. The Christian loves God above all other   
objects. God is the quintessence of all good things;   
He is superlatively good. The soul admiring in Him   
that constellation of all excellencies—is carried out   
in love to Him in the highest degree. God, who is   
the chief of our *happiness*—must have the chief of   
our *affections*. The creature may have the *milk* of   
our love—but God must have the *cream!* Though   
some *drops* of love may run to our kindred and   
friends—yet the *full torrent* must run out after   
Christ. Relations may lie on the *bosom*—but   
Christ must lie in the *heart!*  
  
We set a high value upon God as being the most sublime   
and infinite good. We so esteem God, as that if we have   
Him—we do not care though we lack all other things. The  *stars* vanish, when the *sun* appears. All *creatures* vanish   
in our thoughts, when the *Sun of righteousness* shines in   
His full splendor. The soul that loves God, rejoices in Him   
as in his treasure—and rests in Him as his center. The   
heart is so set upon God—that it desires no more.   
  
We must love God more for what He *is* (His intrinsic   
excellencies)—than for what He *bestows*. True love is   
not mercenary. You need not hire a mother to love her   
child. Just so, a soul deeply in love with God needs not   
be hired by rewards. It cannot but love Him—for that   
luster of beauty which sparkles forth in Him!  
  
"And we know that all things work together for  
good *to those who love God*." Rom 8:28  
  
Despisers and haters of God—have no lot or part  
in this privilege. It is *children's bread*—it belongs   
only to those who love God.   
  
This is a sharp reproof to those who do not love God,  
to such as have not a grain of love to God in their   
hearts—and are there such reprobates alive? He who   
does not love God—is **a beast with a man's head!**   
Oh wretch! Do you live upon God's bounty every day  
—yet not love Him! These are monsters in nature—  
devils in the shape of men! Let them read their doom:   
"If anyone does not love the Lord, that person is   
cursed!" 1Co 16:22

How can he expect love *from* God—who shows no   
love *to* Him? Will God ever lay such a viper in His   
bosom—as casts forth the poison of malice and   
enmity against Him?  
  
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**Temptations work for our good**

"And we know that *all things work together for good* to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose." Rom 8:28  
  
Even **temptations** are overruled for good, to the children of God. A tree which is shaken by the wind is more settled and rooted. Just so, the *blowing of a temptation* does but settle a Christian the more in grace.   
  
*Temptations are overruled for good in eight ways:*  
  
**(1.) Temptation sends the soul to prayer.** The more furiously Satan tempts, the more fervently the saint prays. The deer being shot with the dart—runs faster to the water. When Satan shoots his fiery darts at the soul—it then runs faster to the throne of grace. When Paul had the messenger of Satan to buffet him, he says, "*Three times* I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me" (2Co 12:8). That which makes us pray more, works for good.  
  
**(2.) Temptation to sin, is a means to keep from the perpetration of sin.** The more a child of God is tempted—the more he fights against the temptation. The more Satan tempts to blasphemy, the more a saint trembles at such thoughts, and says, "Away from me, Satan!" When Joseph's mistress tempted him to lust—the stronger her temptation was, the stronger was his opposition. That temptation which the devil uses as a *spur* to sin—God makes a *bridle* to keep back a Christian from sin!  
**(3.) Temptation works for good—as it abates the swelling of pride.** "To keep me from getting puffed up, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me and *keep me from getting proud!"* (2Co 12:7). The thorn in the flesh was to puncture the puffing up of pride! Better is that *temptation* which humbles me—than that *duty* which makes me proud! Rather than a Christian shall be haughty minded—God will let him fall into the devil's hands awhile, to be cured of his swelling pride!  
**(4.) Temptation works for good—as it is a touchstone to try what is in the heart***.* The devil tempts—that he may *deceive* us; but God allows us to be tempted—that He may *try* us. Temptation is a trial of our sincerity. It argues that our heart is chaste and loyal to Christ—when we can look a temptation in the face, and turn our back upon it. Many have no heart to resist temptation. No sooner does Satan come with his bait—but they yield; like a coward who, as soon as the thief approaches, gives him his purse. But he is the valorous Christian, who brandishes the sword of the Spirit against Satan, and will rather die than yield. The valor and courage of a saint is never more seen than on a *battlefield*, when he is fighting the *red dragon*, and by the power of faith puts the devil to flight. That grace is tried gold, which can stand in the fiery trial, and withstand Satan's fiery darts!  
  
**(5.) Temptations work for good—as God makes those who are tempted, fit to comfort others in the same distress.** A Christian must himself be under the buffetings of Satan, before he can speak a word in due season to him who is weary. Paul was well-versed in temptations. "We are very familiar with his evil schemes" (2Co 2:11). Thus he was able to acquaint others with Satan's cursed wiles (1Co 10:13). A man who has ridden over a place where there are bogs and quicksands—is the fittest to guide others through that dangerous way. He who has felt the claws of Satan, the roaring lion, and has lain bleeding under those wounds—is the fittest man to deal with one who is tempted. None can better discover Satan's subtle devices—than those who have been long in the *fencing school of temptation.*  
  
**(6.) Temptations work for good—as they stir up fatherly compassion in God to those who are tempted.**The child who is sick and bruised—is most looked after. When a saint lies under the bruising of temptations, Christ *prays*, and God the Father *pities*. When Satan puts the soul into a fever, God comes with a cordial; which made Luther say, that *"temptations are Christ's embraces,"* because He then most sweetly manifests Himself to the soul.  
  
**(7.) Temptations work for good—as they make the saints long more for heaven.** There they shall be out of gunshot; heaven is a place of rest, no *bullets of temptation* fly there. The eagle which soars aloft in the air, and sits upon high trees—is not troubled with the stinging of the *serpent*. Just so, when believers are ascended to heaven, they shall not be molested by the *old serpent*, the devil. In this life, when one temptation is over, another comes. This makes God's people wish for death—to call them off the battlefield where the bullets fly so quick—and to receive a victorious crown, where neither the drum nor cannon—but the harp and violin, shall be eternally sounding.  
  
**(8.) Temptations work for good—as they engage the strength of Christ.**Christ is our Friend, and when we are tempted, He sets all His power working for us. "Since He Himself has gone through suffering and temptation, He is able to help us when we are being tempted" (Heb 2:18). If a poor soul was to fight alone with *the Goliath of hell,* he would be sure to be vanquished! But Jesus Christ brings in His auxiliary forces—He gives fresh supplies of grace. "We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us!" (Rom 8:37). Thus the evil of temptation is overruled for our good.  
  
*Question*. But sometimes Satan *foils* a child of God. How does this work for good?  
  
*Answer*. I grant that, through the suspension of divine grace, and the fury of a temptation—a saint may be overcome; yet this foiling by a temptation shall be overruled for good. By this *foil,* God makes way for the augmentation of grace. Peter was tempted to self-confidence; he presumed upon his own strength; and Christ let him fall. But this wrought for his good—it cost him many a tear. "He went out, and wept bitterly" (Mat 26:75). And now he grows less self-reliant. He dared not say he loved Christ more than the other apostles. "Do you love me more than these?" (Joh 21:15). He dared not say so—*his fall into sin broke the neck of his pride!*  
The foiling by a temptation causes more *circumspection* and *watchfulness* in a child of God. Though Satan did before decoy him into sin—yet for the future he will be the more cautious. He will beware of coming within the *lion's chain* any more! He is now more vigilant and fearful of the occasions of sin. He never goes out without his spiritual armor—and he girds on his armor by prayer. He knows he walks on *slippery ground*, therefore he looks wisely to his steps. He keeps close sentinel in his soul, and when he spies the devil coming—he grasps his spiritual weapons, and displays the shield of faith (Eph 6:16).

This is all the hurt the devil does when he foils a saint by temptation—he cures him of his careless neglect; he makes him watch and pray more. When wild beasts get over the hedge and damage the grain—a man will make his fence the stronger. Just so, when the devil gets over the hedge by a temptation, a Christian will be sure to mend his fence; he will become more fearful of sin, and careful of duty. Thus the being worsted by temptation, works for good.  
  
*Objection*. But if being foiled works for good, this may make Christians careless whether they are overcome by temptations or not.  
  
*Answer*. There is a great difference between *falling* into a temptation, and *running* into a temptation. The *falling* into a temptation shall work for good—not the *running* into it. He who falls into a river is fit for help and pity—but he who desperately runs into it, is guilty of his own death. It is madness running into a *lion's* den! He who runs himself into a temptation is like king Saul—who fell upon his own sword.  
  
From all that has been said, see how God disappoints the *old serpent*—by making his temptations turn to the good of His people. Luther once said, "There are three things which make a godly man—prayer, meditation, and temptation." The *wind of temptation* is a contrary wind to that of the *Spirit*; but God makes use of this cross wind, to blow the saints to heaven!

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**Charging God with wrongdoing**  
  
"It is the Lord's will. Let Him do what He thinks best."   
1Sa 3:18  
  
One who genuinely loves God, interprets all His dealings   
in the best sense. Though He afflicts sharply—the soul   
takes all well. This is the language of a gracious spirit:   
*"My God sees what a hard heart I have, therefore He   
drives in one wedge of affliction after another—to break   
my heart. He knows how full I am of the cancer of   
covetousness, or the swelling of pride, or the fever of   
lust—therefore He gives me bitter remedies, to save my   
life. This severe dispensation is either to mortify some   
corruption—or to exercise some grace. How good is God,   
who will not let me alone in my sins—but smites my body   
to save my soul!"* Thus genuine piety puts a good gloss   
upon all God's afflictive dealings. It is Satan who makes   
us have *high* thoughts of ourselves, and *hard* thoughts   
of God. "Take away everything he has—and he will   
surely curse You to Your face!" Job 1:11   
  
"Then Job fell to the ground in worship and said, 'Naked   
I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart.   
The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the   
name of the Lord be praised.' In all this, Job did not sin   
by **charging God with wrongdoing**." Job 1:20-22   
  
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**Five sharp stings!**  
  
Many love sin, more than God. "They are haters of   
God, insolent, proud, and boastful. They are forever   
inventing new ways of sinning." (Rom 1:30)   
  
*What is there in sin—that any should love it?*   
  
Sin is a **debt**. "Forgive us our *debts*" (Mat 6:12).   
Sin is a debt which binds over to the wrath of God!   
And will you love sin? Does any man love to be in debt?   
  
Sin is a **disease**. "The whole head is *sick*" (Isa 1:5).   
And will you love sin? Will any man hug a disease? Will   
he love his plague sores?   
  
Sin is a **pollution**. The apostle calls it "*filthiness*" (Jas 1:21).

It is compared to leprosy and to poison of asps!   
  
**God's heart rises against sinners.** "My soul *loathed*   
them!" (Zec 11:8).   
  
Sin is **a hideous monster**. Lust makes a man brutish;   
malice makes him devilish! What is in sin to be loved?   
Shall we love deformity?   
  
Sin is an **enemy**. It is compared to a   
"serpent". Sin has **five sharp stings**:  
shame,  
guilt,  
horror,   
death,  
damnation!   
  
Will a man love that which seeks his death?   
Surely then it is better to love God than sin.   
God will save you—but sin will damn you!   
Is he not a fool—who loves damnation!

But *love to God* will never let sin thrive in the heart.  
The love of God withers sin. The *flower of love* kills the  *weed of sin!* How should we labor for that grace of *love   
to God*—which is *the only corrosive to destroy sin!*  
  
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**We shall leave this staff at heaven's door**  
  
*Love is* *the most abiding grace.* This will stay with us,   
when other graces take their farewell. In heaven we   
shall need no **repentance**—because we shall have no   
sin. In heaven we shall not need **patience**—because   
there will be no affliction. In heaven we shall need no  **faith**—because faith looks at unseen things (Heb 11:1).   
Then we shall see God face to face; and where there is   
vision, there is no need of faith.  
  
But when the other graces are out of date, love continues.   
And in this sense the apostle says that love is greater than   
*faith* or *hope—*because it abides the longest. "Love will last   
forever" (1Co 13:8). *Faith* is the 'staff' which we walk   
with in this life. "We walk by faith" (2Co 5:7). But **we   
shall leave this staff at heaven's door**—and only 'love'  
shall enter. Thus love carries away the crown from all the   
other graces. Love is the most long-lived grace—it is a   
blossom of eternity. How should we strive to excel in this   
grace, which alone shall live with us in heaven, and shall   
accompany us to the marriage supper of the Lamb!  
  
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**A little honey in its mouth—but it has wings!**

It is better to love God, than the world.  
  
If you set your love on worldly things, they will not satisfy. You may as well satisfy your *body* with air—as your *soul* with earth! If the globe of the world were yours—it would not fill your soul. Will you set your love on that which will never give you contentment? Is it not better to love God? He will give you that which shall satisfy your soul to all eternity!   
  
If you love worldly things, they cannot remove trouble of mind. If there is a thorn in the conscience—all the world cannot pluck it out. King Saul, being perplexed in mind, all his crown jewels could not comfort him (1Sa 28:15). But if you love God, He can give you peace when nothing else can. He can apply Christ's blood to refresh your soul. He can whisper His love by the Spirit, and with one smile scatter all your fears and disquiets.  
  
If you love the world, you love that which may keep you out of heaven. "How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!" (Mar 10:23). Prosperity, to many, is like a large sail to a small boat, which quickly overturns it. By loving the world, you love that which will endanger you. But if you love God, there is no fear of losing heaven. He will be a Rock to hide you—but not to hurt you. By loving Him, we come to enjoy Him forever.  
  
You may love worldly things—but they cannot love you in return. You love gold and silver—but your gold cannot love you in return. You give away your love to the creature—and receive no love back. But if you love God, He will love you in return. "If any man loves Me, My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him" (Joh 14:23). God will not be behindhand in love to us. For our *drop* of love to Him—we shall receive an *ocean* of His love!  
  
While you love the world, you love that which is infinitely below the worth of your souls. When you lay out your love upon the world, you *hang a pearl upon a swine*—you love that which is inferior to yourself. As Christ speaks in another sense of the birds of the air, "Are you not much better than they?" (Mat 6:26), so I say of worldly things, Are you not much better than they? You love a fair house, or a beautiful garment—are you not much better than they? But if you love God, you place your love on the most noble and sublime object—you love that which is better than yourselves. God is better than the soul, better than angels, better than heaven!  
  
You may love the world, and receive hatred for your love. Would it not vex one, to lay out money upon a piece of ground which, instead of bringing forth grain or fruit, should yield nothing but nettles? Thus it is with all earthly things—we love them, and they prove *nettles to sting us!* We meet with nothing but disappointment. But if we love God, He will not return hatred for love. "I love those who love Me" (Pro 7:17). God may *chastise* His children—but He cannot *hate* them. Every believer is part of Christ, and God can as well hate Christ, as hate a believer.  
  
You may over-love the creature. You may love wine too much, and silver too much; but you cannot love God too much. It is our sin that we cannot love God enough. How weak is our love to God! If we could love God far more than we do—yet it can never be proportionate to His worth; so there is no danger of excess in our love to God.  
  
You may love worldly things—and they die and leave you. Riches take wings! Relations drop away! There is nothing here abiding. The creature has **a little honey in its mouth—but it has wings!** It will soon fly away. But if you love God, He is "a portion forever" (Psa 73:26). As He is called a *Sun* for comfort, so a *Rock* for eternity. Thus we see, that it is better to love God than the world.  
  
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**A sea of sin—and not a drop of sorrow!**  
  
One sign of genuine love to God—is grief for sin.   
Where there is love to God—there is a grieving for   
our sins of unkindness against Him. A child who loves   
his father, cannot but weep for offending him. The   
heart which burns in love—melts in tears. "Oh! that I   
should abuse the love of so dear a Savior! Shall I give   
Him more gall and vinegar to drink? How disloyal and   
hypocritical have I been! How have I grieved His Spirit,   
trampled upon His royal commands, slighted His blood!"   
  
This opens a vein of godly sorrow, and makes the heart   
bleed afresh. "Peter went out, and wept bitterly!" That   
Peter should deny Christ after he had received such   
amazing love from Him—this broke his heart with grief!   
"He went out, and wept bitterly!"  
  
By this, let us test our love to God. Do we shed the tears   
of godly sorrow? Do we grieve for our unkindness against   
God, our abuse of His mercy, our non-improvement of the   
talents which He has given us? How far are they from   
loving God—who sin daily, and their hearts never smite   
them! They have **a sea of sin—and not a drop of   
sorrow!** They are so far from being troubled, that they   
make merry with their sins. "When you engage in your   
wickedness, then you rejoice!" (Jer 11:15). Oh wretch!   
Did Christ *bleed* for sin—and do you *laugh* at it!  
  
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**The daughter helps to destroy the mother**"And we know that all things work together for good  
to those who love God, to those who are the called  
according to His purpose." Rom 8:28  
  
Afflictions work for good to the godly, as they are   
destructive to sin. *Sin* is the 'mother', *affliction* is   
the 'daughter'; **the daughter helps to destroy   
the mother**.   
  
Sin is like the tree which breeds the worm; and   
affliction is like the worm that eats the tree.   
  
There is much corruption in the best heart; affliction   
does by degrees work it out, as the fire works out the   
dross from the gold, "The Lord did this to purge away   
his sin." (Isa 37:9)  
  
What if we have more of the *rough file*—if we have   
less *rust!* Afflictions carry away nothing but the dross   
of sin. Afflictions are the *medicines* which God uses   
to cure our spiritual diseases. Afflictions cure . . .  
the swelling of *pride*,  
the fever of *lust*,  
the cancer of *covetousness*.   
  
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**The chain which fastened Jesus to the cross!**  
  
"Because of His great love for us." Eph 2:4   
  
Love made Jesus suffer for us. Love was **the chain   
which fastened Jesus to the cross!** "Because of   
the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for His   
compassions never fail." Lam 3:22  
  
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**Glittering sins!**  
  
**Our best works are but** **glittering sins!**"We are all infected and impure with sin.  
When we proudly display our righteous  
deeds, we find they are but filthy rags.  
Like autumn leaves, we wither and fall.  
And our sins, like the wind, sweep us  
away." Isa 64:6  
  
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**Monuments of mercy**  
  
Admire and adore God's free grace in saving you—that   
God should pass over so many, that He should pass by   
the wise and noble, and that the lot of free grace should   
fall upon you! That He should take you out of a state of   
vassalage, from grinding the devil's mill—and should set   
you above the princes of the earth, and call you to inherit   
the throne of glory! Fall upon your knees, break forth   
into a thankful triumph of praise! Let your hearts be ten   
stringed instruments, to sound forth the memorial of   
God's saving mercy. There are none so deep in debt   
to free grace—as you are; and none should be so high   
mounted upon the pinnacle of thanksgiving. Say as the   
sweet singer; "I will extol You, O God my King, every   
day will I bless You, and I will praise Your name forever!"   
(Psa 145:1-2). Those who are **monuments of mercy**  
—should be trumpets of praise! O long to be in heaven,   
where your thanksgivings shall be purer and shall be  
raised a note higher!  
  
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**The idol of self-righteousness**  
  
"Not having my own righteousness" (Php 3:9).   
  
He whose heart God has touched by His Spirit, lays   
down **the idol of self-righteousness** at Christ's   
feet, for Him to tread upon. The true Christian denies   
not only **sinful** self—but **righteous** self. He becomes  
moral and pious—but he does not trust to his morality   
or piety. Noah's dove made use of her *wings* to fly,   
but trusted to the *ark* for safety.   
  
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**God calls us to glory and virtue**  
  
"In His kindness God *called you to His eternal glory*."  
1Pe 5:10   
  
This effectual call is a GLORIOUS call. We are called to   
the enjoyment of the ever blessed God. It is as if a man   
were called out of a prison—to sit upon a throne! Curtius   
writes of one, who while digging in his garden, was called   
to be king. Thus **God calls us to glory and virtue** (2Pe 1:3)  
First to virtue, then to glory. At Athens there were   
two temples, the temple of *Virtue*, and the temple of *Honor*;   
and no man could go to the temple of Honor—but through   
the temple of Virtue. Just so, God calls us first to virtue,   
and then to glory.   
  
What is the glory among men, which most so hunt after—  
but a feather blown in the air? What is it, compared to the   
weight of eternal glory? God would have us part with nothing   
for Him—but that which will damn us if we keep it. He has no   
design upon us—but to make us happy. He calls us to salvation,   
He calls us to a heavenly kingdom! Oh, how should we then,   
with Bartimeus, throw off our ragged coat of sin, and follow   
Christ when He calls!  
  
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**He opens the heart!**  
  
"And we know that all things work together for goodto those who love God, *to those who are the* ***called*** *according to His purpose*." Rom 8:28  
  
This is **an inward and effectual call**, when God wonderfully   
overpowers the *heart*, and draws the *will* to embrace Christ.   
God, by the outward call, blows a trumpet in the ear; by the   
inward call, **He opens the heart**, as He did the heart of Lydia   
(Act 16:14). The outward call may bring men to a *profession*   
of Christ—the inward call brings them to a *possession* of Christ.   
The outward call *curbs* a sinner—the inward call *changes* him!  
  
See our deplorable condition before we are called—  
  
We are in a state of **bondage**. Before God calls a man, he is   
the devil's slave. He is at the command of Satan, as the donkey   
is at the command of the driver.  
  
We are in a state of **darkness**. "You were once darkness" (Eph 5:8)  
Darkness is very disconsolate. A man in the dark is full of   
fear, he trembles every step he takes. Darkness is dangerous.   
He who is in the dark may quickly go out of the right way, and   
fall into rivers or whirlpools. Just so, in the darkness of ignorance,   
we may quickly fall into the whirlpool of hell.  
  
We are in a state of **impotency**. "When we were without   
strength" (Rom 5:6). We had no strength to resist a   
temptation, or grapple with a corruption. Sin cut the lock   
where our strength lay (Jdg 16:20). Nay, there is not   
only *impotency*—but *obstinacy*, "You always resist the Holy   
Spirit" (Acts 8:51). Besides *indisposition* to holiness, there   
is *opposition* to holiness.  
  
We are in a state of **pollution**. "I saw you polluted in your   
blood" (Eze 16:6). The mind coins only earthly thoughts;   
the heart is the devil's forge, where the sparks of lust fly.  
  
We are in a state of **damnation**. We are born under a curse.   
The wrath of God *abides* on us (Joh 3:36).   
  
This is our condition before God is pleased by a merciful call  
to bring us near to Himself, and free us from that misery in   
which we were before engulfed.  
  
God effectually calls His people by His Spirit. The Word is   
the *instrumental* cause of our conversion, the Spirit is the  *efficient* cause of our conversion. The ministers of God are   
only the pipes and organs; it is the Spirit blowing in them,   
which effectually changes the heart. "While Peter spoke,  *the Holy Spirit fell* on all those who heard the word" (Act 10:44)  
It is not the farmer's industry in ploughing and   
sowing, which will make the ground fruitful, without the   
early and latter rain. Just so, it is not the seed of the Word   
that will effectually convert, unless the Spirit puts forth His   
sweet influence, and drops as rain upon the heart. Therefore   
the aid of God's Spirit is to be implored, that He would put   
forth His powerful voice, and awaken us out of the grave of   
unbelief. If a man knocks at a gate of brass, it will not open;   
but if he comes with a **key** in his hand, it will open. Just so,   
when God, who has the key of David in His hand (Rev 3:7)   
comes, **He opens the heart**, though it be ever so fast locked   
against Him!  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**A crown which is unfading!**  
  
"And we know that all things work together for  
good *to those who love God."* Rom 8:28  
  
If we love God, everything in the world shall conspire   
for our good. We know not what fiery trials we may   
meet with—but to those who love God, all things shall   
work for good. Those things which work against them,   
shall work for them; their *cross* shall make way for a  *crown!* Every *cross*wind shall blow them to the   
heavenly port!  
  
"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind  
has imagined—what God has prepared *for those  
who love Him!"* 1Co 2:9   
  
The *eye* has seen rare sights, the *ear* has heard   
sweet music; but eye has not seen, nor ear heard,   
nor can the heart of man imagine—what God has   
prepared for those who love Him! Such glorious   
rewards are laid up that, as Augustine says, "faith  
itself is not able to comprehend them!" God has   
promised a crown of life to those who love Him   
(James 1:12). This crown encircles within it, all   
blessedness—riches, and glory, and delight, and  
it is **a crown which is unfading!** 1Pe 5:4  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**Prize their gold above God**  
  
One sign of genuine love to God, is crucifixion to the   
world. He who is a lover of God—is dead to the world.   
"The world has been crucified to me, and I to the world."  
(Gal 6:14). That is, "I am dead to the honors and   
pleasures of the world."  
  
He who is in love with God is not much in love with   
anything else. The love of God, and ardent love of   
the world—are incompatible. "If any man loves the  
world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1Jn 2:15)  
Love to God swallows up all other love—as   
Moses' rod swallowed up the Egyptian rods.   
  
If a man could live as high as the sun—what a small   
point would all the earth be. Just so, when a man's   
heart is raised above the world in the admiring and   
loving of God—how poor and diminutive are these   
things below! They seem as nothing in his eye.   
Test your love to God by this.   
  
What shall we think of those who never have enough   
of the world? They have the *cancer of covetousness*,   
thirsting insatiably after riches: "Who pant after the   
dust of the earth!" (Amo 2:7). "Never talk of your   
love to Christ," says Ignatius, "when you prefer the   
world before the Pearl of great price!" Are there not   
many such, who **prize their gold above God**? If they   
have a good farm—they care not for the water of life.   
They will sell Christ and a good conscience for money.   
Will God ever bestow heaven upon those who so basely   
undervalue Him, preferring *glittering dust* before the  *glorious Deity?*   
  
What is there in the earth, that we should so set our   
hearts upon it? The devil makes us look upon it through   
a magnifying glass! The world has no real intrinsic worth;   
it is but paint and deception!  
  
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**He never thinks of God**  
  
The first sign of genuine love to God—is the musing   
of the mind upon God. He who is in love—his thoughts   
are ever upon the object of his love. He who loves God   
is ravished and transported with the contemplation of   
God. "When I awake, I am still with You!" Psa 139:18  
God is the treasure, and where the treasure   
is—there is the heart.   
  
By this we may test our love to God. What are our   
thoughts most upon? Can we say we are ravished   
with delight, when we think on God? Have our   
thoughts gotten wings? Are they fled aloft? Do we   
contemplate Christ and glory? Oh, how far are they   
from being lovers of God—who scarcely ever think   
of God! "God is not in all his thoughts" Psa 10:4.   
A sinner crowds God out of his thoughts. **He never   
thinks of God**—unless with horror, as the prisoner   
thinks of the judge!  
  
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**How can we glorify God?**  
  
"Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever  
you do, *do everything for God's glory*." 1Co 10:31   
  
**How can we glorify God?**  
  
(1.) We glorify God—when we *aim* at His glory—when   
we make Him the first in our thoughts, and the end of   
our life. As all the rivers run into the sea, and all the   
lines meet in the center—so all our actions should   
terminate and center in God!   
  
(2.) We advance God's glory—by being *fruitful* in grace.   
"Herein is my Father glorified—that you bring forth much   
fruit" (Joh 15:8). Barrenness reflects dishonor upon God.   
We glorify God when we grow . . .  
in beauty as the lily,  
in tallness as the cedar,  
in fruitfulness as the vine.   
  
(3.) We glorify God—when we give the *praise* and glory   
of all we do unto God. When the silk worm weaves her   
curious work, she hides herself under the silk—and is not   
seen. Just so, when we have done our best, we must   
vanish away in our own thoughts—and transfer the glory   
of all to God. The apostle Paul said, "I labored more   
abundantly than them all" (1Co 15:10). One would   
think this speech savored of pride; but the apostle pulls   
off the crown from his own head—and sets it upon the   
head of free grace, "Yet not I—but the grace of God   
which was with me!"  
  
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**Why so?**  
  
"And we know that all things work together for good  
to those who love God, to those who are the called  
according to His purpose." Rom 8:28  
  
See what cause the saints have to be frequent in the   
work of thanksgiving. In this, Christians are defective,   
though they are much in supplication—yet little in   
thanksgiving. The apostle says, "In everything giving   
thanks" (1Th 5:18). **Why so?** Because God makes   
everything work for our good. We thank the physician,   
though he gives us a bitter medicine which makes us   
sick, because it is to make us well. We thank any man   
who does us a good turn; and shall we not be thankful   
to God, who makes everything work for good to us?   
  
God loves a thankful Christian. Job thanked God when   
He took all away: "The Lord has

taken away—blessed be   
the name of the Lord!" (Job 1:21). Many will thank God   
when He gives; Job thanks Him when He takes away,   
because he knew God would work good out of it. We   
read of saints with *harps* in their hands (Rev 14:2), an   
emblem of praise. We meet many who have *tears* in their   
eyes, and *complaints* in their mouths! But there are few   
with their harps in their hands, who praise God in affliction.   
  
To be thankful in affliction is a work peculiar to a saint.   
Every bird can sing in spring—but some birds will sing in   
the dead of winter. Everyone, almost, can be thankful in   
prosperity—but a true saint can be thankful in adversity.   
A godly man will bless God, not only at sun-rise—but at   
sun-set. Well may we, in the worst which befalls us, have   
a psalm of thankfulness, because all things work for good.  
Oh, be much in blessing of God—who befriends us—and   
makes all things work out to our good.  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**Let us not nourish this angry viper in our bosom!**   
  
"And we know that *all things work together for good*to those who love God, to those who are the called  
according to His purpose." Rom 8:28  
  
Learn how little cause we have then to be discontented   
at outward trials and troubles! What! Discontented at that   
which shall do us good! All things shall work for good.   
  
There are no sins God's people are more subject to, than  *unbelief* and *impatience*. They are ready either to *faint*   
through unbelief—or to fret *through* impatience. When   
men fly out against God by discontent and impatience,   
it is a sign they do not believe this text. Discontent is *an   
irrational sin*, because afflictions work for good. The devil   
blows the coals of discontent—and then warms himself at   
the fire.   
  
Oh, **let us not nourish this angry viper in our bosom!**Let this text produce patience, "All things work for good to   
those who love God!" Shall we be discontented at that which   
works for our good? If one friend should throw a bag of money   
at another, and in throwing it, should graze his head—he would   
not be troubled much, seeing by this means he had got a bag   
of money. Just so, the Lord may bruise us by afflictions—but it   
is to enrich us. These light afflictions work for us an eternal   
weight of glory—and shall we be discontented!  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**A divine chemistry**  
  
"And we know that all things work together for good  
to those who love God, to those who are the called  
according to His purpose." Rom 8:28  
  
See here the wisdom of God, who can make the worst   
things imaginable, turn to the good of the saints. He can   
by **a divine chemistry**—extract gold out of dross! God   
enriches by impoverishing; He causes the augmentation   
of grace by the diminution of an estate. When the creature   
goes further from us, it is that Christ may come nearer to   
us. God works strangely. He brings order out of confusion,   
and harmony out of discord. God often helps when there   
is least hope, and saves His people in that way which they   
think will destroy. He made use of the high priest's malice   
and Judas' treason—to redeem the world.   
  
We are apt to find fault with God's dealings with us—which   
is as if an illiterate man should censure learning, or a blind   
man find fault with the work in a landscape. "Vain man   
would be wise" (Job 11:12). Silly men will be calling the   
wisdom of God to the bar of human reason. God's ways  
are "past finding out" (Rom 9:33). They are rather to   
be admired than fathomed.  
  
How stupendous and infinite is that wisdom, that makes   
the most adverse dispensations work for the good of His   
children!  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**Good things work for hurt**  
  
"And we know that all things work together for good  
to those who love God, to those who are the called  
according to His purpose." Rom 8:28  
  
To those who are godly—evil things work for good; to   
those who are ungodly—**good things work for hurt**.   
Notice the miserable condition of wicked men. Riches   
and prosperity are not benefits, but snares to them.   
Worldly things are given to the wicked, as Michal was   
given to David—for a snare (1Sa 18:21). Their   
mercies are like poisoned bread; their tables are   
sumptuously spread—but there is a hook under the   
bait! "Let their table become a snare" (Psa 69:22).   
  
Pride and luxury are the twin offspring of prosperity.   
Riches are not only like the spider's web, unprofitable  
—but like the cockatrice's egg, pernicious. "Riches kept  
for the hurt of the owner" (Ecc 5:13). The common   
mercies wicked men have, are not loadstones to draw   
them nearer to God—but millstones to sink them deeper   
in hell (1Ti 6:9). Their delicious dainties are like   
Haman's banquet; after all their lordly feasting, death   
will bring in the bill, and they must pay it in hell!  
  
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**Spiritual declension**  
  
"You have left your first love" (Rev 2:4)  
  
Satan labors to blow out this flame of love to God.   
Of all graces, love is most apt to decay; therefore   
we had need to be the more careful to preserve it.   
If a man has a precious jewel, he will keep it safe.   
What care then should we have to keep this precious   
jewel, of love to God! It is sad to see professors   
declining in their love to God; many are in a   
**spiritual declension**—their love is decaying.  
  
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**How do afflictions make us happy?**  
  
"*Happy* is the man whom God corrects." Job 5:17  
  
**How do afflictions make us happy?** We reply   
that, being sanctified, *they bring us nearer to God.*   
  
The *magnet of mercy* does not draw us so near to   
God as the *cords of affliction*. When God sets our   
worldly comforts on fire, then we run to Him, and   
make our peace with Him. When the prodigal was   
pinched with need, then he returned home to his   
father (Luk 15:13). When the dove could not find   
any rest for the sole of her foot, then she flew to   
the ark. When God brings a deluge of affliction   
upon us, then we fly to the ark—Christ.   
  
Thus affliction makes us happy, in bringing us   
nearer to God. Faith can make use of the *waters   
of affliction*—to swim faster to Christ.  
  
Thus we see afflictions are not harmful—but beneficial,   
to the saints. We should not so much look at the evil   
of affliction, as the good. The worst that God does to   
His children—is to *whip them to heaven!*  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**God draws, and the world draws**  
  
"And we know that all things work together for good  
to those who love God, to those who are the called  
according to His purpose." Rom 8:28  
  
Afflictions work for good, as they are the means of   
making the heart more upright. In *prosperity* the   
heart is apt to be divided (Hos 10:2). The heart   
cleaves partly to God—and partly to the world. It is   
like a needle between two loadstones: **God draws,   
and the world draws.** Now God takes away the world  
—that the heart may cleave more to Him in sincerity.   
  
As we sometimes hold a crooked rod over the fire to   
straighten it; so God holds us over the fire of affliction   
to make us more straight and upright. Oh, how good   
it is, when sin has bent the soul awry from God, that   
affliction should straighten it again!  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**Hear the rod**  
  
"And we know that all things work together for  
good to those who love God, to those who are  
the called according to His purpose." Rom 8:28  
  
Affliction works for good, as it is our preacher and   
teacher—"**Hear the rod**" (Mic 6:9). Luther said   
that he could never rightly understand some of the   
Psalms—until he was in affliction.   
  
Affliction teaches what **sin** is. In the word preached,   
we hear what a dreadful thing sin is, that it is both   
defiling and damning—but we fear it no more than   
a painted lion; therefore God lets loose affliction—  
then we feel sin bitter in the fruit of it. A sick-bed   
often teaches more than a sermon. We can best see   
the ugly visage of sin in the looking-glass of affliction!  
  
Affliction teaches us to know **ourselves**. In prosperity   
we are for the most part strangers to ourselves. God   
afflicts us—that we may better know ourselves. We see   
that corruption in our hearts, in the time of affliction,   
which we would not believe was there. Water in the   
glass looks clear—but set it on the fire, and the scum   
boils up. Just so—in prosperity, a man seems to be   
humble and thankful, the water looks clear; but set   
this man a little on the fire of affliction, and the   
scum boils up—much impatience and unbelief appear.   
"Oh," says a Christian, "I never thought I had such a   
bad heart, as now I see I have! I never thought my   
corruptions had been so strong, and my graces so weak."  
  
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**The Lord gave—and the devil took away**  
"And we know that all things work together for good  
to those who love God, to those who are the called  
according to His purpose." Rom 8:28  
  
Afflictions work for good, to the godly. "It is good for   
me that I have been afflicted." (Psa 119:71)   
  
Afflictions to the godly, are *medicinal*. Out of the   
most poisonous drugs God extracts our salvation.   
Those afflictive providences which seem to be   
harmful—are *beneficial*.  
  
It is a heart-quieting consideration in all the afflictions   
which befall us—to know that God has a special hand   
in them: "The Almighty has afflicted me!" (Rth 1:21)  
  
Job eyed God in his affliction; therefore, he does not  
say, "**The Lord gave—and the devil took away**,"   
but, "The Lord gave—and the **Lord** has taken away."   
Whoever brings an affliction to us—it is God who   
sends it.  
  
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**The saints' graces** are . . .  
*weapons* to defend them,  
*wings* to elevate them,  
*jewels* to enrich them,  
*spices* to perfume them,  
*stars* to adorn them,  
*cordials* to refresh them,  
*evidences* for heaven.   
  
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**Prayer**  
  
**Prayer** is the bellows of the affections; it blows   
up holy desires and ardors of soul.   
  
**Prayer** has power with God. It is the key which   
unlocks the treasury of God's mercy.   
  
**Prayer** keeps the heart open to God—and shut to sin.   
  
**Prayer** assuages the swellings of lust.   
  
**Prayer** is the Christian's gun, which he   
discharges against his enemies.   
  
**Prayer** is the sovereign medicine of the soul.   
  
**Prayer** sanctifies every mercy (1Ti 4:5).   
  
**Prayer** is the dispeller of sorrow—by venting the grief,  
it eases the heart. When Hannah had prayed, "she   
went away, and was no more sad" (1Sa 1:18)  
  
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**The mercies of God**  
  
**The mercies of God** **humble**. "Then King David   
went in and sat before the Lord and prayed—Who   
am I, O Sovereign Lord, that You have brought me   
this far?" (2Sa 7:18)  
  
So says a gracious heart, "Lord, who am I, with all   
my unworthiness, that it should be better with me   
than others? Who am I, that I should have those   
mercies which others lack, who are better than me?   
The mercies of God make a sinner proud—but a   
saint humble.   
  
The mercies of God have a **melting** influence   
upon the soul; they dissolve it in love to God.   
God's judgments make us fear Him—but His   
mercies make us love Him. Such a melting   
influence has God's mercy—it makes the   
eyes drop with tears of love.  
  
The mercies of God make the heart **fruitful**.   
When you lay out more cost upon a field, it   
bears a better crop. A gracious soul honors   
the Lord with his substance. The golden   
showers of Gods' mercy, cause fertility.  
  
The mercies of God make the heart **thankful**.   
"What shall I render unto the Lord for all His   
benefits towards me?" (Psa 116:12) Every   
mercy is an gift of free grace; and this enlarges   
the soul in gratitude. A godly Christian is not a   
grave to bury God's mercies—but a temple to   
sing His praises.   
  
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**Those goliath lusts**  
  
"He will subdue our iniquities." Mic 7:19   
  
The power of God subdues our corruptions.   
  
*Is your* ***sin*** *strong?* God is powerful—He will   
break the head of this leviathan!   
  
*Is your* ***heart*** *hard?* God will dissolve that   
stone in Christ's blood! "The Almighty makes   
my heart soft" Job 23:16   
  
When we say as Jehoshaphat, "We have no  
might against this great army!"—the Lord   
goes up with us, and helps us to fight our   
battles. He strikes off the heads of **those   
goliath lusts** which are too strong for us!

This E-sword module was formatted by wlue777 and original document is found at www.gracegems.org

÷**Body of Practical Divinity**

By Thomas Watson

CHOICE EXCERPTS

**Mirror and fountain**   
  
The Scripture is a **mirror** to show us our sins;   
Christ's blood is a **fountain** to wash them away.  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**A lamp for my feet**  
  
"Teach me Your ways, O Lord, that I may  
**live** according to Your truth!" Psa 86:11  
  
Let us lead Scripture lives. Oh that the Bible might   
be seen printed in our lives! Obedience is an excellent   
way of commenting upon the Bible. Let the Word be   
the sun-dial by which you set your life. What are we   
the better for having the Scripture, if we do not direct   
all our speech and actions according to it? What is a   
carpenter the better for his rule about him, if he sticks   
it at his back, and never makes use of it for measuring   
and squaring his work? So, what are we the better for   
the rule of the Word, if we do not make use of it, and   
regulate our lives by it? How many swerve and deviate   
from the rule!   
  
"Your Word is **a lamp for my feet** and a light for my   
*path*." Psa 119:105. It is not only a light to our eyes   
to mend our sight--but to our feet to mend our walk.   
**Oh, let us lead Bible lives!**~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
 **Why is salvation by faith?**   
  
"For it is by grace you have been saved, through  
**faith**--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift  
of God--not by works, so that no one can boast."   
Eph 2:8-9   
  
"Jesus said to the woman--Your **faith** has saved  
you; go in peace." Luk 7:50  
  
**Why is salvation by faith?**   
  
To exclude all glorying in the creature. Faith is a   
humble grace. If salvation were by *repentance* or  *works*, a man would say, "It is *my* righteousness   
which has saved me!" But if it is of faith, where is   
boasting? *Faith fetches all from Christ--and gives   
all the glory to Christ!*   
  
God's believing people are a **humble** people.   
"Be clothed with humility." God's people shrink into   
nothing in their own thoughts. *David* cries out, "I am   
a worm, and not a man!" Though a saint, though a   
king--yet a worm! When *Moses'* face shined, he   
covered it with a veil. When God's people shine most   
in grace--they are covered with the veil of humility.   
*Abraham* the father of the faithful, confesses, "I am  
nothing but dust and ashes." "God resists the proud."  
Surely, God will not take to be with Himself in glory,  
such as whom He resists.  
  
God's believing people are a **willing** people.   
Though they cannot serve God perfectly--they serve   
Him willingly. They do not grudge God a little time   
spent in His worship. They do not murmur at sufferings.   
They will go through a sea and a wilderness--if God calls.   
"Your people shall be a willing people." This spontaneity   
and willingness is from the attractive power of God's   
Spirit. The Spirit does not force--but *sweetly draws* the   
will. This willingness makes all our services acceptable.   
God sometimes accepts of willingness without the   
work--but never the work without willingness.  
  
God's believing people are a **consecrated** people.   
They have "holiness to the Lord" written upon them.   
"You are a holy people to the Lord your God." God's   
people are separated from the world--and sanctified   
by the Spirit. The priests under the law were not only   
to *wash* in the laver--but were *arrayed* with glorious   
apparel. This was typical, to show that God's people   
are not only washed from gross sins--but adorned   
with holiness of life. They bear not only God's *name*  
--but His *image!* Holiness is God's stamp; if He does   
not see this stamp upon us, He will not own us for   
His believing people.  
  
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**Worse than a dog!**  
  
Sin cleaves to us, as blackness to the skin of the Ethiopian,   
so that we cannot get rid of it. Paul shook off the viper on   
his hand--but *we cannot shake off this inbred corruption!*   
Sin comes not, as a lodger, for a night--but as an indweller.   
"Sin which dwells in me." Rom 7:17. **Sin is an evil   
spirit, which haunts us wherever we go**.   
  
Sin, though latent in the soul, and as a spring which runs   
underground--often breaks forth unexpectedly. Christian,   
you cannot believe that evil which is in your heart, and   
which will break forth suddenly--**if God should leave you!**   
"Is your servant a dog that he should do this monstrous thing?"   
2Ki 8:13. Hazael could not believe he had such a root of   
evil in his heart, that he would rip up pregnant women. "Is   
your servant a dog?" Yes, and **worse than a dog**--when   
that corruption within is stirred up!  
  
If one had come to *Peter* and said, "Peter, within a few hours   
you will deny Christ;" he would have said, "Is your servant a   
dog?" But alas! Peter did not know his own heart, nor how far   
that corruption within would prevail upon him. The *sea* may be   
calm, and look clear; but when the wind blows--how it rages   
and foams! So though now your heart seems good--yet, when   
temptation blows--how may sin reveal itself, making you foam   
with lust and passion!  
  
Who would have thought to have found adultery in *David*,   
and drunkenness in *Noah*, and cursing in *Job*? **If God leaves   
a man to himself**--how suddenly and scandalously may sin  
break forth in the holiest men on the earth!  
  
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**See its ugly face!**  
  
*What a heinous and execrable thing is sin!* Sin is   
the distillation of all evil. The Scripture calls it the   
"accursed thing." It is compared to the venom of   
serpents, and the stench of sepulchers. The devil   
would paint sin with the pleasing colors of *pleasure*   
and *profit--*that he may make it look fair; but **I   
shall pull off the paint, that you may see its   
ugly face!** We are apt to have slight thoughts of   
sin, and say to it, as Lot of Zoar, "Is it not a little   
one?" But sin is a great evil.  
  
*Sin fetches its pedigree from hell;* sin is from the   
devil. "He who commits sin is of the devil." Satan   
was the first actor of sin, and the first tempter to   
sin. Sin is the devil's first-born!  
  
*Sin is a defiling thing--a polluting thing.* It is to the   
soul--as rust is to gold, as a stain to beauty. It makes   
the soul red with guilt, and black with filth! Sin in   
Scripture is compared to a "menstruous cloth," and   
to a "plague-sore." Sin has blotted out God's image,   
and stained the orient brightness of the soul.   
  
*Sin makes God loathe a sinner;* and when   
a sinner sees his sin--he loathes himself!   
  
*Sin stamps the devil's image on a man.* Malice is   
the devil's eye, hypocrisy his cloven foot. Sin turns   
a man into a devil. "One of you is a devil!" Joh 6:70  
  
*Sin is an act of rebellion against God.* A sinner tramples   
upon God's law, crosses His will, and does all he can to   
affront, yes, to spite God!   
  
*Sin strikes at the very Deity.* Sin is *God's would-be   
murderer.* Sin would not only unthrone God--but   
un-God Him. If the sinner could help it, God would   
no longer be God.  
  
*Sin is an act of ingratitude and unkindness.* God feeds   
the sinner, keeps off evils from him, be-miracles him   
with mercy; but the sinner not only forgets God's   
mercies--but abuses them! He is the worse for mercy;   
like Absalom, who, as soon as David had kissed him,   
and taken him into favor, plotted treason against him!  
Like the mule, who kicks the mother after she has given   
it milk. God may upbraid the sinner, "I have given you   
your health, strength, and estate; but you requite Me   
evil for good; you wound Me with My own mercies! Did   
I give you life--to sin against Me? Did I give you wages--  
to serve the devil? Is this your kindness to your Friend?"  
  
*Sin is a disease.* "The whole head is sick!" Some are sick   
with pride, others with lust, others with envy. Sin has   
distempered the intellectual part--it is a leprosy in the   
head; it has poisoned the vitals. It is with a sinner as with   
a sick patient--his palate is distempered--the sweetest   
things taste bitter to him. The Word, which is "sweeter   
than the honey-comb," tastes bitter to him. Nothing   
can cure this disease, but the blood of the Physician!  
  
*Sin is an irrational thing.* It makes a man act not only   
wickedly--but foolishly. It is absurd and irrational to   
prefer the less, before the greater. The sinner prefers   
the passing pleasures of sin, before eternal rivers of  
pleasures. Is it rational to lose heaven--for the   
indulging of a lust? Is it rational to gratify an   
enemy? When sin burns in the soul, Satan warms   
himself at this fire. Men's sins feast the devil.  
 *Sin is a painful thing.* It costs men much labor to   
pursue their sins. How do they tire themselves in   
doing the devil's drudgery! "They weary themselves   
to commit iniquity." What pains did Judas take to   
bring about his damnation! Many a man goes to   
hell, in the sweat of his brow.  
  
*Sin is the only thing God has antipathy against.*   
God does not hate a man because he is poor, or   
despised in the world. The only thing which draws   
forth the keenness of God's hatred, is sin. "Oh, do   
not do this abominable thing, which I hate!" And   
surely, if the sinner dies under God's hatred, he   
cannot be admitted into the celestial mansions. Will   
God let that man live with Him--whom He hates?   
God will never lay such a viper in His bosom!  
  
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**Well-colored dirt**  
  
Did God make our bodies out of the dust, and that   
dust out of nothing? Let this keep down pride! When   
God would humble Adam, He uses this expression,   
"You were made from dust." **Why are you proud,   
O dust and ashes?**   
  
David says, "I praise You because I am fearfully   
and wonderfully made." Your being wonderfully   
made--should make you *thankful*; your being   
made from the dust--should keep you *humble*.

If you have **beauty**, it is but **well-colored dirt!**   
  
"For you were made from dust, and to the dust  
you will return." Gen 3:19

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**The trials and sufferings of the godly**  
  
God's own people often suffer great afflictions.   
  
"This is what **the wicked** are like--always carefree,  
they increase in wealth. Surely in vain have I kept  
my heart pure; in vain have I washed my hands in   
innocence. For **I am afflicted all day long!**"   
Psa 73:12-14   
  
How can this be consistent with God's justice?  
  
'God's ways of judgment are sometimes *secret*, but   
never *unjust!'* The Lord never afflicts His people   
without a cause; He cannot be unjust towards them.   
  
There is some *good* in the godly--therefore the wicked   
afflict them; there is some *evil* in them--therefore God   
afflicts them!  
  
God's own children have their *blemishes*. "But aren't   
you also guilty of sins against the Lord your God?"   
2Ch 28:10. These *spiritual diamonds*--have they no *flaws?* Do we not read of the *spots* of God's children?   
Are not they guilty of much pride, passion, worldliness?   
Though, by their profession, they should resemble the   
birds of paradise, to fly above, and feed upon the dew   
of heaven; yet, as the serpent, they often lick the dust!  
  
*The sins of God's people*, do more provoke God than   
the sins of others. "The Lord saw this and was filled   
with loathing. He was provoked to anger by His own   
sons and daughters." Deu 32:19. The sins of *others*   
pierce Christ's side; the sins of *His people* wound His   
heart! Therefore is not God just in all the afflictions   
which befall them? "You only have I *chosen* of all the   
families of the earth; therefore I will *punish* you for   
all your sins." Amo 3:2. I will punish you sooner,   
surer, sorer--than others.  
  
**The trials and sufferings of the godly**, are to   
refine and purify them. God's *furnace* is in Zion. Is   
it any injustice in God to put His *gold* into the furnace   
to purify it? Is it any injustice in God, by afflicting His   
people, to make them *partakers of His holiness?* What   
more proclaims God's faithfulness--than to take such   
a course with them as may make them more holy?   
  
"I know, O Lord, that Your laws are righteous, and  
in faithfulness You have afflicted me." Psa 119:75

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**A sleeping lion**  
  
"Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why   
do the treacherous live at ease?" Jer 12:1  
  
Such as are highest in sin--are often highest in   
prosperity. This has led many to question God's   
justice. Diogenes, seeing a thief live on affluently,   
said, "Surely God has cast off the government of   
the world, and does not care how things go on   
here below."  
  
How can it be consistent with **God's justice**,   
that the wicked should prosper in the world?  
  
If God lets men prosper a while in their sin--His   
vial of wrath is all this while filling; His sword is   
all this time sharpening. Though God may forbear   
with men a while--yet long forbearance is not  
forgiveness. The longer God is in taking His blow,   
the heavier it will be at last! As long as there is   
eternity, God has time enough to reckon with   
His enemies!  
  
God's justice may be as **a sleeping lion**--but the   
lion will awake at last, and roar upon the sinner!  
  
"Yes, Lord God Almighty, Your punishments are  
true and just." Rev 16:7

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**Who are you, O man, to talk back to God?**  
  
"I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I  
will have compassion on whom I have compassion.  
It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or  
effort, but on God's mercy." Rom 9:15-16  
  
God has a sovereign right and authority over man.   
He can do with His creatures as He pleases. Who shall   
dispute with God? Who shall ask Him a reason of His   
doings? "**Who are you, O man, to talk back to   
God?** Shall what is formed say to him who formed   
it--*Why did you make me like this?*" Rom 9:20  
  
"Our God is in heaven and does whatever He pleases."  
Psa 115:3   
  
"The Lord does whatever He pleases in heaven and  
on earth, in the seas and all the depths." Psa 135:6  
  
God sits as judge in the highest court, and is not bound   
to give a reason for His proceedings. "He puts down one,   
and raises up another." He has *salvation* and *damnation*in His power. He has the **key of justice** in His hand, to   
lock up whomever he will, in the fiery prison of hell! And   
He has the **key of mercy** in His hand, to open heaven's   
gate to whomever He pleases! The name engraved upon   
His vesture is, "King of kings, and Lord of lords!" He sits   
Lord paramount, and who can call Him to account? The   
world is **God's house**, and shall not He do what He  
desires in His own house?   
  
"My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please!"  
Isa 46:10  
  
"Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns!"  
Rev 19:6

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**God bottles every tear!**  
  
Is God a God of infinite knowledge? This is **comfort**   
to the child of God. Christian, you set hours apart for   
God, your thoughts run upon Him as your treasure;   
God takes notice of every good *thought!* "He had a   
book of remembrance written for those who *thought*   
upon His name." You enter into your closet, and pray   
to your Father in secret; **He hears every sigh and   
groan!** "My groaning is not hidden from You." You   
water the seed of your prayer with tears--**God bottles   
every tear!** "You keep track of all my sorrows. You   
have collected all my tears in Your bottle. You have   
recorded each one in Your book!" Psa 56:8  
  
The infiniteness of God's knowledge is a comfort, in   
the case of saints who have not a clear knowledge of   
themselves. They find so much corruption--that they   
judge they have no grace. "If it is so--why am I thus?  
If I have grace, why is my heart in so dead and earthly   
a frame?" Oh remember, God is of infinite knowledge.  
He can spy grace where you cannot; He can see grace   
hidden under corruption, as the stars may be hidden   
behind a cloud. God can see that holiness in you, which   
you cannot discern in yourself. He can spy *the flower   
of grace* in you, though overtopped with *weeds*.   
  
"Because there is some good thing in him." God sees   
some good thing in His people--when they can see no   
good in themselves; and though they judge themselves   
harshly, He will forgive their sins and infirmities.

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**God sees through these fig-leaves!**  
  
"My eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden  
from Me, nor is their sin concealed from My eyes!"  
Jer 16:17  
  
If God is a God of infinite knowledge, then see **the   
folly of hypocrisy**. Hypocrites carry it fair with   
men--but care not how bad their hearts are; they   
live in secret sin. "They say--How can God know?   
Does the Most High have knowledge?" "What does   
God know? Can He judge through thick darkness?"   
"God has forgotten, He hides His face, **He will   
never see it!**"   
  
But, "His understanding is infinite!" He has a **window**   
to look into men's hearts! He has a **key** to open up the   
heart. "Your Father who *sees in secret*." God sees in   
secret. As a merchant enters debts in his book, so God   
has His debt-book, in which He enters every sin!  
  
The hypocrite thinks to disguise and juggle with God--but  
God will unmask him. "God shall bring every work into   
judgment, with every secret thing." "For they have done   
outrageous things . . . **I know it and am a witness to   
it**--declares the Lord." Jer 29:23  
  
The hypocrite hopes he shall color over his sin, and   
make it look very good. *Absalom* masks over his   
treason with the pretense of a religious vow. *Judas*   
cloaks his covetousness, with the pretense of "charity   
to the poor." *Jehu* makes religion a cloak for his selfish   
design. But **God sees through these fig-leaves!**   
  
He who has an **eye** to see--will find a **hand** to punish!  
  
Since God is infinite in knowledge, we should always feel   
as under *His omniscient eye*. "I have set the Lord always   
before me." The consideration of *God's omniscience* would   
be preventive of much sin. The eye of **man** will restrain   
from sin; and will not **God's eyes** much more?   
  
"Will he even assault the queen right here in the palace,   
**before my very eyes?** the king roared." Est 7:8. Will   
we sin when our Judge looks on? Would men **speak** so   
vainly, if they considered God overheard them? What care   
would people have of their words, if they remembered that   
God heard, and His pen was writing everything down in   
heaven? Would they commit **immorality**, if they believed   
God was a spectator of their wickedness, and would punish  
them in hell for it? Would they **defraud** in their dealings,   
and use false weights, if they knew God saw them; and   
for making their weights lighter--would make their   
damnation heavier?  
  
Is God omniscient, and His eye chiefly upon the heart?   
Then be **sincere**--be what you seem! "The Lord does not   
look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward   
appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." 1Sa 16:7 *Men* judge the heart--by the actions.  *God* judges the actions--by the heart.

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**The best friend--but the worst enemy!**  
  
Woe to all such, as have God against them. He lives   
forever to be avenged upon them. "Can your heart   
endure, or can your hands be strong in the day that   
I shall deal with you?" Such as oppose His *people*,   
trampling these *jewels* in the dust; and such as live   
in contradiction to God's Word--engage the Infinite   
Majesty of heaven against them! How dreadful will   
their case be! "As surely as I live, when I sharpen   
My flashing sword and begin to carry out justice,   
I will bring vengeance on My enemies and repay   
those who hate Me!"  
  
If it is so dreadful to hear the lion *roar*, what must   
it be when he begins to *tear* his prey? "Consider   
this, you who forget God, lest I tear you in pieces!"   
Oh that men would think of this--who go on in sin!   
Shall we engage the great God against us? **God   
strikes slow--but heavy! "**Have you an arm like   
God?" Can you strike such a blow? God is **the best   
friend--but the worst enemy!** If He can *look* men   
into their grave, how far can He *throw* them? "Who   
knows the power of His wrath?" What fools are they,   
who, for a drop of pleasure--drink a sea of wrath!   
  
Paracelsus speaks of a craze some have, which   
will make them die dancing. Just so--**sinners   
go dancing to hell!**

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**What is the chief end of man?**  
  
Question: **What is the chief end of man?**Answer: **Man's chief end is to glorify God,   
and to enjoy Him forever.**  
  
"My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When  
can I go and meet with God?" Psa 42:2  
  
Is the enjoyment of God in this life so sweet? How   
wicked are those who prefer the enjoyment of their   
lusts, before the enjoyment of God! 'The lust of the   
flesh, the lust of the eye, the pride of life,' is *the   
evil trinity* they worship.   
  
Lust is an inordinate desire or impulse, provoking the   
soul to that which is evil. Lust, like a feverish heat, puts   
the soul into a flame. Aristotle calls sensual lusts, *brutish*,  
because, when any lust is violent--reason and conscience  
cannot be heard. These lusts besot and brutalize the man.  
  
How many make it their chief end, not to enjoy *God*--but  
to enjoy *their lusts!* Lust first bewitches with pleasure--and   
then comes the fatal dart! This should be a flaming sword   
to stop men in the way of their carnal delights--**Who, for   
a drop of pleasure, would drink a sea of wrath?**

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**A weeping creature**  
  
"Open to Me, My sister, My darling, **My dove**,  
My flawless one." Son 5:2   
  
Christ calls His spouse His "dove". The dove is **a   
weeping creature**. Grace dissolves and liquefies   
the soul, causing a spiritual thaw. The sorrow of   
the heart, runs out at the eye.   
  
A godly heart grieves that it is not more holy.   
It troubles him that he falls short of the rule and   
standard which God has set. "I should", he says,   
"love the Lord with all my heart. But how defective   
my love is! How far short I come of what I should   
be, no, of what I might have been!"  
  
A godly man sometimes weeps out of the sense   
of God's love. Gold is the finest and most solid of   
all the metals, yet it is soonest melted in the fire.   
Gracious hearts, which are golden hearts--are the   
soonest melted into tears, by the fire of God's love.  
  
A godly person weeps because the sins he commits   
are in some sense worse than the sins of other men.   
The sin of a justified person is very odious, because   
it is a sin of *unkindness*. Peter's denying of Christ was   
a sin against *love*. Christ had enrolled him among the   
apostles. He had taken him up into the Mount and   
shown him the glory of heaven in a vision. Yet after   
all this mercy, it was base ingratitude that he should   
deny Christ. This made him go out and 'weep bitterly.'   
He baptized himself, as it were, in his own tears.   
  
The sins of the godly go nearest to God's heart.   
  
The sins of the wicked--*anger* the Lord.   
The godly man's sins*--grieve* Him.   
  
The sins of the wicked--pierce Christ's *side*.   
The sins of the godly--wound His *heart*.   
  
How far from being godly--are those   
who scarcely ever shed a tear for sin!

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**If our hearts are not rocks**  
  
"And being found in fashion as a man, **He humbled  
Himself**, and became obedient unto death, even the  
death of the cross." Php 2:8  
  
See here the astonishing humility of Christ. That Christ   
should clothe Himself with our flesh--a piece of that earth   
which we tread upon--oh infinite humility! For Christ to be   
made flesh, was more humility than for the angels to be   
made worms! He stripped Himself of the robes of His glory,   
and covered Himself with the rags of our humanity!   
  
*Christ's humiliation* consisted in His being born, and  
that in a poor condition; and His undergoing . . .  
the miseries of this life,  
the cursed death of the cross,  
and the wrath of God.  
  
The prime cause of Christ's humiliationwas free grace!  
Love was the intrinsic motive. Christ came to us, out   
of pity and love. Not our *deserts*--but our *misery,*caused Christ to humble Himself. This was a plot of   
free grace--a design of pure love! *Christ incarnate*,   
is nothing but 'love' covered with flesh!As Christ's   
assuming our human nature was a masterpiece of   
wisdom, so it also was a monument of free grace!  
  
Behold the infinite love of Christ! Had not He been   
made flesh--we would have been made a curse! Had   
He not been incarnate, we would have been incarcerate,   
and had been forever in the prison of hell.   
  
Consider **where** Jesus came from. He came from   
heaven, and from the richest place in heaven--His   
Father's bosom, that hive of sweetness.  
  
Consider **for whom** Jesus came. Was it to His friends?   
No! He came for sinful man--who had defaced His image,   
and abused His love, and rebelled against Him! Yet He came   
to man, resolving to conquer *our obstinacy* with *His kindness.*   
  
If He would come to any, why not to the *fallen angels*?   
The angels are of a more noble origin, are more intelligent   
creatures, and more able for service! But behold the love of   
Christ--He did not come to the fallen angels--but to sinful   
mankind!   
  
Among the several wonders of the *magnet* is that it will not   
draw *gold* or *pearl--*but despising these, it draws the *iron* to   
itself--one of the most inferior metals. Just so, Christ leaves   
angels, those noble spirits, the gold and the pearl--and   
comes to poor sinful man, and draws him into His embraces!  
  
Consider in what **manner** Jesus came. He came not in   
the majesty of a king, attended with His royal retinue  
--but He came poor.   
  
Consider the **place** Jesus was born in--  
a feeding trough was His cradle,  
the cobwebs were His curtains,  
the beasts were His companions!  
  
Christ was so poor, that when He needed money,   
He had to work a miracle to obtain it. When He   
died, He made no will.  
  
Consider **why** Jesus came. That He might take   
our sins upon Him--and so appease God's wrath   
for us, and bring us into His kingdom!  
  
He was poor--that we might become rich!  
  
He was born of a virgin--that we might be born of God!   
  
He took our flesh--that we might have His Spirit!   
  
He lay in the feeding trough--that we might lie in paradise!   
  
He came down from heaven--that we might go up to heaven!   
  
And what was all this, but love? **If our hearts are not   
rocks**, this love of Christ should affect us. "May you   
experience the love of Christ, though it is so great you   
will never fully understand it!" Eph 3:19

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**Do not be proud of your fine feathers!**  
  
Behold here a sacred riddle or paradox--*"God was manifest   
in the flesh."* That *man* should be made in God's image, was   
a wonder--but that *God* should be made in man's image, is   
a greater wonder!  
  
That the Ancient of Days--should be born;   
that He who thunders in the heavens--should cry in the cradle;   
that He who rules the stars--should suck the breast;   
that Christ should be made of a woman--and of that  
woman which He Himself made;   
that the mother should be younger than the child she bore;   
this is the most astonishing miracle! *"God was manifest in   
the flesh"* is a mystery we shall never fully understand until   
we come to heaven, when our *light* shall be clear, as well as   
our *love* perfect.  
  
"He humbled Himself and became obedient to  
death--even death on a cross!" Php 2:8   
  
"God made Him who had no sin--to be sin for us!"   
2Co 5:21   
  
This was the lowest degree of Christ's humiliation.   
That Christ, who would not endure sin in the *angels*,   
should endure to have sin imputed to *Himself*--is the   
most amazing humility that ever was!  
  
Christian! Learn to be humble! Do you see *Christ* humbling   
Himself--and are *you* proud? It is the humble saint, who is   
Christ's picture! Christians, **do not be proud of your fine   
feathers!** Have you an **estate**? Do not be proud. The earth   
you tread on is richer than you! It has mines of gold and   
silver in its depths. Have you **beauty**? Do not be proud. It   
is but water mingled with dirt! Have you **skill** and **abilities**?   
Be humble. Lucifer has more knowledge than you! Have you  **grace**? Be humble. It is not of your own making--it was   
*given* to you by God. You have more *sin* than grace; more  *spots* than beauty. Oh look on Christ--this rare pattern of   
humility--and be humbled! It is a sad sight, to see *God*   
humbling Himself--and *man* exalting himself; to see a  *humble Savior*--and a *proud sinner!* God hates the very   
semblance of pride! "I hate pride and *arrogance*!"   
Pro 8:13  
  
"If God," says Augustine, "did not spare the angels   
when they grew proud; will He spare you--who are   
but *dust* and *sin*?"

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**Walking pictures of Christ!**  
  
"Leaving you an example--so that you  
should follow in His steps." 1Pe 2:21  
  
"The one who says he remains in Him should  
walk just as He walked." 1Jn 2:6   
  
"I have set you an example that you should  
do as I have done for you." Joh 13:15   
  
**True religion is to imitate Christ.**   
There are four things in which we should   
labor to be like Christ.   
  
1. Be like Christ in DISPOSITION.  
He was of a most sweet disposition.   
He has a heart to pity us.  
He has breasts to feed us.  
He has wings to cover us.   
  
He would not break our heart--but with *mercy*. Let us   
be like Him in sweetness of disposition. Do not be of a   
morose spirit. It was said of Nabal, "He's so ill-tempered   
that no one can even talk to him!" Some are so sour, and   
breathe forth nothing but revenge! Or they are like those   
two men in the gospel, "possessed with devils, coming   
out of the tombs. They were so *violent* that no one could   
pass that way." Let us be like Christ in mildness and   
sweetness. Let us pray for our enemies--and conquer   
them by love. David's kindness melted Saul's heart.   
A frozen heart will be thawed, with the fire of love.  
  
2. Be like Christ in HUMILITY.   
"He humbled himself." He left the bright robes of His   
glory--to be clothed with the rags of our humanity--a   
wonder of humility! Let us be like Christ in this grace.   
Humility is the glory of a Christian. We are never so   
lovely in God's eyes--as when we are black in our own   
eyes. In this let us be like Christ. Indeed, what cause   
have we to be humble--if we look *within* us, *about* us,  
*below* us, and *above* us!  
  
If we look **within** us--here we see our sins represented   
to us in the looking-glass of conscience--lust, envy, passion.   
Our sins are like vermin crawling in our souls. "How many  
are my iniquities!" Job 13:23. Our sins are as the sands   
of the sea for *number*; as the rocks of the sea for *weight!*   
Augustine cries out, "My heart, which is God's temple--is   
polluted with sin!"  
  
If we look **about** us--there is that which may humble us.   
We may see other Christians outshining us in graces, as   
the sun outshines the lesser planets. Others are *laden* with   
fruit--and perhaps we have but here and there, a berry!  
  
If we look **below** us--there is that which may humble us.   
We may see the mother earth, out of which we came.   
The earth is the most ignoble element. "They were viler   
than the earth." Job 30:8.   
  
"Then the Lord God formed the man out of the *dust* from   
the ground." Gen 2:7. "You will return to the ground   
from which you came. For you were made from *dust*, and   
to the *dust* you will return." Gen 3:19. You who are   
so proud, behold your pedigree--you are but *walking dirt!*   
And will you be proud? What is man? The son of dust!   
And what is dust? The son of nothing!  
  
If we look **above** us; there is that which may humble us.   
If we look up to heaven, there we may see God resisting   
the proud. God pursues the proud in vengeance. He threw   
*proud Lucifer* out of heaven! The *proud man* is the mark   
which God shoots at--and *He never misses the mark!*   
Oh then--be like Christ in humility!  
  
3. Be like Christ, in the contempt of the WORLD.   
Christ was not ambitious for titles or honor. He *declined*   
worldly dignity and greatness--as much as others *seek* it.   
When they would have made Him a king--He refused it.  
He chose rather to ride upon the foal of a donkey, than   
be drawn in a chariot. He chose rather to hang upon a   
wooden cross--than to wear a golden crown! He scorned   
the pomp and glory of the world. He ignored secular   
affairs. "Who made Me a judge?" He did not come into   
the world to be a judge--but a Redeemer. He minded   
nothing but heaven.   
  
Let us be made like Him--in heavenliness and contempt   
of the world. Let us not be ambitious for the empty honors   
and glories of the world. Let us not purchase the world--  
with the loss of our soul. What wise man would damn  
himself--to grow rich? or throw his soul down to hell--to  
to build up an earthly estate?   
  
Be like Christ in a holy contempt of the world.  
  
4. Be like Christ in HOLINESS of life.   
No temptation could fasten upon Him. Temptation to Christ,   
was like a spark of fire upon a marble pillar, which glides off.   
"As the One who called you is holy, you also are to be holy in   
all your conduct." 1Pe 1:15.   
  
A Christian should be both a magnet and a diamond!   
A **magnet**--in drawing others to Christ; a **diamond**--in casting a sparkling luster of holiness, in his life.   
Oh let us be . . .  
so **just** in our dealings,  
so **true** in our promises,  
so **devout** in our worship,  
so **unblamable** in our lives;  
that we may be the **walking pictures of Christ!**

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**How shall we know if we have saving faith?**  
  
By the noble *fruits* and *effects* of saving faith.  
  
True faith is a **Christ-prizing** grace--it puts a high   
valuation upon Christ. "To you who believe--He is   
precious." See how Paul styles all things in comparison   
with Christ, "I count all things but rubbish, that I may   
win Christ." Do we set a high estimate upon Christ?   
Could we be willing to part with the *wedge of gold*  
--for the *Pearl of great price?*  
  
True faith is a **refining** grace. Faith is in the soul as   
fire among metals--it refines and purifies. *Morality*   
may wash the outside--but faith washes the inside.   
"Having purified their *hearts* by faith." Faith makes   
the heart a *holy of holies*. Faith is a virgin-grace;   
though it does not take away the *life* of sin--yet it   
takes away the *love* of sin. Examine if your hearts   
are an unclean fountain, sending out the mud and   
mire of pride and envy. If there are legions of lusts   
in your soul, there is no faith. Faith is *a heavenly   
plant*, which will not grow in an impure soil.  
  
True faith is an **obediential** grace. "The obedience   
of faith." Faith melts our will into God's. It runs at God's   
call. If God commands duty (though cross to flesh and   
blood) faith obeys. "By faith Abraham obeyed." Faith is   
not an *idle* grace. As it has an *eye* to see Christ--so it   
has a *hand* to work for Him. It not only *believes* God's   
promises--but *obeys* His commands. It is not having   
knowledge that will evidence you to be believers; the   
devil has knowledge, but lacks obedience--and that   
makes him a devil. The true obedience of faith, is a   
*cheerful* obedience. God's commands do not seem   
grievous. Have you obedience, and obey cheerfully?   
Do you look upon God's command as your *burden*--  
or *privilege*; as an *iron fetter* about your leg--or as   
a *gold chain* about your neck?  
  
True faith is an **assimilating** grace. It changes the   
soul into the image of the object; it makes it like Christ.   
Never did any look upon Christ with a believing eye--but   
he was made like Christ. A deformed person may look on   
a beautiful object, and not be made beautiful; but faith   
looking on Christ--transforms a man, and turns him into   
His similitude.

Looking on a *bleeding* Christ--causes a soft bleeding heart.

Looking on a *holy* Christ--causes sanctity of heart.

Looking on a *humble* Christ--makes the heart humble.

As the chameleon is changed into the color of that   
which it looks upon--so faith, looking on Christ,   
changes the Christian into the similitude of Christ.  
  
True faith **grows**. All living things grow. Growth of faith   
is seen by doing duties in a more spiritual manner, with   
more fervency. When an apple has done growing in  *bigness*, it grows in *sweetness*. Just so, duties performed  
in love and are sweeter, and come off with a better relish.

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**The Lord has two heavens**  
  
"Just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in  
all you do; for it is written--Be holy, because I  
am holy." 1Pe 1:15-16  
  
God is not drawn to any person's outward beauty,   
great abilities, noble blood or worldly grandeur. But   
He is drawn to a heart embellished with holiness.   
Christ never admired anything but *the beauty of   
holiness*. He slighted the glorious buildings of the   
temple--but admired the woman's faith, and said,   
"O woman, great is your faith!" As a king delights   
to see *his image* upon a piece of coin; so where   
God sees *His* *likeness*--He gives His *love!* **The Lord   
has two heavens** to dwell in--and the holy heart   
is one of them!

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**Spiritual joys**  
  
What are the differences between **worldly** joys   
and **spiritual** joys? The *gleanings* of spiritual joys,   
are better than the *vintage* of the worldly joys.  
  
**Spiritual joys** help to make us BETTER; worldly   
joys often make us worse. "I spoke unto you in   
your *prosperity*; but you said--I will not hear."   
**Pride** and **luxury** are the *two worms which   
are bred from worldly pleasures.*   
  
But spiritual joy is cordial medicine, which   
not only *comforts*, but *purifies*--  
it makes a Christian more holy;  
it causes an antipathy against sin;  
it infuses strength to live and suffer for Christ.   
Some colors not only *delight* the eye--but   
*strengthen* the sight. Just so, the joys of God   
not only *refresh* the soul--but *strengthen* it.  
"The joy of the Lord is your strength."   
  
**Spiritual joys** are INWARD, they are *heart* joys.   
"Your *heart* shall rejoice." True joy is hidden within;   
worldly joy lies on the outside, like the dew which   
wets the leaf. "Laughter can conceal a heavy heart;   
when the laughter ends, the grief remains." Like a   
house which has a gilded frontispiece--but all the   
rooms within are in shambles. But spiritual joy lies   
most within. "Your *heart* shall rejoice." Divine joy   
is like a spring of water, which runs underground.   
Others can see the *sufferings* of a Christian--but   
they cannot see his *joy*. His joy is hidden manna  
--hidden from the eye of the world; he has joyful   
music which others cannot hear. The *marrow* lies   
within--the best joy is within the heart.  
  
**Spiritual joys** are SWEETER than worldly joys.   
"Your love is sweeter than wine!" Spiritual joys are   
a Christian's festival; they are the golden pot, and   
the sweet manna. They are so sweet, that they make   
everything else sweet! Spiritual joys sweeten health   
and estate, as sweet water poured on flowers makes   
them more fragrant and aromatic. Divine joys are so   
delicious and ravishing, that they put our mouth out   
of taste for earthly delights; just as he who has been   
drinking cordials, tastes little sweetness in water.   
Paul had so tasted these divine joys, that his mouth   
was out of taste for worldly things. The world was   
crucified to him--it was like a dead thing, he could   
find no sweetness in it.   
  
**Spiritual joys** are more PURE; they are not tempered   
with any bitter ingredients. A sinner's joy is mixed with   
dregs--it is embittered with fear and guilt--he drinks   
*wormwood wine*. But spiritual joy is not muddied with   
guilt--but like a crystal stream, it runs pure. Spiritual   
joy is a rose without prickles; it is honey without wax.  
  
**Spiritual joys** are SATISFYING joys. "Ask, that your   
joy may be *full*." Worldly joys can no more fill the heart,  
than a drop can fill an ocean! They may please the palate   
or imagination--but cannot satisfy the soul. "No matter   
how much we **see**--we are never satisfied. No matter   
how much we **hear**--we are not content." Ecc 1:8.   
But the joys of God satisfy. "Your comforts delight my   
soul." Psa 94:19. There is as much difference between   
spiritual joys and earthly joys--as between a banquet   
which is *eaten*--and one which is *painted* on the wall!  
  
**Spiritual joys** are STRONGER joys than worldly joys.   
"Strong consolation." Heb 6:18. They are strong joys   
indeed, which can bear up a Christian's heart in trials   
and afflictions. "Having received the word in *much*   
*affliction*--with joy." These joys are *roses which grow   
in winter!* These joys can sweeten the bitter waters of   
Marah! He who has these joys--can gather grapes from   
thorns, and fetch honey out of the carcass of a lion!   
At the end of the *rod*--a Christian tastes *honey!* "As   
sorrowing--yet always rejoicing."   
  
**Spiritual joys** are UNWEARIED joys. Other joys, when   
in excess, often cause loathing; too much honey nauseates.   
One may be tired of *pleasure--*as well as *labor*. King Xerxes   
offered a reward to him who could find out a *new* pleasure.  
But the joys of God, though they satisfy--yet they never glut.   
A *drop* of joy is sweet--but the more of this wine the better!   
Such as drink of the joys of heaven--are never glutted. Their   
satiety is without loathing, because they still desire more of   
the joy with which they are satiated.  
  
**Spiritual joys** are ABIDING joys. Worldly joys are soon   
gone. Such as *bathe in the perfumed waters of pleasure*--  
may have joys which *seem* to be sweet--but they are *swift*.   
They are like meteors--which give a bright and sudden flash,   
and then disappear. But the joys which believers have are   
abiding; they are a blossom of eternity--a pledge of those   
*rivers of pleasure* which run at God's right hand! "In Your   
presence is abundant joy; in Your right hand are eternal   
pleasures!" Psa 16:11  
  
If God gives His people such joy in this life, oh! then, what   
glorious joy will He give them in heaven! "Enter into the *joy*   
of your Lord!" God keeps His best wine until last. What joy   
will that be--when the soul shall forever bathe itself in the  
pure and pleasant fountain of God's love! What joy will that   
be--to see the orient brightness of Christ's face, and have   
the kisses of those lips which drop sweet-smelling myrrh!   
How may this set us all longing for that place where *sorrow*   
cannot live--and where *joy* cannot die!

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**You have but a little way to go!**  
  
"Our salvation is *nearer* now than when we  
first believed." Rom 13:11  
  
You are within a few days march of heaven!   
Salvation is near to you. Christians, it is but a   
little while, and you will be done *weeping* and  *praying*--and be *triumphing!* You shall put off   
your *mourning garments*--and put on white   
robes! You shall put off your *battle armor*--and   
put on a victorious crown! You are almost ready   
to commence eternal glory!  
  
When a man is almost at the *end* of a race--will   
he tire, or faint away? **You have but a little   
way to go**--and you will set your foot in heaven!   
Though the way is uphill and full of thorns; yet   
you have gone the greatest part of your way,   
and shortly shall rest from your labors!  
  
"Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father  
has been pleased to give you the kingdom!"  
Luk 12:32

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**For to me, to live is Christ**  
  
Paul was a great admirer of Christ. He desired to know   
nothing but Christ, and Him crucified. "**For to me, to   
live is Christ** and to die is gain!" Php 1:21  
  
"For to me, to live is Christ." That is, "Christ is my life!"   
Or thus, "My life is made up of Christ." As a wicked man's   
life is made up of sin, so Paul's life was made up of Christ  
--he was full of Christ. That I may give you the sense of   
the text more fully, take it in these three particulars:  
  
[1] "For to me, to live is Christ," that is--**Christ is the   
PRINCIPLE of my life.** I fetch my spiritual life from Christ,   
as the branch fetches its sap from the root. "Christ lives in me."   
Gal 2:20. Jesus Christ sends forth life into me, to quicken me   
to every holy action. Thus, Christ is the principle of my life;   
from His fullness I live--as the branch lives from the root.  
  
[2] "For to me, to live is Christ," that is--**Christ is the   
END of my life.** I live not for myself--but for Christ. All   
my living, is to do service to Christ. "Whether we live, we   
live unto the Lord." Rom 14:8. We lay out ourselves wholly   
for Christ. The design of our life is to exalt Christ, and to   
make the crown upon His head flourish. In this sense, Christ   
is the *end* of my life--when my whole life is a living for Christ.  
  
[3] "For to me, to live is Christ," that is--**Christ is the   
JOY of my life.** Psa 43:4, "God my exceeding joy,"  
or the cream of my joy. A Christian can rejoice in Christ,  
when worldly joys are gone. When the *tulip* in a garden   
withers--a man still rejoices in his *jewels* which are locked   
up in the house. Just so--when worldly joys are gone--a   
saint can rejoice in Christ, the pearl of great price. In this   
sense, Christ is the joy of my life--if Christ were gone, my   
life would be a death to me.  
  
"For to me, to live is Christ!" Christ is the **principle** of   
my life, the **end** of my life, the **joy** of my life. If we can   
say, "For to me, to live is Christ," we may comfortably   
conclude, "and to die is gain!"

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**A love letter sent to you from God**  
  
"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly."  
Col 3:16   
  
STUDY the Scripture. It is a copy of God's will. Be   
Scripture-men, Bible-Christians. Search the Scripture,   
as for a vein of silver. This blessed Book will fill your   
head with knowledge, and your heart with grace!  
  
There is **majesty** sparkling in every line of Scripture.  
  
There is a **melody** in Scripture. This is that blessed   
harp which drives away sadness of spirit. How sweetly   
does this harp of Scripture sound, what heavenly music  
does it make in the ears of a distressed sinner, especially   
when the finger of God's Spirit touches this instrument!  
  
There is **divinity** in Scripture. It contains the marrow   
and quintessence of true religion. It is a rock of diamonds,   
a mystery of piety. The lips of Scripture have grace poured   
into them. The Scripture speaks of faith, self-denial, and all   
the graces which, as a chain of pearls, adorns a Christian.  
  
Oh, then, search the Scripture! Had I the tongue of angels,   
I could not sufficiently set forth the excellency of Scripture.   
It is a spiritual telescope, in which we behold God's glory;   
it is the tree of life, the oracle of wisdom, the rule of manners,   
the heavenly seed of which the new creature is formed.   
  
'The two Testaments,' says Austin, 'are the two breasts which   
every Christian must suck, that he may get spiritual nourishment.'   
These holy leaves of Scripture are for the healing of our souls.   
  
The Scripture is **profitable** for all things. If we are deserted--  
here is spiced wine that cheers the heavy heart; if we are   
pursued by Satan--here is the sword of the Spirit to resist him;   
if we are diseased with sin's leprosy--here are the waters of the   
sanctuary, both to *cleanse* and *cure*. Oh, then, search the   
Scriptures!   
  
Read the Bible with **reverence**. Think, in every line you   
read--that *God is speaking to you*. The ark wherein the   
Word was put was overlaid with pure gold, and was carried   
on bars, that the Levites might not touch it. Exo 25:14.   
Why was this--but to give reverence to the Word?   
  
Read with **seriousness**. It is matter of life and death;  
by this Word you must be tried and judged.   
  
Read the Word with **affection**. Get your hearts quickened   
with the Word. Labor that the Word may not only be a lamp   
to direct--but a fire to warm. Read the Scripture, not only as   
a history--but as **a love letter sent to you from God**, which   
may affect your hearts. Pray that the same Spirit who wrote   
the Word may assist you in reading it; that God's Spirit would   
show you the wonderful things of His law, so that the Word  
will become effectual.

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**Immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine!**  
  
If God is infinite, see what a full portion the saints have.   
They have Him who is infinite, for their portion! His fullness   
is an infinite fullness; and He is infinitely sweet, as well as   
infinitely full. He is infinitely full of beauty and of love. His   
riches are called *unsearchable*, because they are infinite.   
Stretch your thoughts as much as you can, there is that   
in God which exceeds; it is an infinite fullness.   
  
"Now to Him who is able to do **immeasurably more than   
all we ask or imagine!**" Eph 3:20. What can an   
ambitious person ask? He can ask crowns and kingdoms,   
millions of worlds; but God can give more than we can ask,   
nay, more than we can imagine, because He is infinite!  
  
We can imagine--what if all the dust were turned to silver;  
what if every flower were a ruby; what if every sand in the   
sea were a diamond; yet God can give more than we can   
imagine, because He is infinite. **Oh, how rich are they   
who have the infinite God for their portion!** Well   
might David say, "Surely I have a delightful inheritance!"  
  
We may go with the bee from flower to flower--but we shall   
never have full satisfaction until we come to the infinite God!   
Jacob said: "I have enough!" In the Hebrew it is, "I have all!"   
because he had the infinite God for his portion!   
  
God being an infinite fullness, there is no fear of lack for any   
of the heirs of heaven. Though there are millions of saints and   
angels who have a share in God's riches, yet He has enough   
for them all--because He is infinite! Though a thousand men  
behold the sun--there is light enough for them all. Put ever so   
many buckets into the sea--there is water enough to fill them.   
Though an innumerable company of saints and angels are to be   
filled out of God's fullness, yet God, being infinite, has enough   
to satisfy them. God has land enough to give to all His heirs.   
There can be no lack, in that which is infinite.

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**Totus oculus**  
  
"Him who is **perfect in knowledge**." Job 37:16  
  
God's knowledge is **infallible**; there is no mistake in   
His knowledge. Human knowledge is subject to error.   
A physician may mistake the treatment of a disease;   
but God's knowledge is unerring. He can neither deceive,   
nor be deceived. He cannot deceive--because He is   
truth; nor be deceived--because He has infinite wisdom.  
  
God's knowledge is **instantaneous**. Our knowledge is   
successive--one thing after another. God knows things   
past, present, and to come--at once. They are all   
before Him in one entire prospect.  
  
God's knowledge is **retentive**; He never loses any of His   
knowledge; He *remembers* as well as *understands*. Many   
things elapse out of our minds--but God's knowledge is   
eternalized. Things transacted a thousand years ago,   
are as fresh to Him as if they were done but the last   
minute! Thus He is perfect in knowledge.  
  
God is **totus oculus**, "All eye!"   
  
It ought to be so; for He is the "Judge of all the world."   
There are so many causes to be brought before Him, and   
so many people to be tried, that He must have a *perfect   
knowledge*--or He could not do justice. A human judge   
cannot proceed without a jury; the jury must search the   
cause, and give in the verdict. But God can judge without   
a jury. He knows all things in and of Himself, and needs   
no witnesses to inform Him. A human judge judges only   
matters of *fact*--but God judges the *heart!* He not only   
judges wicked *actions*--but wicked *designs!* He sees the   
*treason of the heart*, and punishes it.

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**Enough to put them into a cold sweat!**  
  
The sinner takes liberty to sin; he breaks God's laws  
with greediness, as if he could not sin fast enough.   
  
Remember--the *pleasures of sin* are but for a season,  
but the torments of the wicked are forever! Sinners   
have a short feast--but a long reckoning!   
  
"The smoke of their torment rises forever and ever,  
and they will have no relief day or night." Rev 14:11  
  
Here is thunder and lightning to the wicked. God   
is eternal, therefore the torments of the wicked are   
eternal! God lives forever; and as long as God lives,   
He will be punishing the damned! Remember, one   
of God's names is *Eternal*, and as long as God is   
eternal, He has time enough to reckon with all   
His enemies!  
  
Origen erroneously thought, that after a thousand   
years, the damned would be released out of their   
misery. But the *worm,* the *fire*, the *prison*--are   
all eternal.   
  
Eternity is a sea without bottom and banks. After   
millions of years, there is not one minute in eternity   
spent; and the damned must be ever burning--but   
never consumed; always dying--but never dead.   
"They shall seek death--but shall not find it."   
  
The fire of hell is such, as *multitudes of tears* will   
not quench it; and length of time will not finish it!  
The vial of God's wrath will be always dropping upon   
the sinner! As long as God is eternal, He lives to be   
avenged upon the wicked.   
  
Oh eternity! eternity! who can fathom it? Mariners   
have their plummets to measure the depths of the   
sea; but what line or plummet shall we use to fathom   
the depth of eternity? The breath of the Lord kindles   
the infernal lake, (Isa 30:33) where shall we get   
buckets to quench *that* fire?   
  
Oh eternity! If all the body of the *earth* and *sea* were   
turned to sand, and all the *air* up to the starry heaven   
were nothing but sand--and a little bird should come   
every thousand years, and fetch away in her bill but   
the tenth part of a grain of all that heap of sand; what   
numberless years would be spent before that vast heap   
of sand would be fetched away! Yet, if at the end of all   
that time, the sinner might come out of hell--there would   
be some *hope*. But that word "Forever" breaks the heart!  
  
What a terror is this to the wicked--**enough to put   
them into a cold sweat**--to think, as long as God is   
eternal, He lives forever to be avenged upon them!

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**A divine chemistry**  
  
"For our momentary light **affliction** is producing  
for us an absolutely incomparable eternal weight  
of **glory**!" 2Co 4:17  
  
The wisdom of God is seen in making the most   
desperate evils, work to the good of His children.   
As several poisonous ingredients, wisely tempered   
by the skill of the apothecary, make a sovereign   
medicine--so God makes the most deadly afflictions   
work together for the good of His children. He uses  
severe afflictions to purify them, and prepare them   
for heaven.   
  
These *hard frosts* hasten the spring flowers of glory!   
The wise God, by **a divine chemistry**, turns our   
afflictions into cordials. He makes His people gainers   
by losses; and turns their crosses into blessings!

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**Sweet in the mouth, but bitter in the belly**  
  
See the evil effects of sin!  
  
*Sin has degraded us of our honor.* God made us in His   
own image; but sin has debased us. Sin has plucked   
off our coat of innocence, and now it has debased us,   
and turned our glory into shame.  
 *Sin disquiets the peace of the soul.* "But the wicked are   
like the tossing sea, which cannot rest, whose waves cast   
up mire and mud. "There is no peace," says my God, "for   
the wicked." Isa 57:20-21. Whatever defiles, disturbs.   
As poison corrupts the blood, so sin corrupts the soul. Sin   
breeds a trembling at the heart; it creates fears, and there   
is "torment in fear." Sin makes sad convulsions in the   
*conscience*. Judas was so terrified with guilt and horror,   
that he hanged himself to quiet his conscience. In order  
to ease his conscience--he threw himself into hell.  
  
*Sin produces all temporal evil.* It is the Trojan horse,   
which has sword, and famine and pestilence, in its   
belly. Sin is a coal, which not only blackens--but   
burns. Sin creates all our troubles; it puts gravel into   
our bread, and wormwood in our cup. Sin rots the   
name, consumes the estate, buries loved ones.   
  
*Sin unrepented of, brings final damnation.* The canker   
which breeds in the rose is the cause of its perishing;   
just so--the corruptions which breed in men's souls are   
the cause of their damning. Sin's pleasure will turn to   
sorrow at last; like the book the prophet ate--**sweet   
in the mouth, but bitter in the belly**. Sin brings   
the wrath of God--what tears can quench that fire?

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**A dish which men cannot refrain from**  
  
"How long will you love vanity?" Psa 4:2   
  
How strange it is, that anyone should love such a deadly   
evil as sin! Sin is **a dish which men cannot refrain from**,   
though it makes them sick. What pity it is, that so sweet an   
affection as *love,* should be poured upon so filthy a thing as   
sin! Sin brings a sting in the conscience, and a curse in the   
estate; yet men love it. A sinner is the greatest self-denier;   
for his sin he will deny himself a part in heaven.  
  
Do anything rather than sin. Oh, hate sin! There is more evil   
in the least sin--than in the greatest bodily evils which can   
befall us. There is more evil in a drop of sin--than in a sea of   
affliction! Affliction is like a *rip* in a coat--but sin a *stab* at the   
heart! In affliction there is some good--in this lion there is   
some honey to be found. "It is good for me that I was afflicted."   
Psa 119:71. "Affliction is God's flail to thresh off our husks.   
Affliction does not consume--but refines." (Augustine) But there   
is no good in sin; it is the quintessence of evil. Sin is worse than   
hell; for the pains of hell are a burden to the creature only; but   
sin is a burden to God!  
  
Is sin so great an evil? Then how thankful should you be to God,   
if He has taken away your sin! "I have taken away your sins."   
Zec 3:4. If you had a disease on your body--how thankful would   
you be to have it taken away! Much more to have sin taken away.   
God takes away the *guilt* of sin by pardoning grace, and the *power*of sin by mortifying grace.

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**The devil's workshop**  
  
"The human heart is most deceitful and desperately  
wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?" Jer 17:9  
  
Sin has defiled the heart. The heart is deadly wicked.   
It is a lesser hell. In the heart are legions of lusts,   
obdurateness, infidelity, hypocrisy, sinful lusts. It boils   
as the sea--with passion and revenge. "The hearts of   
men, moreover, are full of evil and there is madness   
in their hearts while they live." Ecc 9:3. The   
heart is **the devil's workshop**, where all mischief is   
framed.

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**The effectual call**  
  
"Those He predestined, He also **called**." Rom 8:30  
  
The **cause** of the effectual call is God's electing love.   
It is not because some are more *worthy* to partake   
of the heavenly calling than others. What worthiness   
is in us? What worthiness was there in *Mary Magdalene*,   
out of whom seven devils were cast? What worthiness   
in the *Corinthians*, before God called them by His gospel?   
They were "idol worshipers, adulterers, male prostitutes,   
homosexuals, thieves, greedy people, drunkards, abusers,   
and swindlers." 1Co 6:9-10. Before effectual calling,   
we are not only "without strength," but "enemies to   
God." So that the foundation of effectual calling is   
election--and not merit.  
  
The effectual call is **powerful**. God puts forth infinite  
power in calling home a sinner to Himself. He not only   
puts forth His *voice*--but His *arm!* He conquers the pride   
of the heart, and makes the stubborn will, to yield and   
stoop to His grace; He makes the stony heart bleed.   
The effectual call is mighty and powerful. God puts forth   
a divine energy, nay, a kind of omnipotence; it is such   
a powerful call, that the will of man has no power   
effectually to resist.  
  
Consider what you were **before** God called you! "You   
were dead, doomed forever because of your many sins!"   
Eph 2:1. When God called Paul, he found him   
persecuting; when he called Zacchaeus, he found him   
using extortion. When God calls a man by His grace, He   
finds him seeking after his lusts; as when Saul was called   
to the kingdom, he was seeking the donkeys. Admire   
God's love, exalt His praise--that He should call you   
when you were in the hot pursuit of sin!   
  
What mercy is this--that God should call **you**, and pass   
by others! "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in   
Your sight!" That God should pass by wise and noble  
people; or people of sweeter disposition, better morals,  
greater abilities, guilty of less vice--and that the lot of   
free grace should fall upon you--oh, the astonishing   
love of God!   
  
As God so governs the *clouds*, that He makes them   
rain upon one place, and not upon another--just so,   
at a *sermon* the Lord opens the heart of one, and   
another is no more affected with it than a deaf man   
with the sound of music! Here the banner of *free   
grace* is displayed!  
  
When two are living together--husband and wife, or   
father and child--that God should call one by His grace,  
and leave the other in his sins, and let the other perish   
eternally--oh infinite rich grace! How should they that   
are called be affected with God's sovereign love! How   
should the *vessels of mercy* run over with thankfulness!   
Such as are *trophies of mercy*, should be trumpeters of   
praise. Thus Paul, being effectually called by God, and   
seeing what a debtor he was to free grace, breaks forth   
into admiration and gratitude, "Thanks be to God for   
His indescribable gift!" 2Co 9:15

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**There are many roaring devils around us!**  
  
There is nothing that more troubles a child of God, than   
that he fears he shall never hold out. "These weak legs   
of mine," he says, "will never carry me to heaven." But   
he is kept by the power of God! Once in Christ--forever   
in Christ. A believer may fall from some *degrees* of grace;  
but not from the *state* of grace.   
  
How despairing is the Arminian doctrine of *falling from   
grace!* Today a saint--tomorrow a reprobate; today a   
Peter--tomorrow a Judas! This is like boring a hole in   
a vessel--to make all the wine of his joy run out. Were   
the Arminian doctrine true, what comfort would it be--to   
have one's name written in the book of life--if it might   
be blotted out again? But be assured, for your comfort,  
that grace--if it is *true*--though ever so *weak*, shall   
persevere.   
  
"Who are **kept by the power of God** through  
faith unto salvation." 1Pe 1:5   
  
See whence it is--that believers persevere in holiness.   
It is to be ascribed solely to the power of God. It is   
a wonder that any Christian perseveres, if you consider:   
  
(1.) **Corruption within.** There is more sin than grace;  
yet grace is habitually predominant. Grace is like a   
spark in the sea--it is a wonder that it is not quenched!   
It is a wonder that sin does not destroy grace.  
  
(2.) **Temptations without.** Satan envies us happiness,   
and he raises his militia, and stirs up persecution. He   
shoots his *fiery darts of temptations--*which are called   
*darts* for their swiftness, *fiery* for their terribleness. We   
are every day beset with devils! As it was a wonder that   
Daniel was kept alive in the midst of the roaring lions,   
so **there are many roaring devils around us**--and   
yet we are not torn in pieces! Now, whence is it, that   
we stand against these powerful temptations? We are   
kept by the power of God!  
  
(3.) **The world's old snares--riches and pleasure.**   
How many have been shipwrecked upon these *golden*   
rocks! "Demas has deserted me, because he loved this   
present world." 2Ti 4:10   
  
What a wonder any persevere in holiness--that the *earth*   
does not choke the fire of all holy affections! Whence is   
this, but from the power of God? We are kept by His power.  
  
"My sheep hear My voice, I know them, and they follow Me.  
I give them eternal life, and *they will never perish--ever!*  
No one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who  
has given them to Me, is greater than all. No one is able  
to snatch them out of the Father’s hand!" Joh 10:27-29  
  
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**Losers!**  
  
"The hopes of the *godly* result in happiness, but   
the expectations of the *wicked* are all in vain."   
Pro 10:28  
  
See the great difference between the death of   
the godly and the wicked. The *godly* are great   
gainers at death--but the *wicked* are great  
**losers** at death. **They lose four things:**  
  
(1.) They lose the **world**; and that is a great   
loss to the wicked. They laid up their treasure   
upon earth, and to be turned out of it all at   
once is a great loss.  
  
(2.) They lose **their souls**. Mat 16:26-27.   
The soul is more precious than the whole world!  
But the sinner's soul is lost; not that the souls   
of the wicked are *annihilated* at death--but   
*tormented!*  
  
(3.) They lose **heaven**. Heaven is the region   
of happiness and perfection.   
  
(4.) They lose all **hope**. Though they lived wickedly,   
they *hoped* God would be merciful, and they hoped   
they would go to heaven. Their hope was not an   
*anchor*--but *a spider's web!* At death they lose their   
hopes, and see they did but flatter themselves into   
hell! "Such is the destiny of all who forget God; so   
perishes the hope of the godless. What he trusts in   
is fragile; what he relies on is a spider's web."   
Job 8:13-14. It is dreadful to have *life* and *hope*   
cut off together!   
  
"When a wicked man dies, his hope perishes."   
Pro 11:7  
  
"The desire of the righteous ends only in good,  
but **the hope of the wicked** only in wrath."  
Pro 11:23  
  
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÷**Body of Practical Divinity cont'd**

**The best friend!**  
  
"Man is born to **trouble**." Job 5:7  
  
He is heir to trouble, it is his birthright. You may as well separate weight from lead, as trouble from the life of man.  
  
Death frees a believer from all the troubles and encumbrances to which this life is subject. "*Sin* is the seed sown--and *trouble* is the harvest reaped!" Euripides. Life and trouble are married together. There is more in life to *trouble* us, than to *tempt* us! Parents divide a portion of sorrow to their children, and yet leave enough for themselves.  
  
King Henry's emblem was a crown hung in a bush of thorns. There is a far greater proportion of bitterness, than pleasure in this life. "I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon." Pro 7:17. For one sweet ingredient there were two bitter; for the sweet cinnamon, there were bitter myrrh and aloes.   
  
A man's grace will not exempt him from troubles. "My years have been few and difficult." Gen 47:9. Thus said a godly patriarch, though he had met with God. "I have seen God face to face!" and yet he had his troubles. There are many things to embitter life and cause trouble--but death frees us from them all!   
  
(1.) Death frees a believer from CARE. The mind is full of perplexed thoughts--how to bring about such a design; or how to prevent such an evil. The Greek word for care comes from a primitive in the Greek, which signifies, to cut the heart in pieces. Care torments the mind; wastes the spirits. Care is a spiritual canker, which eats out the comfort of life. Death is its only cure!   
  
(2.) Death frees a believer from FEAR. Fear is the epilepsy of the soul, which sets it shaking. "There is torment in fear." Fear is like Prometheus' vulture gnawing the heart. There is a mistrustful fear--a fear of lack; and a distracting fear--a fear of danger; and a discouraging fear--a fear that God does not love us. These fears leave dreadful impressions upon the mind. But at death, a believer is freed from these torturing fears! He is as far from fear--as the damned are from hope. The grave buries a Christian's fear!

(3.) Death frees a believer from LABOR. "All things are *wearisome*, more than one can say." Ecc 1:8. Some labor with their bodies--others with their minds. God has made a law, "In the sweat of your face, you shall eat bread." But death gives a believer a quietus--it takes him off from his hard labor. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord: they rest from their labors." They no longer need to work--for they have entered upon their reward! They no longer need to fight--for they have the crown set on their head! "They rest from their labors."   
  
(4.) Death frees a believer from SUFFERING. Believers are as a lily among thorns; or as the dove among vultures. The wicked have an antipathy against them; and secret hatred will often break forth into open violence. "He who was born after the flesh, persecuted him who was born after the Spirit." The *dragon* is described with seven heads and ten horns. j. He *plots* with the seven heads, and *pushes* with the ten horns. But at death, the godly shall be freed from the molestations of the wicked! *They shall never more be pestered with these vermin!* "There the wicked cease from troubling." Job 3:17. Death does to a believer, as Joseph of Arimathea did to Christ--it takes him down from the *cross*. The eagle which flies high, cannot be stung with the serpent. Death gives the soul the wings of an eagle--to fly above all the venomous serpents here below!  
  
(5.) Death frees a believer from TEMPTATION. Though Satan is a conquered enemy--yet he is a *restless* enemy. "Be careful! Watch out for attacks from the Devil, your great enemy. He *prowls* around like a roaring lion, looking for some victim to devour." 1Pe 5:8. He *prowls* about--he is always going about his diocese. He has his snares and his darts! One he tempts with riches, another with beauty. It is a great trouble to be continually followed with temptations; it is as bad as for a virgin to have her chastity daily assaulted. But death will free a child of God from temptation, so that *he shall never again be vexed with the old serpent!* After death has shot its dart--the devil will be done shooting his! *Grace* puts a believer out of the devil's *possession*--but only *death* frees him from the devil's *temptation!*   
  
(6.) Death frees a believer from SORROW. A cloud of sorrow often gathers in the heart--and drops into tears! "My life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing." It was part of the curse, "In sorrow you shall bring forth." Gen 3:16. Many things occasion sorrow: sickness, lawsuits, treachery of friends, disappointment of hopes, and loss of estate. "Don't call me *Naomi* (that is, *pleasant*). Instead, call me *Mara* (that is, *bitter*), for the Almighty has made life very bitter for me." Rth 1:20.  
  
*Sorrow is the evil spirit which haunts us!* "The people *wept* loudly. So they named that place *Bochim* (that is, *weeping*)." Jdg 2:4-5. *The world is a Bochim!* Rachel wept for her children; some grieve that they have no children, and others grieve that their children are unkind. Thus we spend our years with sighing. *The world is a valley of tears!* But death is the funeral of all our sorrows! "God will wipe away every tear from their eyes!" Rev 7:17. Then Christ's spouse puts off her mourning garments; for "how can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them?" Mat 9:15. Thus death gives a believer his quietus--it frees him from sin and trouble. "The last enemy to be destroyed is death." 1Co 15:26. Though the apostle calls death the **last enemy**--yet it is **the best friend!** "To me to die is gain!"  
  
See here that which may make a true saint willing to die. Death will set him out of gunshot, and free him from sin and trouble! There is no cause for weeping--to leave a valley of tears--to leave the stage on which *sin* and misery are *acted*. Believers are here in a strange country, why then should they not be willing to leave it? Death beats off their fetters of sin, and sets them free! Who goes weeping--when released from a jail?  
  
Besides our own sins, there are the sins of *others*. The world is a place where Satan's throne is; a place where we see God daily dishonored. Lot, who was a bright star in a dark night, felt his righteous soul tormented with the filthy lives of the wicked. 2Pe 2:7. To see God's truths adulterated, and His glory eclipsed--wounds a godly heart. It made David cry out, "Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar." Kedar was Arabia, where Ishmael's posterity lived. It was a cut to David's heart to dwell there. O then, be willing to depart out of the tents of Kedar!  
  
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**The sweetest hours**  
  
Be exhorted to prize the written Word.   
  
"I have treasured the words of His mouth  
more than my daily bread." Job 23:12  
  
David valued the Word more than gold.   
  
The Word is the field where Christ the pearl   
of great price is hidden! In this sacred mine   
we dig, not for a wedge of gold--but for a   
weight of glory! The Scripture is a sacred   
eye-salve to illuminate us. Prov. 6:63, 'The   
commandment is a lamp, and the law is light.'   
The Scripture is the chart and compass by   
which we sail to the new Jerusalem.   
  
The Word is a sovereign cordial in all distresses.   
What are the promises, but the water of life to   
renew fainting spirits? Is it sin which troubles   
you? Here is a Scripture cordial.   
  
Do outward afflictions disquiet you? Here is   
a Scripture cordial. Psa 91:15, 'I will be   
with him in trouble, I will deliver him.' Thus,   
as manna was laid up in the ark, so promises   
are laid up in the ark of Scripture.   
  
The Scripture will make us wise. Wisdom is   
above rubies. Psa 119:104, 'By Your precepts   
I get understanding.' The Scriptures teach a   
man to know himself. They unmask Satan's   
snares and stratagems. 2Co 2:2. 'They   
make one wise to salvation.' 2Ti 3:15.   
They show us the way to the heavenly  
kingdom.  
  
David counted the Word 'more desirable than   
gold, even the finest gold. They are sweeter   
than honey, even honey dripping from the   
comb.' Psa 19:10. There is that in Scripture   
which may breed delight. Well then may we   
count those **the sweetest hours**, which are   
spent in reading the holy Scriptures; well may   
we say with the prophet, 'Your words were   
found, and I ate them. Your words became   
a delight to me and the joy of my heart.'   
Jer 15:16  
  
Oh, then, highly prize the Scriptures.   
  
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**True 'holy water'**  
  
"True worshipers will worship the Father in spirit  
and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the  
Father seeks. God is spirit, and His worshipers  
must worship in spirit and in truth." Joh 4:23-24  
  
See how God is delighted with spiritual worship.   
This is the savory meat which God loves. How few   
mind this! They give Him more dregs than souls;   
they think it enough to bring their duties, but not   
their hearts!  
  
To worship God in spirit, is to worship Him without   
ceremonies. The ceremonies of the law, which God   
Himself ordained, are now abrogated, and out of date.   
Christ the *substance* being come, the *shadows* fly away;   
and therefore the apostle calls the legal ceremonies,  
carnal rites.  
  
To worship God in spirit, is to worship Him with the   
utmost zeal and intenseness of soul. The more spiritual   
any service is--the more excellent it is. The spiritual   
part of duty is the fat of the sacrifice: it is the soul   
and quintessence of true religion. It is not *pomp* of   
worship--but *purity*, which God accepts.   
  
*Repentance* is not in the outward severities used to   
the body--such as penance, fasting, and chastising   
the body--but it consists in the sacrifice of a broken   
heart. The **true 'holy water'** is not that which the   
pope sprinkles--but is distilled from the penitent eye.   
  
*Thanksgiving* does not stand in church-music, the   
melody of an organ--but rather in making melody   
in the heart to the Lord. Eph 5:19.   
  
*Prayer* is not the tuning of the voice into a heartless   
confession, or counting over a few prayer beads;  
but it consists in sighs and groans, Rom 8:26.   
When the *fire of fervency* is put to the *incense of   
prayer*--then it ascends as a sweet fragrance to God.  
  
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**They are never out of His eye**  
  
God is infinite. He fills all places, and is everywhere   
present. This is dreadful to the wicked. God is their   
enemy, and they cannot escape Him, nor flee from   
Him--for He is everywhere present! **They are never   
out of His eye**, nor out of His *reach*. "Your hand shall   
find out all your enemies." What caves or thickets can   
men hide in--that God cannot find them? Go where   
they will--He is present.   
  
"Where shall I flee from Your presence?" If a man owes   
a debt to another he may make his escape, and flee into   
another land, where the creditor cannot find him. "But   
where shall I flee from Your presence?" God is infinite,   
He is in all places; so that He will find out His enemies   
and punish them!  
  
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**The diamond in the ring!**  
  
God is eternal, therefore He lives forever to reward the   
godly. "To those who seek for glory and honor, eternal   
life." The people of God are now in a suffering condition.   
The wicked are clad in purple, and fare deliciously, while   
the godly suffer. The *goats* climb upon high mountains,   
while Christ's *sheep* are in the valley of slaughter. But   
here is the comfort--God is eternal, and He has appointed   
eternal recompenses for the saints. In heaven are fresh   
delights, and sweetness without excess. That which is   
the crown and zenith of heaven's happiness, is--that it   
is "eternal." Were there but the least suspicion that this   
glory must cease, it would much eclipse, yes, embitter it;   
but it is eternal. "An eternal weight of glory."   
  
What angel can span eternity? The saints shall bathe   
themselves in the *rivers* of divine pleasure; and these   
rivers can never be dried up. "At Your right hand are   
pleasures for evermore." This is the highest strain in   
the apostle's rhetoric--"Forever with the Lord!"   
In heaven, there is . . .  
peace without trouble,  
ease without pain,  
glory without end!  
  
Let this comfort the saints in all their troubles; their   
sufferings are but short--but their reward is eternal!   
  
Eternity makes heaven to be heaven! **Eternity** is **the   
diamond in the ring!** Oh blessed day, which shall have   
no night! The *sunlight of glory* shall rise upon the soul,   
and never set!  
  
The saints' crown is eternal, "You shall receive a crown   
of glory, which never fades away!" The *wicked* have a   
never-dying worm; and the *godly* a never-fading crown!   
Oh how should this be a spur to virtue! How willing   
should we be to work for God! Though we have nothing   
here on earth, God has time enough to reward His people.   
The crown of eternity shall be set upon their head!  
  
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**A good antidote against sin**  
  
Thoughts of eternal torments, are **a good   
antidote against sin**. Sin tempts with its   
pleasure; but when we think of eternity, it   
may cool the intemperate heat of lust. Shall   
I, for the pleasure of sin for a season--endure   
eternal pain? Shall I venture eternal wrath?   
Is sin committed so sweet--as lying in hell   
forever is bitter? This thought would make   
us flee from sin, as from a serpent!  
  
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**What a strong appetite!**  
  
"Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one  
man, and death through sin, and in this way death  
came to all men, because all sinned." Rom 5:12  
  
Not only is the guilt of Adam's sin imputed to us--but   
the depravity and corruption of his nature is transmitted   
to us, as poison is carried from the fountain to the cistern.   
This is that which we call original sin. "In sin did my mother   
conceive me." Psa 51:5. Adam's leprosy cleaves to us, as   
Naaman's leprosy did to Gehazi. 2Ki 5:27.   
  
Sin has contaminated and defiled our virgin nature. Sin has   
poisoned the spring of our nature, it has turned beauty into   
leprosy; it has turned the azure brightness of our souls, into   
midnight darkness.  
  
In sin there is an aversion from good. Man has a desire to be   
happy--yet opposes that which would promote his happiness.   
He has a disgust of holiness, he hates to be reformed. Since   
we fell from God, we have no mind to return to Him.  
  
We have a propensity to evil. Men roll sin as honey under their  
tongue. "They drink iniquity as water," Job 15:16. They thirst   
for sin. Though they are tired out in committing sin--yet they   
sin. "Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over   
to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a   
continual lust for more." Eph 4:19. "They weary themselves   
to commit iniquity"; as a man who follows his game while he is   
weary--yet delights in it, and cannot leave it off. Jer 9:5. Though   
God has set so many flaming swords in the way to stop men in   
their sin--yet they go on in it; which all shows **what a strong   
appetite** they have to the forbidden fruit.  
  
Consider the universality of sin. It has, as poison, diffused itself   
into all the parts and powers of the soul. "The whole head is sick,   
and the whole heart is faint." Isa 1:5. Like a sick patient, that has   
no part sound, his liver is swelled, his feet are gangrened, his   
lungs are withered. **Such infected, gangrened souls we have**;   
until Christ, who has made a medicine of His blood, cures us!  
  
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**Three keys**  
  
Christ has **three keys** in His hand--   
the key of the **grave**, to open the graves   
of men at the resurrection;   
the key of **heaven**, to open the kingdom   
of heaven to whomever He will;   
the key of **hell**, to lock up the damned   
in that fiery prison!  
  
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**The *diamond* in the ring**  
  
"For God has reserved a priceless inheritance for  
His children. It is kept in heaven for you, pure  
and undefiled, beyond the reach of change and  
decay!" 1Pe 1:4  
  
But that which is **the *diamond* in the ring**, the *glory*   
of this inheritance--is the **eternal** sight and fruition of   
the blessed God! The sight of God will be a most alluring,   
heart-ravishing object! "We shall see Him as He is!" Oh,   
what will it be to see Him in glory, shining ten thousand   
times brighter than the sun! And not only see Him--but   
enjoy Him forever! All this blessedness, has Christ   
purchased for us, through His death on the cross!  
  
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**He turns the wolf into a lamb**  
  
The whole world is divided into two classes--  
the sons of God, and the heirs of hell.   
  
"He predestined us to be **adopted** as His sons through  
Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will."  
Eph 1:5   
  
Adoption is a mercy spun out of the affections of free   
grace. All by nature are strangers to God, therefore   
have no right to sonship. God is pleased to adopt one,   
and not another; to make one a vessel of glory--  
another a vessel of wrath!  
  
God adopts us *from* a state of sin and misery. He   
adopts us from slavery; it is a mercy to *redeem*   
a slave--but it is more to *adopt* him!  
  
It would be much for God to take a clod of dust--and   
make it into a star. But it is more for Him to take *a   
piece of clay and sin*--and adopt it for His heir!  
  
God adopts all His sons *to* a glorious inheritance.   
"It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the   
kingdom!" Adoption ends in coronation! The   
kingdom God gives to His adopted sons and   
heirs, excels all earthly kingdoms.  
  
All whom God adopts as His *sons*--He makes *saints*.   
Those whom God adopts--He sanctifies. He not only   
gives a new name--but a new nature. **He turns the   
wolf into a lamb**; He makes the heart humble and   
gracious.  
  
See the amazing love of God, in making us His sons.   
It is love in God to *feed* us--but more to *adopt* us!   
  
God did not adopt us when we were bespangled with   
the jewels of holiness--but when we were deformed   
with sin, and diseased as lepers!  
  
It is amazing that God should adopt His enemies!   
For God to have *pardoned* His enemies would have   
been much; but to *adopt* them for His heirs--this  
astonishes the angels in heaven! All this proclaims   
the wonder of God's love in adopting us.  
  
"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!" 1Jn 3:1  
  
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**Evangelical obedience**  
  
A true Christian not only *believes* God's promise--but   
*obeys* His command. When God says "Do not drink   
from sin's enchanted cup," the believer says, "my   
heavenly Father has commanded me--and I dare   
not drink!"   
  
*Obedience must have the Word of God for its rule.* This   
is the touchstone. "To the law and to the testimony!" If   
our obedience is not according to the Word, it is offering   
up strange fire; and God will say, "Who has required *this*   
at your hand?" Child-like obedience is that which is   
consistent with our Father's revealed will.  
  
*Obedience must be done from a right principle*, from   
the noble principle of faith. "The obedience of faith."   
A crab-tree may bear fruit fair to the eye--but it is sour   
because it does not come from a good root. A moral   
person may give God outward obedience, which to the   
eyes of others may seem glorious; but his obedience is   
sour because it comes not from the sweet and pleasant   
root of faith. A child of God gives Him the obedience of   
faith, and that meliorates and sweetens his services.  
  
All God's commands have the same stamp of divine   
authority upon them. If I obey one precept because   
my heavenly Father commands me, by the same rule   
I must obey all. A child of God obeys one command,   
as well as another. "I have respect unto all Your   
commandments." To obey God in some things--and   
not in others, shows an unsound heart. Child-like   
obedience moves towards every command of God,   
as the needle points that way which the magnet draws.   
If God calls to duties which are cross to flesh and blood,  
if we are children--we shall still obey our Father. "I have   
kept my feet from *every* evil path so that I might obey   
Your Word."  
  
Though a believer cannot obey every precept *perfectly*;  
yet he does *evangelically*. He *approves* of every command.   
"I consent to the law, that it is good." He *delights* in every   
command. "O how love I Your law!" His *desire* is to obey   
every command. "Oh, that my ways were steadfast in   
obeying Your decrees!" Wherein he comes short--he   
looks up to Christ's blood to supply his defects. This is   
**evangelical obedience**; which, though we are not   
satisfied with it, God accepts it.  
  
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**Satan's picture!**  
  
"Our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave  
Himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and  
to **purify** for Himself a people that are His very own,  
eager to do what is good." Tit 2:13-14  
  
Jesus Christ has died for our sanctification. Christ shed   
His blood to wash off our impurity. The cross was both   
an *altar* and a *laver*. **Christ died, not only to save  
us from wrath--but from sin!**  
"Just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all  
you do; for it is written--Be holy, because I am holy."  
1Pe 1:15-16  
  
Sanctification makes us resemble God. It was Adam's   
sin--that he aspired to be like God in *omniscience*; but   
we must endeavor to be like Him in *sanctity*. It is a holy   
heart--in which something of God can be seen. Nothing  
of God can be seen in an unsanctified man--but you may   
see **Satan's picture** in him! *Envy* is the devil's eye,   
*hypocrisy* his cloven foot; but nothing of God's image   
can be seen in him.  
  
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***Feathers* fly up--but *gold* descends!**   
  
True assurance of salvation, always keeps the   
heart in a lowly posture. "Lord," says the soul,   
"what am *I*, that, passing by so many others, the   
golden beams of Your love should shine upon *me*?"   
  
Paul had assurance. Is he proud of this jewel? No!   
"To me who am less than the least of all saints."   
The more love a Christian receives from God, the   
more he sees himself a debtor to free grace; and   
the sense of his debt keeps his heart humble!  
  
But *presumption* is bred from pride. He who presumes,  
thinks himself better than others. "The proud Pharisee   
stood by himself and prayed this prayer: I thank You,   
God, that I am not a sinner like everyone else,   
especially like that tax collector over there! For I   
never cheat, I don't sin, I don't commit adultery,   
I fast twice a week, and I give You a tenth of my   
income." Luk 18:11-12.   
  
***Feathers* fly up--but *gold* descends!** Just so, the   
heart of him who has this golden assurance, descends   
in humility. Pride estranges God from the soul. Be low  
in humility. Paul had assurance, and he baptized   
himself with the name, *"chief of sinners!"* The *jewel of   
assurance* is best kept in *the cabinet of a humble heart*.  
  
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**To die is gain!**  
  
As the wicked have a worm which never dies,   
so the elect have an unfading crown of glory.   
'Forever' is a short word--but it has no end.   
  
"For to me, to live is Christ and **to die is gain!**"   
Php 1:21  
  
To show fully what a believer's gains are at death,   
would be a task too great for an angel; all hyperboles   
fall short of it; the reward of glory exceeds our   
imagination.   
  
Believers at death, shall bid an eternal farewell to   
all sins and troubles. They shall be in a state of   
impeccability. Sin expires with their life. I think   
sometimes what a happy state that will be, never   
to have another sinful thought, and to have a   
quietus from all troubles. Here David cried out,   
"My life is spent with griefs, and my years with   
sighing." "Long life is merely long torment," said  
Augustine.   
  
Life *begins* with a cry, and ends with a *groan*; but   
at death all troubles die. How delightful will it be,   
to be freed from all our sinful corruptions, pride,   
envy, passion and censoriousness--which as *scars*,   
disfigured us here!   
  
Believers at death, shall gain the glorious sight of   
God. The sight of God will be very delightful; for   
the terror of God's essence will be taken away; His   
majesty will be mixed with beauty, and sweetened   
with mercy. It will be infinitely delightful to the   
saints, to see the amiable aspects and smiles of   
God's face.  
  
The saints at death shall not only have a sight of   
God--but shall enjoy His love. There shall be no   
more a veil on God's face, nor shall His smiles be   
chequered with frowns--but His love shall discover   
itself in all its orient beauty and fragrant sweetness.   
Here the saints pray for His love, and they have a   
few drops; but there they shall have as much as   
their vessels can receive. To know the love that   
passes knowledge, will cause a jubilation of spirit,   
and create such holy raptures of joy in the saints,   
as are superlative, and would soon overwhelm them,   
if God did not make them able to bear it.   
  
**Forever in Christ's bosom is the highest strain   
of the saint's glory!** We should be ambitious of   
being with Christ. "I desire to depart and be with   
Christ, which is better by far!" Php 1:23. We should   
be content to live--but willing to die. Is it not a   
blessed thing to be freed from sin, and to lie forever   
in the bosom of divine love? Does not the bride desire   
the marriage day, especially if she has the prospect of   
a crown? What is the place we now live in--but a place   
of *banishment* from God? We are in a *wilderness!* Here   
we are *combating* with Satan--should we not desire to   
be out of the bloody field, where the bullets of temptation   
fly fast--and receive a victorious crown? Think what it will   
be, to have always a smiling look from Christ's face! to be   
brought into the banqueting-house, and have the banner   
of His love displayed over us! O you saints, desire death--  
it is your ascension-day to heavenly glory!   
  
"Always thanking the Father, who has enabled you to  
share **the inheritance** that belongs to God's holy  
people, who live in the light. For He has rescued us  
from the domain of darkness, and He has brought  
us into the Kingdom of His dear Son." Col 1:12-13   
  
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***Miser ego homo!***  
  
Death frees a believer from sin. There are in the best   
believers, the remnants of sin--some remainders and   
relics of corruption. "O wretched man who I am! who   
shall deliver me from this body of death?" By the body   
of death is meant the mass and lump of sin. It may   
well be called a body--for its weightiness; and a body   
of death for its harmfulness.   
  
(1.) Sin **weighs** us down. Sin hinders us from doing good.   
Like a bird that would be flying up--but has a chain tied   
to its legs to hinder it--a Christian would be flying up to   
heaven with the wings of desire--but sin hinders him!   
He is like a ship under sail, and at anchor! Grace would   
sail forward--but sin is the anchor that holds it back!  
  
(2.) Sin is more **active** in its sphere, than grace. How   
stirring was lust in David, when his grace lay dormant!   
  
(3). Sin sometimes gets the **mastery**, and leads a saint   
captive. "For what I do is not the good I want to do;   
no, the evil I do not want to do--this I keep on doing."   
Rom 7:19. Paul was like a man carried down the   
stream, and could not bear up against it. How often is   
a child of God overpowered with pride and passion!   
Therefore Paul calls sin, "a law at work in the members   
of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and   
making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my   
members." Rom 7:23. Sin binds as a law; it has a kind   
of jurisdiction over the soul, as Caesar had over the senate.   
  
(4.) Sin **defiles** the soul. Like a stain to beauty--sin   
turns the soul's azure brightness into darkness.   
  
(5.) Sin **debilitates** us, disarms us of our strength. "I am this   
day *weak*, though anointed king." Though a saint is crowned   
with grace, and anointed a spiritual king--he is weak.   
  
(6.) Sin is ever **restless**. "The flesh lusts against the spirit."   
Gal 5:17. Sin is an inmate that is always quarreling--it   
will never be quiet.   
  
(7.) Sin **adheres** to us, we cannot get rid of it. It may be   
compared to a wild fig-tree growing on a wall, the roots of   
which are pulled up--but some fibers of it are left in the   
joints of the stone-work, which cannot be gotten out.   
  
(8.) Sin **mingles** with our duties and graces. It makes   
a child of God weary of his life, and makes him water his   
couch with his tears--to think that sin is so strong an   
inhabitant, and that he often offends the God he loves.   
This made Paul cry out, ***Miser ego homo!*** "Oh, what a   
miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life   
that is dominated by sin?" Rom 7:24. He did not cry   
out because of his *affliction*, or his *prison-chains*--but   
for the body of sin!   
  
Now a believer at death is freed from sin! He shall never   
again have a vain, proud thought! He shall never again   
grieve the Spirit of God! Sin brought death into the world  
--and death shall carry sin out of the world.   
  
The Persians had a certain day in the year in which they   
killed all serpents and venomous creatures; such a day will   
the day of death be to a believer. Death will destroy all his   
sins--which, like so many serpents, have stung him! Death   
smites a believer as the angel did Peter--and made his   
*chains* fall off. Act 12:7.   
  
Believers at death are made perfect in holiness. "The spirits   
of just men made perfect." At death the souls of believers   
recover their virgin purity. Oh! what a blessed privilege is   
this--to be without spot or wrinkle; to be purer than the   
sunbeams; to be as free from sin as the angels! This makes   
a believer desirous to have his passport, and to be gone   
from his sin! He would gladly live in that pure air, where   
no black vapors of sin arise!  
  
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**Seven eyes and an iron rod**  
  
"The Father has committed all judgment   
to the Son." Joh 5:22  
  
He who once hung upon the cross--shall sit upon the   
throne of judgment! He is of infinite *knowledge* to  
understand all causes brought before Him; and of  *infinite* power to execute offenders. He is described   
with **seven eyes**, Zec 3:9, to denote His *wisdom*;   
and **an iron rod**, Psa 2:9, to denote His *power*.   
  
He is so **wise** that He cannot be deceived,   
and so **strong** that He cannot be resisted.  
  
This will be terrible to the wicked. How can a guilty   
prisoner endure the sight of the judge? The **Lamb**   
of God will then be turned into a **Lion**, the sight of   
whom will strike terror into sinners. They, being   
convicted, will be speechless. Then follows the   
dismal sentence: "Depart from Me, you cursed ones,   
into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his   
angels!"--a dreadful, but a righteous sentence. The   
sinner himself shall cry, "Guilty!" Though he has a   
*sea* of wrath--he has not one *drop* of injustice.  
  
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**My sheep**   
  
"**My sheep** hear My voice; I know them, and  
they follow Me. I give them eternal life, and  
they shall never perish." Joh 10:27-28  
  
"My sheep"--there is election.   
  
"Hear My voice"--there is effectual calling.   
  
"I know them"--there is justification.   
  
"They follow Me"--there is sanctification.   
  
"I give them eternal life"--there is glorification.   
  
"They shall never perish"--there is preservation.  
  
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**The devil's peace**  
  
"There is no peace," says my God, "for the  
wicked." Isa 57:21  
  
The wicked may have something which looks like peace;  
but it is not. They only have a stupefied conscience. This   
is **the devil's peace**. He rocks men to sleep in the cradle   
of carnal security; he cries, "Peace, peace!" when men   
are on the precipice of hell. The seeming peace, which   
a sinner has, arises from the ignorance of his danger.  
  
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**The very hinge and pillar of Christianity**  
  
Justification is an act of God's free grace, whereby   
He pardons all our sins, and accepts us as righteous   
in His sight--only for the righteousness of Christ,   
imputed to us, and received by faith alone. By   
Christ's death and merits, God's justice is more   
abundantly satisfied than if we had suffered the   
pains of hell forever.  
  
Justification is **the very hinge and pillar of Christianity**.   
An error about justification is dangerous, like a defect   
in a foundation. Justification by Christ is a spring of the   
water of life. To have the poison of corrupt doctrine cast   
into this spring is damnable.   
  
God, in justifying a person, pronounces him to be   
righteous, and looks upon him as if he had not sinned.  
  
The cause, the motive or ground of justification, is the   
free grace of God: "being justified freely by his grace."   
The first wheel that sets all the rest running, is the love   
and favor of God; as a king freely pardons a delinquent.   
Justification is a mercy spun out of the affections of free   
grace. God does not justify us because we are worthy;  
but by justifying us makes us worthy.  
  
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**Redeemed**  
  
A justified person is redeemed from the **guilt** of sin  
--though not the stain of sin. Christ has redeemed a   
justified person from the guilt of sin; He has discharged   
his debts. Christ says to God's justice, as Paul to Philemon,   
"If he has wronged you in any way, or owes you anything  
--charge that to My account."  
  
A justified person is redeemed from the **power** and  **dominion** of sin--though not from the presence of sin.   
Sin may rage in a child of God--but not reign.  *Lust* raged in David, and *fear* in Peter--but it did not   
reign; they recovered themselves by repentance. "Sin   
shall not have dominion over you." Sin lives in a child   
of God--but is deposed from the throne; it lives not as   
a king--but a captive.  
  
A justified person is redeemed from the **curse** due to sin.   
"Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being   
made a curse for us." Gal 3:13. Christ said to His Father,   
as Rebecca to Jacob, "Upon Me, upon Me be the curse; let   
the blessing be upon them--but upon Me be the curse."  
  
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**The sum and quintessence of the gospel!**  
  
Jesus Christ is **the sum and quintessence of the   
gospel!** He is the wonder of angels; and the joy and   
triumph of saints. The name of Christ is sweet--it is as   
music in the ear, honey in the mouth, and a cordial at   
the heart!  
  
"His name shall be called Jesus." Mat 1:21. The word   
for JESUS signifies a Savior; and whom He saves from hell,   
He saves from sin. Where Christ is a Savior, He is a sanctifier.   
There is no other Savior. "Neither is there salvation in any   
other." Act 4:12. As there was but one ark to save the   
world from drowning--so there is but one Jesus to save   
sinners from damning.   
  
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**Minerva's eyes were upon him**  
  
God's glory lies chiefly in his *attributes*, which are the   
several beams by which the divine nature shines forth.   
  
"The Lord is a God of knowledge, and by Him actions   
are weighed." Among other of his orient excellencies,   
this is not the least--"the Lord is a God of knowledge."  
He has a full idea and cognizance of all things; the   
world is to Him a transparent body.   
  
He makes a heart-anatomy. "I am He who searches   
the thoughts and the heart." The clouds are no canopy,   
the night is no curtain--to draw between us and His sight.   
"Even in darkness I cannot hide from You. To You the   
night shines as bright as day. Darkness and light are   
both alike to You."   
  
There is not a **word** we whisper but God hears it.   
"There is not a word in my tongue--but lo, O Lord,   
You know it altogether." There is not the most subtle  **thought** that comes into our mind--but God perceives   
it. "I know their thoughts." Thoughts speak as loud in   
God's ears--as words do in ours. All our **actions**,   
though ever so subtly contrived, and secretly conducted,   
are visible to the eye of Omniscience. "I know their works."   
Achan hid the Babylonish garment in the earth--but God   
brought it to light. Minerva was so lively painted, that   
whichever way one turned, **Minerva's eyes were upon   
him**. Just so, whichever way we turn ourselves, God's   
eye is upon us!  
  
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**Baptized heathen?**  
  
"The ox *knows* its owner, and the donkey its  
master’s feeding-trough, but Israel does not  
know; My people do not understand." Isa 1:3   
  
Are there not many in our churches, who   
are no better than **baptized heathen?**   
  
Ignorance is the nurse of impiety.   
  
Where ignorance reigns in the understanding,   
lust rages in the affections. When people's minds   
are covered with ignorance, it is a fatal forerunner   
of destruction.   
  
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**Blown to hell!**  
  
"Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness'   
before men, to be seen by them." Mat 6:1  
  
Many do religious duties for their own glory. They   
want to be set upon a theater for others to admire   
them. The *oil of vainglory* feeds their lamp. How   
many by the wind of popular breath--have been  **blown to hell!** Whom the devil cannot destroy   
by intemperance, he does by vainglory! If there   
is either justice in heaven, or fire in hell--they   
shall not go unpunished.  
  
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**The silkworm**  
  
When Herod had made an oration, and the people   
gave a shout, saying, 'It is the voice of a God, and   
not of a man!' 'Immediately, because Herod did not   
give glory to God, an angel of the Lord struck him   
down, and he was eaten by worms and died.' Act 12:23.   
  
We glorify God, when we sacrifice the praise and glory   
of all we do--to Him. 1Co 15:10. 'I have worked harder   
than all the other apostles,' is a speech, one would think,   
which savored of pride. But the apostle pulls the crown   
from his own head--and sets it upon the head of free   
grace! 'Yet it was not I but God who was working   
through me by His grace.'   
  
As Joab, when he fought against Rabbah, sent for King   
David, that David might carry away the crown of the   
victory; so a Christian, when he has gotten power over   
any corruption or temptation, sends for Christ, that He   
may carry away the crown of the victory.  
  
As **the silkworm**, when she weaves her curious work,   
hides herself under the silk, and is not seen; so when   
we have done anything praiseworthy--we must hide   
ourselves under the veil of humility, and transfer the   
glory of all we have done to God.   
  
As one used to write the name of Christ over his door--  
so should we write the name of Christ over our duties.   
Let Him wear the garland of praise!  
  
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**Diamonds and magnets**  
  
We glorify God by laboring to draw others to God,   
by seeking to convert others, and so make them   
instruments of glorifying God. We should be both   
**diamonds and magnets**; *diamonds* for the luster   
of grace, and *magnets* for attractive virtue in drawing   
others to Christ. It is a great way of glorifying God,   
when we break open the devil's prison, and turn men   
from the power of Satan to God.  
  
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**Either leap over them, or tread upon them!**   
  
"Anyone who loves his father or mother more than  
Me is not worthy of Me; anyone who loves his son  
or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me!"  
Mat 10:37  
  
If relations lie in our way to heaven, we must   
**either leap over them, or tread upon them!**   
  
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**Feathery Christians**  
  
A man may go to hell as well for heresy, as adultery!   
  
"Then we will no longer be *infants*, tossed back and forth  
by the waves, and *blown here and there* by every wind  
of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in  
their deceitful scheming." Eph 4:14  
  
To be unsettled in religion, argues lightness. As feathers   
will be blown every way, so will **feathery Christians**.   
Therefore such are compared to *infants*. Children are fickle;   
sometimes of one mind, sometimes of another; nothing   
pleases them long. Just so, unsettled Christians are childish;  
the truths they embrace at one time, they reject at another.  
  
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**Let us be content that God   
should rule the world**  
Better is the *loss* that makes you humble,   
than the *success* that makes you proud.   
  
If God will give His people a kingdom when   
they die--he will not deny them daily bread   
while they live!  
  
God's providences are wise and regular,   
though to us they seem very strange and   
crooked.  
  
**Providence** is a Christian's diary--but not his Bible.   
  
If other people do not act as *we* would have them   
act, they shall act as *God* would have them act.   
  
It may be, we think sometimes we could order things   
better, if we had the government of the world in our   
hands; but alas! should we be left to our own choice,   
we would choose those things that are hurtful for us!   
  
**Let us be content that God should rule the   
world.** Learn to acquiesce in His will, and submit   
to His providence.   
  
Does any affliction befall you? Remember God sees it   
is that which is fit for you--or it would not come. God's   
providence may sometimes be *secret*--but it is always  *wise*. We should learn to be silent under His displeasure.  
  
"I was silent; I would not open my mouth, for   
You are the one who has done this." Psa 39:9

÷**The Beatitudes**

Thomas Watson, 1660

**CHOICE EXCERPTS**

**God has two fires**  
  
"I have *refined* you in the **furnace of affliction**."  
Isa 48:10   
  
"Away with you, you cursed ones, into the **eternal**  
**fire** prepared for the Devil and his demons! And they   
will go away into eternal *punishment!*" Mat 25:41, Mat 25:46  
  
**God has two fires**—  
one where He puts His *gold*,   
one where He puts His *dross*.   
  
The fire where He puts His ***gold***,is   
the fire of *affliction*—to purify them.   
  
The fire where He puts His ***dross***, is   
the fire of *damnation*—to punish them.   
  
  
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**There are *nails* in that cross!**  
  
"If anyone would come after Me, he must **deny   
himself** and take up his cross daily and follow Me."   
Luk 9:23  
  
Self-denial is the highest sign of a sincere Christian.   
Hypocrites may have great knowledge and make large   
profession—but it is only the true-hearted saint who   
can deny himself for Christ.  
  
Self-denial is the foundation of godliness, and if this   
foundation is not well-laid, the whole building will fall.   
If there is any lust in our souls which we cannot deny  
—it will turn at length, either to scandal or apostasy.   
Self-denial is the *thread* which must run along through   
the whole work of piety.   
  
A man must deny **self-esteem**. Every man by nature   
has a high opinion of himself. He is *drunk* with spiritual   
pride. A proud man disdains the cross. He thinks himself  
too good to suffer. Oh deny self-esteem! Let the *plumes   
of pride* fall off!  
  
A man must deny **carnal self**. This I take to be the   
chief sense of the text. He must deny carnal ease.   
The flesh cries out for ease. It is loath to put its neck   
under Christ's yoke or stretch itself upon the *cross*. The   
flesh cries out, "Oh! the cross of Christ is heavy! **There   
are *nails* in that cross** which will lacerate, and fetch   
blood!" We must deny our self-ease, and be as a deaf   
adder, stopping our ears to the charmings of the flesh!   
Those who lean on the *soft pillow of sloth*, will hardly   
take up the cross.   
  
This self-denying frame of heart is very hard. This is "to   
pluck out the right eye." It is easier to overcome men and   
devils, than to overcome self. "Stronger is he who conquers  
himself, than he who conquers the strongest walled city."   
  
SELF is the idol, andhow hard it is to sacrifice this idol   
and to turn self-seeking into self-denial! But though it is   
difficult—it is essential. A Christian must first lay down   
*self*—before he can take up the cross.  
  
Alas! how far are they then from self-denial, who cannot deny   
themselves in the least things; who in their diet or apparel,   
instead of *martyring* the flesh—*pamper* the flesh! Instead of   
taking up the cross—take up their cups! Is this self-denial,   
to let loose the reins to the flesh? Oh Christians, as ever you   
would be able to carry Christ's cross, begin to deny yourselves.   
  
"Everyone who has given up houses or brothers or sisters or  
father or mother or children or property, for My sake, will  
receive a hundred times as much in return and will have  
eternal life!" Mat 19:29. Here is a very choice bargain!

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**This perfume of free grace!**  
"**Blessed are the poor in spirit**, for theirs  
is the kingdom of heaven." Mat 5:3  
  
Only those who are poor in spirit, are capable of   
receiving grace. He who is swollen with self-excellency   
and self-sufficiency—is not fit for Christ. He is full already.   
If the hand is full of pebbles—it cannot receive gold. The   
glass is first emptied, before you pour in wine. God first   
empties a man of himself, before He pours in the precious   
wine of His grace.  
  
He who is poor in spirit—is a Christ-admirer. He has high   
thoughts of Christ. He sees himself *naked*—and flies to   
Christ, to be clothed in the garments of His righteousness.   
He sees himself *wounded*—and as the wounded deer runs   
to the water—so he thirsts for Christ's blood, the water of   
life. "Lord!" says he, "give me Christ or I die!" His *conscience*   
has turned into a fiery serpent and has stung him; now he   
will give all the world—for a *brazen* serpent! He sees himself   
in a state of *death*; and how precious is one leaf of the tree   
of life, which is both for food and medicine! The poor in spirit   
sees that all his riches lie in Christ—"wisdom, righteousness,   
sanctification" In every need, he flies to this storehouse! He   
adores the all-fullness in Christ.  
  
He who is poor in spirit—is an exalter of free grace. None so   
magnify God's mercy—as the poor in spirit. The poor are very   
thankful. When Paul had tasted mercy—how thankfully does   
he adore free grace! "The grace of our Lord was exceeding   
abundant" (1Ti 1:14). It was super-exuberant grace!   
He sets the crown of his salvation—upon the head of free   
grace! As a man who is condemned and has a pardon sent to  
him—how greatly he proclaims the goodness and mercifulness   
of his prince! So Paul displays free grace in its magnificent   
colors. He interlines all his epistles with free grace! As a vessel   
which has been perfumed, makes the water taste of it—so Paul,   
who was a vessel perfumed with mercy, makes all his epistles   
to taste of **this perfume of free grace!** Those who are poor   
in spirit, bless God for the least crumb which falls from the table   
of free grace! Labor for poverty of spirit. Christ begins with this,  
and we must begin here if ever we are saved. Poverty of spirit   
is the foundation stone, on which God lays the superstructure   
of eternal glory!  
  
"**Blessed are the poor in spirit**, for theirs  
is the kingdom of heaven." Mat 5:3

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**Worms should be made kings!**  
  
"Don't be afraid, little flock, because your Father  
delights to give you the kingdom!" Luk 12:32   
  
See here the mercy and bounty of God, who has prepared   
a *kingdom* for His people. It is a favor that we poor worms  
should be allowed to *live*. But that **worms should be made   
kings**—this is *divine* bounty! It is mercy to *pardon* us—but it   
is rich mercy to *crown* us! 'Behold, what kind of love is this!'  
  
Earthly princes may bestow great gifts on their subjects—but   
they keep the *kingdom* to themselves. Though Pharaoh advanced   
Joseph to honor and gave him a ring from his finger—yet he kept   
the kingdom to himself. 'Only in the throne will I be greater than   
you' (Gen 41:40). But God gives a kingdom to His people—He   
sets them upon the throne!   
  
How David admires the goodness of God in bestowing upon him   
a *temporal* kingdom. 'Then king David went in, and sat before the   
Lord and said—Who am I, O Lord God—and what is my house, that   
You have brought me hitherto?' (2Sa 7:18). He wondered   
that God should take him from the sheepfold—and set him on the   
throne—that God should turn his shepherd's staff into a king's   
scepter! O then, how may the saints admire the riches of grace—  
that God should give them a glorious kingdom above all the   
princes of the earth—nay, far above all heavens!   
  
*God thinks nothing too good for His children.* We many times think   
much of a tear, a prayer, or to sacrifice a sin for Him—but He does   
not think a kingdom is too much to bestow upon us! How will the   
saints read over the lectures of *free grace* in heaven, and trumpet   
forth the praises of that God, who has crowned them with such  
astonishing loving-kindness!  
  
See here, that which may make the people of God long for *death*.   
Then, they shall enter upon their glorious kingdom! Indeed *the   
wicked* may fear death. It will not lead them to a kingdom—but to  
a horrid prison. Hell is the jail where they must lie rotting forever   
with the devil and his demons!

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**Only the blood of Christ can soften it!**   
  
"I will take away their **hearts of stone** and  
give them tender hearts!" Eze 11:19   
  
*Oh the misery of a hard heart!*   
  
A heart of stone is **insensible**. A *stone* is not   
sensible of anything. Lay a heavy weight upon   
it; or grind it to powder—it does not feel. So it   
is with a hard heart—it is insensible to both its   
own sin and God's wrath. The stone in the  *kidneys* is felt—but not the stone in the *heart*.   
"Having lost all sensitivity" (Eph 4:19).  
  
A heart of stone is **inflexible**. A *stone* will not   
bend. Just so, the hard heart will not *comply* with   
God's command. It will not *stoop* to Christ's scepter.   
A heart of stone will sooner *break*, than *bend* by   
repentance. It is so far from *yielding* to God, that   
like the anvil—it beats back the hammer. A heart   
of stone will "always resist the Holy Spirit." (Act 7:51)  
  
A hard heart is void of all grace. While the *wax* is   
hard—it will not take the impression of the seal.   
Just so, the *heart*, while it is hard—will not take the   
stamp of grace. It must first be made tender and   
melting. The *plough of the Word* will not penetrate   
a hard heart!  
  
A hard heart is good for nothing—but to make   
fuel for hellfire. "Because of your *hardness* and   
unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath for   
yourself in the day of wrath!" (Rom 2:5).   
  
Hell is full of *hard* hearts—there is not one *soft* heart   
there! There is much *weeping* there—but no *softness*.   
We read of "vessels of wrath—prepared for destruction"   
(Rom 9:22). Hardness of heart, fits these vessels   
for hell, and makes them like withered wood, which   
is fit only to burn!  
  
Hardness of heart makes a man's condition worse   
than all his other sins besides. If one is guilty of   
great sins—yet if he can mourn, there is hope. But   
hardness of heart binds guilt fast upon the soul. It   
seals a man under wrath. It is not *heinousness of   
sin*—but *hardness of heart—*which damns!  
  
Oh the misery of a hard heart!   
  
A *stony* heart is the *worst* heart. If it were *bronze*,   
it might be melted in the furnace; or it might be   
bent with the hammer. But a stony heart is such,   
that only the *arm of God* can break it—and **only   
the *blood of Christ* can soften it!**   
  
"I will take out your *stony heart of sin* and give  
you a new, obedient heart." Eze 36:26

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**View sin in the red glass**  
  
**View sin in the red glass** of Christ's sufferings.  
The least sin cost His blood. Would you take a true   
view of sin? *Go to Golgotha!* Jesus Christ poured out   
His soul, as an offering for sin! *Read the greatness   
of your sin—in the deepness of Christ's wounds!* Let   
not Satan cast such a mist before your eyes—that   
you cannot see sin in its right colors! Remember,   
not only do great sins carry men to hell—but lesser   
sins as well. "The wages of sin is death!" Every sin   
is damnable. There is death and hell in every sin.   
The least sin without repentance—will be a lock   
and bolt to shut men out of heaven.

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**A tear dropping from the eye of faith**  
"Blessed are those who *mourn*." Mat 5:8  
  
It is a sign that the *Sun of Righteousness* has risen   
upon us, when our *frozen hearts* thaw and melt for sin.   
Weeping for sin is a sign of the new birth. As soon as   
the child is born—it weeps. Mourning shows a 'heart   
of flesh' (Eze 36:26). A stone will not melt. When   
the heart is in a melting frame—it is a sign the heart   
of stone is taken away.  
  
"Let your tears flow like a river. Give yourselves no  
rest from weeping day or night." Lam 2:18  
  
Tears for sin, are blessed tears.   
  
Tears poison our *corruptions*. Salt-water kills worms.   
Just so, the brinish water of repenting tears will help to   
kill that *worm of sin* which would gnaw the conscience.   
  
Mourning also fences us against the devil's *temptations*.   
Temptations are called 'fiery darts' (Eph 6:16),   
because indeed they set the soul on fire. Temptations   
enrage anger, and inflame lust. Now the waters of holy   
mourning, quench these fiery darts! Wet gunpowder will   
not easily catch fire. Just so, when the heart is wetted   
and moistened with sorrow—it will not so easily catch  
the fire of temptation.  
  
Penitential tears are *precious*. Tears dropping from a   
mournful, penitent eye, are like water dropping from   
the roses—very sweet and precious to God. A *fountain*   
in the garden makes it pleasant. That heart is most   
delightful to God—which has a *fountain of sorrow*  
running in it. 'Mary stood at Christ's feet weeping'   
(Luk 7:38). Her *tears* were more fragrant than her   
*ointment*. The incense, when it is broken, smells   
sweetest. When the heart is broken for sin, then   
our services give forth their sweetest perfume.   
  
Surely, God delights much in tears—else He would   
not keep a bottle for them. "You keep track of all   
my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in Your   
bottle. You have recorded each one in Your book."   
Psa 56:8. Tears are powerful orators for God's   
mercy. Tears melt the heart of God. When a man   
comes weeping in prayer and smites on his breast,   
saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner!"—this melts  
God's heart towards him. Tears, though they are   
silent—yet have a voice, "The Lord has heard *the   
voice of my weeping!"* (Psa 6:8). Tears in the   
child's eye sometimes move the angry father to   
spare the child. Penitential tears melt God's heart   
and bind His hand. Tears have a mighty influence   
upon God.   
  
Repentant tears are *sweet*. Mourning is the way to   
solid joy. A Christian thinks himself sometimes in the   
suburbs of heaven—when he can weep. Sugar when   
it *melts* is sweetest. When a Christian melts in tears,   
now he has the sweetest joy. When the daughter of  
Pharaoh descended into the river—she found a babe   
there among the reeds. Just so, when we descend into   
the river of repenting tears—we find the babe Jesus   
there, who shall wipe away all tears from our eyes.   
  
Tears water our *graces* and make them flourish. Where   
the springs of sorrow run—there the heart bears a fruitful   
crop. The tender-eyed Christian usually brings forth more   
of the fruit of the Spirit. A weeping eye is *the water-pot*   
to water our graces!  
  
If there is so much profit and benefit in gospel-sorrow,   
then let every Christian wash his face every morning in   
the laver of tears.  
  
Our mourning for sin here—will prevent mourning in hell.   
Hell is a place of weeping (Mat 8:12). The damned   
mingle their drink with weeping. God is said to have His  
bottle for our tears. Those who will not shed a bottle-full   
of tears—shall hereafter shed rivers of tears. "Woe to you   
who laugh now—for you shall mourn and weep!" (Luk 6:25)  
You have sometimes seen sugar lying in a damp   
place, dissolve into water. Just so, all the *sugared joys*   
of the wicked, dissolve at last into the water of tears!   
  
There is but one way to blessedness, and that is through   
the *valley of tears*. If you do not go this way, you will miss   
Paradise. "I tell you, unless you *repent*, you shall all likewise   
perish"' (Luk 13:3). There is only one way leading to heaven,   
and that is **a tear dropping from the eye of faith**. A man   
may have a disease in his body, which twenty medicines will   
heal. But only the *medicine of repentance*, will heal the   
mortal disease of sin.  
  
Think what a sinner you have been. You have filled God's   
book with your debts—and what need you have to fill His   
bottle with your tears!   
  
He who weeps here is a *blessed* mourner. He who weeps   
in hell is a *cursed* mourner. If God's *bottle* is not filled   
with tears—His *vial* will be filled with wrath!   
  
Repentant tears are but finite. It is but a short time that we   
shall weep. After a few showers fall from our eyes, we shall   
have a perpetual sunshine. "God shall wipe away all tears!"   
(Rev 7:17). When *sin* shall cease—*tears* shall cease!   
"Weeping may endure for a night—but joy comes in the   
morning!" (Psa 30:5)

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**The way to be like Jesus**  
  
To render evil for evil is *brutish;*   
to render evil for good is *devilish;*   
to render good for evil is *Christian.*   
  
"Blessed are the **meek**." Mat 5:5  
  
*Meekness* is a grace whereby we are enabled by   
the Spirit of God, to moderate our angry passions.   
Meekness has a divine beauty and sweetness in   
it. This meekness consists in three things:   
the bearing of injuries,   
the forgiving of injuries,   
the recompensing good for evil.   
  
Meekness is opposed to:  
anger,  
malice,  
revenge and  
evil-speaking.  
  
Meekness is a great ornament to a Christian. "The   
ornament of a meek spirit—which is so precious to   
God!" (1Pe 3:4). How lovely is a saint in God's   
eye, when **adorned with this jewel!** No garment   
is more befitting to a Christian, than meekness.   
Therefore we are bid to put on this garment, "Put   
on therefore as the elect of God—meekness."  
(Col 3:12)   
  
Meekness is a noble and excellent spirit. A meek man   
is a valorous man. He gets a victory over *himself!* Anger  
arises from weakness of character. The meek man is able   
to conquer his fury. "He who is slow to anger is better   
than the mighty; controlling one's temper is better than   
capturing a city." (Pro 16:32). To yield to one's   
anger is easy—it is *swimming along with the tide of   
corrupt nature*. But to turn against nature—to resist   
anger, to "overcome evil with good"—this is truly   
Christian.  
  
Meekness is the best way to conquer and melt the   
heart of an *enemy.* Meekness melts and thaws the   
heart of others. The greatest victory is to overcome   
an enemy—without striking a blow! Mildness prevails   
more than fierceness. Anger makes an enemy of a   
friend. Meekness makes a friend of an enemy.   
  
Meekness is **the way to be like Jesus**—"Learn of   
Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." Mat 11:29.  
It is not *profession* which makes us like Jesus—but   
*imitation*. Where meekness is lacking—we are like   
brutes. Where it is present—we are like Jesus.

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**The hypocrite's desire**  
  
*"Let me die the death of the righteous!"*  
Num 23:10  
  
This was Balaam's desire. The hypocrite, when he   
is about to die and can keep his sins no longer—  
now he desires a passport to carry him to heaven!   
Such desires as these are found among the damned.   
  
Hypocrites have *desires*—but *no endeavors*.   
They would like to go to heaven—but they   
will take no pains. But true desire is always   
quickened into endeavor.  
  
The hypocrite would have . . .   
heaven—and his *sins* too,  
heaven—and his *pride* too,  
heaven—and his *covetousness* too.   
"They have gone astray and have followed  
the path of Balaam—who loved the wages  
of unrighteousness." 2Pe 2:15  
  
The true Christian says, "Give me Christ on *any*   
terms. Let God propound whatever articles He   
will—I will subscribe to them. Would He have me   
deny myself? Would He have me mortify sin? I   
am content to do anything—just so that I may   
have Christ!" Hypocrites would have Christ—but   
they will not part with their beloved lust for Him!  
  
The hypocrite does not desire *grace* for itself.   
He desires grace—only as a bridge to lead him   
over to heaven. He does not so much search   
after *grace*—as *glory*. He does not so much   
desire the *way* of righteousness—as the *crown*   
of righteousness. His desire is not to be made   
*like* Christ—but to reign *with* Christ. This is **the   
hypocrite's desire**.   
  
But a child of God desires *grace* for itself, and   
*Christ* for Himself. To a believer, not only is   
*heaven* precious—but *Christ* is precious, "Yes, He   
is very precious to you who believe!" 1Pe 2:7

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**Cruel mercy**  
  
"Blessed are the **merciful**, for they shall obtain  
mercy." Mat 5:7  
  
When the sun shines—the ice melts. When the Sun of   
righteousness once shines with beams of grace upon   
the soul—then it melts in mercy and tenderness.   
  
*Mercifulness* is a melting disposition whereby we lay   
to heart the miseries of others, and are instrumental   
for their good. We must chiefly be merciful to the   
SOULS of others. Indeed *soul-mercy* is the chief of   
mercies. The soul is the most precious thing; it is a   
rich diamond set in a ring of clay. Had we seen that   
madman in the gospel cutting himself with stones—  
it would have moved our pity (Mar 5:5). To see a   
sinner stabbing himself and having his hands imbrued   
in his own blood, should cause us to sincerely pity him.   
  
That is a **cruel mercy**—when we see men go on in   
sin, and we let them alone. And that is a **merciful   
cruelty**—when we are sharp against men's sins and   
will not let them go to hell quietly. *Fond sentimentality* is no better than cruelty.   
  
The surgeon cuts and lances the flesh—but it is in   
order to a cure. They are *healing wounds*. So when   
we lance men's consciences and let out the blood of   
sin, we exercise *spiritual surgery*. This is showing   
mercy.   
  
"Rescue others by snatching them from the fire!"   
(Jude 23). If a man had fallen into the fire, though   
you hurt him a little in pulling him out—he would be   
thankful and take it as a kindness. Some men, when   
we tell them of sin say, 'O, you are unloving!' No! it   
is showing mercy. If a man's house were on fire, and   
another should see it and not tell him of it, for fear of   
waking him—would not this be cruelty? When we see   
others sleeping in their sin, and the fire of God's wrath   
ready to burn them up—and we are silent—is not this   
cruelty?  
  
They are **unmerciful ministers** who, instead of   
breaking the *bread of life*—fill their people's heads   
with airy speculations and notions! Some ministers   
endeavor only to be *admired*. They go into the pulpit   
only to *amuse* the people. Such ministers give poison   
to their people in a golden cup! They are the devil's   
ambassadors, who ride up and down, and with Satan   
compass the earth—to deceive and devour souls!

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**The children which faith bears**  
  
"Those who have **believed** God might be careful  
to devote themselves to **good works**." Tit 3:8  
  
*Grace* does not lie as a sleepy habit in the soul,  
but will put forth itself in vigorous and glorious   
actings. Grace can no more be concealed, than   
fire. Grace does not lie in the heart as a **stone**   
in the earth—but as **seed** in the earth. *It will   
spring up into good works!* "Our people must   
also learn to devote themselves to good works."   
Tit 3:14  
  
The *lamp of faith* must be filled with the *oil of   
charity.* Faith alone justifies—but justifying faith   
is never alone. You may as well separate weight  
from lead, or heat from fire—as works from faith.   
  
Good works, though they are not the *causes* of   
salvation—yet they are *evidences* of salvation.   
Though they are not the foundation—yet they   
are the superstructure. Faith must not be built   
upon works—but works must be built upon faith.   
"You are married to Christ—that we should bring  
forth fruit unto God." Rom 7:4. Faith is the   
grace which marries Christ, and good works   
are **the children which faith bears**.   
  
Works are distinct from faith—as the *sap* in the   
vine is different from the clusters of *fruit* which   
grow upon it.  
  
Works are the touchstone of faith. "*Show* me   
your faith by your works." Jas 2:18   
  
Works honor faith. These *fruits* adorn the 'trees   
of righteousness'. This *queen*—faith, has the  *handmaids of good works* waiting upon her.  
  
Good works are more visible and conspicuous than faith.   
Faith is a more hidden grace. It may lie hidden in the   
heart and not be seen—but when works are joined with   
it, now it shines forth in its native beauty! Though a   
garden is ever so decked with flowers—yet they are not   
seen until the *light* comes. So the heart of a Christian   
may be enriched with faith—but it is like *a flower in the   
night*. It is not seen until works come. When this light   
shines before men, then faith appears in its orient colors!  
  
  
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**Strewing flowers on a dead corpse!**  
  
"Blessed are the *pure in heart*, for they shall  
see God." Mat 5:8  
  
**External morality** is not heart-purity. A person   
may be clothed with great moral virtues, such as   
justice, charity, prudence, and temperance—and   
yet go to hell.  
  
We must not rest in mere outward morality. A swine   
may be washed—yet be **a swine still**. *Morality* does   
but wash a man*—grace* changes him. Morality may   
shine in the eyes of the world—but it differs as much   
from purity, as a pebble differs from a diamond!   
  
Morality is but **strewing flowers on a dead corpse!**  
  
A man who is but highly moral—is but **a tame devil.**   
  
How many have made 'morality' their Savior!   
Morality will damn—as well as vice! A boat may  
be sunk with *gold*—as well as with *dung*.  
  
The moral person, though he will not commit *gross*   
sins—yet he is not sensible of *heart* sins. He is not  
troubled for unbelief, hardness of heart, vanity of   
thoughts. He abhors gross-sins, not gospel-sins.  
  
**The** **snake** has a fine appearance—but has a deadly   
sting! Just so, the moral man is fair to look on—but   
has a secret antipathy against the holy ways of God.   
  
Morality is not to be rested in. The *heart* must be pure.  
God would have Aaron wash the *inner parts* of the   
sacrifice (Lev 9:14). Morality does but wash the   
outside; the inside must be washed. "Blessed are the *pure in heart*, for they shall see God." Mat 5:8

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**How befilthying a thing it is**  
  
"Unto Him who loved us, and *washed* us from  
our sins in His own blood!" Rev 1:5   
  
We are all *loathsome* to God, before we are   
washed pure in the blood of Christ!  
  
By nature, we are all in a *filthy* and *cursed* condition.   
We are a lump of *clay* and *sin* mingled together. Sin   
not only *blinds* us—but *defiles* us. It is called filthiness   
(Jas 1:21). And to show **how befilthying a thing   
it is**, it is compared . . .  
to a plague of the heart (1Ki 8:38),  
to corruption (Deu 32:5),  
to vomit (2Pe 2:22),  
to a menstrual cloth (Isa 30:22).   
  
If all the evils in the world were put together and their   
quintessence strained out—they could not make a thing   
so black and polluted as sin is! **A sinner is a devil in   
a man's shape!** When Moses' rod was turned into a   
serpent—he fled from it. If God would open men's eyes   
and show them their deformities and damnable spots  
—they would fly from themselves, as from serpents!   
  
When grace comes—it washes off this hellish filth!  
It turns *ravens* into *swans*. It makes those who are   
as black as hell—to become as white as snow!  
  
"Christ gave Himself for us to redeem us from all  
wickedness and to *purify* for Himself a people that  
are His very own." Christ shed His blood—to wash   
off our filth. The cross was both an altar and a laver.   
Jesus died not only to save us from **wrath** (1Th 1:10)  
—but to save us from **sin!** (Mat 1:21).   
Out of his side came *water* which signifies our   
cleansing—as well as *blood* which signifies our   
justifying (1Jn 5:6).

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**Caterers for their lusts!**  
"If I regard iniquity in my heart" Psa 66:18  
  
*What is it to regard iniquity in the heart?*  
  
When we INDULGE in sin. When sin not only lives   
in us—but when we live in sin. Some will leave all   
their sins, but one. Jacob would let all his sons go,  
but Benjamin. The fowler holds the bird fast enough   
by one claw. Just so, Satan can hold a man by one sin.   
  
Others HIDE their sins. Many deal with their sins   
as Moses' mother dealt with her son. She hid him   
in the basket, as if she had left him—but her eye   
was still upon him—and in the end, she became his   
nurse (Exo 2:9). Just so, many seem to leave   
their sins—but they only hide them from the eye   
of others. Their heart still goes after them, and at   
last they nurse and give breast to their sins.  
  
To regard iniquity is to DELIGHT in iniquity. Though   
a child of God sins—yet he does not take a *delight* in   
sin. "I do the very thing I *hate*" (Rom 7:15). But   
the wicked make a *recreation* of sin. They "delight in  
wickedness" (2Th 2:12). Never did one   
feed with more delight on a meal he loves—than a   
wicked man does upon the forbidden fruit!  
  
To regard iniquity is to make PROVISION for sin. "Make   
no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof."   
(Rom 13:14). The wicked are **caterers for their lusts**.   
This is to make provision for the flesh—when one studies   
to satisfy the flesh and provide fuel for lust. Thus Amnon   
made provision for the flesh (2Sa 13:5). He pretends   
to be sick, and his sister Tamar, must be his nurse. She   
must serve his food to him—by which means he defiled   
her virginity. It is sad when men's concern is not to be   
holy—but to satisfy lust!

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**If death gives them a jog**

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, and  
after that to face judgment." Heb 9:27   
  
The wicked tread upon the banks of the bottomless   
pit. **If death gives them a jog**—they tumble in!

"Prepare to meet your God!" Amo 4:12   
  
  
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This E-sword module was formatted by wlue777 and original document is found at www.gracegems.org

÷**The Beatitudes (choice excerpts) cont'd**

**Run to this heavenly Father!**  
  
"The Father of mercies and the God of all comfort."  
2Co 1:3  
  
Christians should look upon God under this notion—the   
Father of all *mercy*, sitting upon a throne of *grace*. We   
should **run to this heavenly Father** in all conditions!  
  
We should run to our Father with our **sins**, as that sick   
child who, as soon as he found himself ill—he ran to his   
father to help him, "My head! My head!" 2Ki 4:19  
So in case of sin—run to God and say: "My heart! My   
heart! O this *dead* heart—Father, quicken it! This *hard*   
heart—Father, soften it! Father, my heart, my heart!"  
  
We should run to our Father with our **temptations**.   
A child, when another strikes him, runs to his father.   
So when the devil strikes us with his temptations, let   
us run to our Father: "Father, Satan assaults and hurls   
in his fiery darts at me! Father, it is Your child who is   
assaulted by this *red dragon!* Father, take off the   
tempter!"  
  
"Cast all your care upon Him, because He cares about   
you!" 1Pe 5:7. What a sweet privilege is this! When   
any burden lies upon our hearts—we may go to our   
Father and unload all our cares and griefs into His   
loving bosom! "Cast your burden on the Lord, and He   
will support you; He will never allow the righteous to   
be shaken!" Psa 55:22  
  
  
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**Sin first enslaves—and then damns!**  
  
"I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a  
**slave to sin**." Joh 8:34  
  
"You are of your father the Devil, and you want  
to carry out your father's desires!"Joh 8:44  
  
It is the sad misery of an unregenerate person,   
that he is in a state of *vassalage*. He is under the   
tyranny of sin. "It is the greatest slavery in the   
world for a man to be a slave to his own passions!"   
  
A wicked man is as much a slave—as he who works in   
the galley! Look into his heart—and there are legions   
of lusts ruling him! He must do what sin will have him   
to do. A slave is at the service of a usurping tyrant. If   
he bids him dig in the mine, or hew in the quarries, or   
tug at the oar—he must do it. Thus every wicked man   
must do what corrupt nature, inspired by the devil, bids   
him to do. If sin bids him to be drunk, or to be unchaste  
—he is at the command of sin, as the donkey is at the   
command of the driver.   
  
**Sin first enslaves—and then damns!**  
  
"But now that you have been set free from sin and have  
become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to  
holiness, and the result is eternal life." Rom 6:22  
  
  
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"**They wear themselves out with all their sinning!**"   
Jer 9:5  
  
Sin lays a heavy yoke upon men. The commands of   
sin are burdensome. Let a man be under the power   
and rage of any lust (whether it be covetousness or   
ambition), how he tires and excruciates himself! What   
hazards does he run, even to the endangering of his   
health and soul, that he may satisfy his lust!   
  
"Virtue is easier than vice." Temperance is easier than   
drunkenness. Doing justice is less burdensome than   
crime. There is more difficulty and perplexity in the   
contrivement and pursuit of wicked ends—than in   
obeying the sweet and gentle precepts of Christ.   
  
Hence it is, that a wicked man is said to 'pregnant with   
evil and conceives trouble' (Psa 7:14), to show what   
anxious pain and trouble he has in bringing about his   
wickedness! **Many have gone with more pain to   
hell—than others have to heaven!**  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  **God is still the same God**  
  
"Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have  
called you by name; you are Mine. When you go  
through deep waters and great trouble, I will be  
with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty,  
you will not drown! When you walk through the fire  
of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames  
will not consume you. For I am the Lord, your God,  
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior." Isa 43:1-3  
  
**God is still the same God**.   
  
He has as much **love** in His heart to *pity* us,  
and as much **strength** in His arm to *help* us!  
  
  
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**He is precious**  
  
"To you who believe, **He is precious**." 1Pe 2:7  
  
See the preciousness in Christ.   
  
His *name* is precious; it is as ointment poured forth.   
His *blood* is precious; it is as balm poured forth.   
His *love* is precious; it is as wine poured forth.   
  
Jesus Christ is made up of all sweets and delights.   
He Himself is all that is desirable. He is . . .  
light to the eye,  
honey to the taste,  
joy to the heart.   
  
"Yes, He is altogether lovely. This is my Beloved,  
and this is my Friend!" Son 5:16  
  
*We truly love Christ*, when we love Him for His   
loveliness, namely—that infinite and superlative   
beauty which shines in Him.  
  
  
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**When we were bitten by the old serpent**  
"Christ loved the church and gave Himself  
up for her!" Eph 5:25  
  
Love made our dear Lord suffer for us. The *pelican*   
out of her love to her young ones, when they are   
bitten by serpents, feeds them with her own blood   
to recover them. Just so, **when we were bitten by   
the old serpent**, Christ fed us with His own blood,   
that He might recover us.   
  
"May you experience the love of Christ, though it is so  
great you will never fully understand it!" Eph 3:19  
  
  
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**Such a wonder-working grace**  
  
"In every situation take the **shield of faith**,  
and with it you will be able to extinguish the  
flaming arrows of the evil one!" Eph 6:16  
  
"Everyone born of God overcomes the world.  
This is the victory that has overcome the  
world—even our **faith**." 1Jn 5:4   
  
Why is faith **such a wonder-working grace?**  
  
Faith unites the soul to Christ, and that blessed   
Head sends forth grace into the members. "I can   
do all things through Christ, who give me strength!"  
Php 4:13. Faith goes to Christ—and fetches   
His strength into the soul.  
  
Faith works a *contempt of the world* into the heart.   
Faith gives a true *map* of the world, "When I *surveyed*   
all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to   
achieve—everything was meaningless, a chasing after   
the wind; nothing was gained under the sun!" Ecc 2:11  
  
Faith shows the world in its night-dress, having all its   
*jewels* pulled off. Faith makes the world appear in its   
true state. Faith shows the soul better things than the   
world. It gives a sight of *Christ* and *eternal glory*. It   
gives a prospect of *heaven*. Faith climbs up above sense   
and reason, into heaven and sees Christ—and the soul,   
having once viewed His superlative excellencies, becomes   
crucified to the world. Says the Christian, "Yes, everything   
else is worthless when compared with the priceless gain of   
knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. I have discarded everything   
else, counting it all as garbage, so that I may have Christ!"   
Php 3:8   
  
Faith gets strength from God's promises. Faith lives upon   
the promises. Take the fish out of the water—and it dies.   
Take faith out of a promise—and it cannot live. The promises   
are *breasts of consolation*. The child by sucking the breast,  
gets strength. Faith gets strength by sucking the breast of   
a promise. When faith begins to be weak and is ready to   
faint in the day of battle, then the *promises* muster their   
forces together, and all come in for faith's relief—and now   
it is able to hold out in the fiery trial.  
  
Faith gives the soul a right notion of suffering. Faith draws   
the true picture of sufferings. What is suffering? Faith says,   
"it is but the suffering of the *body*—which must shortly by   
the course of nature, drop into the dust." Thus faith gives  
the soul a *just measure* of sufferings—which enables a   
Christian to prostrate his life at the feet of Christ.  
  
Faith picks sweetness out of suffering. The bee gathers   
the sweetest honey from the bitterest herb. So faith   
gathers the sweetest comforts, from the sharpest trials.   
Faith looks upon suffering as *God's love-token!* "Afflictions   
are sharp arrows—but they are shot from the hand of a   
loving Father!" Faith can taste honey at the end of the   
afflicting rod. Faith fetches joy out of suffering, "Your   
sorrow will turn to joy!" Joh 16:20. Faith gets *honey*   
from the belly of the lion. Faith finds a *jewel* under the   
cross! "We know that all things work together for the   
good of those who love God: those who are called   
according to His purpose." Rom 8:28   
  
  
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**A lovely garment**  
  
"Be *clothed* with humility." 1Pe 5:5  
  
Humility is **a lovely garment**. Let a child of God   
look at his face every morning in the looking-glass   
of God's Word, and see his sinful spots. This will   
make him walk humbly all the day after. God   
cannot endure to see his children grow proud.   
He allows them to fall into sin, as he did Peter,   
that their plumes of pride may fall off, and that   
they may walk humbly.  
  
  
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**The scars and infirmities of God's children!**   
  
"I will spare them as a father spares an  
obedient and dutiful child." Mal 3:17  
  
God will bear with many infirmities in His children.   
A father bears much with a child he loves. We often   
grieve the Spirit, and abuse His kindness. God will   
pass by much disobedience in His children.   
  
"He has not seen iniquity in Jacob." Num 23:21  
God's love does not make Him blind. He sees sin in   
His people—but not with an eye of revenge. He see   
their sins with an eye of pity. He sees sin in His children   
as a physician sees a disease in his patient. He has not  
seen iniquity in Jacob, so as to *destroy* him. God may   
use the rod (2Sa 7:14), not the scorpion. O how   
much is God willing to pass by in His children—because   
they are His children!   
  
God takes notice of the good that is in His children—and   
passes by the infirmity. God does quite contrary to us.   
We often take notice of the evil that is in others and   
overlook the good. Our eye is upon the flaws of others.   
But God takes notice of the good that is in His children.   
God sees their *faith*—and winks at their *failings! "*Sarah   
obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord." The Holy Spirit does   
not mention her unbelief and laughing at the promise—  
but takes notice of the good in her. God puts his finger   
upon **the scars and infirmities of His children!**   
  
How much did God wink at, in Israel His firstborn!   
Israel often provoked Him with their murmurings—  
but God answered their *murmurings* with *mercies*.   
He spared them—as a father spares his son.  
  
  
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**The sacred ointment**  
  
They godly often spot themselves with sin.   
  
Though sin is in itself deadly—but being tempered with   
repentance and mixed with **the sacred ointment** of   
Christ's blood—the venomous damning nature of it is   
taken away!  
  
  
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**They are not *eagles*—but *earthworms!***   
  
Those who are God's children, are of a more noble   
and celestial spirit than men of the world. They "set   
their minds on things above, not on earthly things"  
(Col 3:2). 'Whoever is born of God, overcomes   
the world' (1Jn 5:4). The children of God live in a   
higher region. They are compared to *eagles* (Isa 40:31)  
in regard of their sublimeness and heavenly  
mindedness. Their souls are fled aloft. *Christ* is in their   
heart (Col 1:27) and the *world* is under their   
feet (Rev 12:1).  
  
Men of the world are ever tumbling in thick clay.   
They are 'sons of earth'. **They are not *eagles*—  
but *earthworms!*** The saints are of another spirit.   
They are born of God and walk with God as the   
child walks with the father. "Noah walked with God"   
(Gen 6:9). God's children show their high pedigree   
in their heavenly life (Php 3:20).  
  
  
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**Our father, which art in hell**  
  
"You have taken off your old self with its practices   
and have put on the new self, which is being renewed   
in knowledge in the image of its Creator." Col 3:9-10  
  
The child resembles the father. God's children are like   
their heavenly Father. They bear His very image and   
impress.   
  
Wicked men say they are the children of God—but there   
is too great an unlikeness. The Jews bragged that they   
were Abraham's children—but Christ disproves them by   
this argument, because they were not like Him. "You are   
determined to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth   
that

I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things!"  
(Joh 8:40). "You—Abraham's children, and go about to   
kill Me! You are more like Satan, than Abraham!" "You   
are of your father the devil!" (verse 44). Such as are   
proud, earthly, and malicious may truly say, "**Our father   
which art in hell**." It is blasphemy to call God our Father,   
and make the devil our pattern! God's children resemble   
Him in meekness and holiness. They are His walking   
pictures. As the seal stamps its print and likeness upon   
the wax—so does God stamp the print and image of  
His own beauty upon His children.  
  
  
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**God is either ignorant, or impotent**  
  
All mankind are divided into two ranks—either they   
are the children of God, or the children of the devil.  
  
The first sign of heavenly sonship, is tenderness of heart.   
"Because your heart was tender" (2Ch 34:27). A   
childlike heart is a tender heart. He who before had a *flinty*heart—has now a *fleshy* heart. A tender heart is like melting   
wax to God. He may set whatever seal He will upon it. This   
tenderness of heart shows itself three ways.  
  
**[1] A tender heart grieves for sin.** A child weeps for   
offending his father. Peter showed a tender heart when   
Christ looked upon him and he remembered his sin, and   
wept like a child. It is reported that Peter never heard a   
rooster crow, but he wept. The least hair makes the eye   
weep. The least sin makes the heart smite.   
  
**[2] A tender heart melts under mercy.** The heart is   
never so kindly dissolved, as under the sunbeams of God's   
mercy. See how David's heart was melted with God's   
kindness: "Who am I, O Sovereign Lord, and what is my   
family, that You have brought me this far?" (2Sa 7:18)   
There was a gracious thaw upon his heart. So says   
a child of God, "Lord, who am I—a piece of dust and sin   
kneaded together—that the orient beams of free grace   
should shine upon me? Who am I, that You should pity   
me when I lay in my blood—and spread the golden wings   
of mercy over me!" The soul is overcome with God's   
goodness—the tears drop, and the love flames. God's  
mercy has a melting influence upon the soul.  
  
**[3] A tender heart trembles under God's threatenings.   
"**My flesh trembles in fear of You!" (Psa 119:120). If the   
father is angry—the child trembles. When ministers denounce   
the threats of God against sin—tender souls sit in a trembling   
posture. This trembling frame of heart, God delights in. "To   
this man will I look, even to him who trembles at Your word!"  
(Isa 66:2). A wicked man, like the Leviathan, 'is made   
without fear' (Job 41:33). He neither believes God's *promises*  
—nor dreads God's *threatenings*. Let judgment be denounced   
against sin—he laughs. He thinks that **God is either ignorant**  
and does not see—**or impotent** and cannot punish. "The   
mountains quake before Him and the hills melt away. The   
earth trembles at His presence!" (Nah 1:5). But the hearts   
of the ungodly are more obdurate than the rocks! A hardened   
sinner like Nebuchadnezzar has "the heart of a beast given to   
him" (Dan 4:16). A childlike heart is a tender heart. The   
heart of stone is taken away.  
  
  
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**More odious to God than a serpent!**  
  
"You are of purer eyes than to behold evil."  
Hab 1:13  
  
God is holy. Purity is the chief robe with which God   
adorns Himself. Will this holy God endure to have   
an impure heart come near Him? **Will a man lay a   
viper in his bosom!** God's image consists in holiness.   
To those who do not have this image and superscription   
upon them, He will say "I never knew you!" God delights   
in no heart, but where He may see His own likeness. *Love*   
is founded upon *likeness*. God loves the pure in heart.  
  
The holy God and the unrepentant sinner—cannot   
dwell together. None can dwell together but friends  
—but there is no friendship between God and the   
sinner, both of them being of a contrary judgment   
and disposition. An impure heart is **more odious   
to God than a serpent!** God gave the serpent its   
venom—but Satan fills the heart with sin. 'Satan   
has filled your heart!' Act 5:3. The Lord abhors   
a sinner! He will not come near him—having his   
plague-sores running. 'My soul loathed them!'   
Zec 11:8  
  
Heaven is a pure place. It is an "*undefiled* inheritance"   
1Pe 1:4. **No unclean beasts shall come into  
the heavenly ark! "**Nothing evil will be allowed to   
enter!" Rev 21:27  
  
"Blessed are the***pure in heart***, for they shall see God."   
Mat 5:8. Purity of heart is the jewel which is hung   
only upon the elect! Chastity distinguishes a virtuous   
woman from a harlot. Just so, the true Christian is   
distinguished from the hypocrite—by his heart-purity.   
  
  
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**A dead wife cannot please her husband**  
  
"Everything is pure to those whose *hearts are pure*.  
But nothing is pure to those who are corrupt and  
unbelieving, because their minds and consciences  
are defiled." Tit 1:15  
  
Until the heart is pure—all our *holy things* (that is—our   
religious duties) are polluted. They are but *splendid sins!*Under the law, whatever a **leper** touched was unclean.   
If he had touched the altar or sacrifice, the altar would   
not cleanse him—but he would defile the altar.   
  
A *filthy hand* defiles the purest water. Just so, an   
*impure heart* defiles all religious duties—he drops   
poison upon them all.   
  
A pure stream running through *muddy ground*, is polluted.   
Just so, the holiest duties, running through an *impure heart,*   
are polluted. A sinner's works are called "dead works" (Heb 6:1)  
And those works which are dead, cannot please God.  **A dead wife cannot please her husband**.  
  
  
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**There goes an idolater!**  
  
"Covetousness which is idolatry." Col 3:5  
  
Covetousness is the root of idolatry. The covetous   
person bows down to the image of gold. His money   
is his **god**—for he puts his trust in it.   
  
Money is his ***creator***. When he has abundance   
of wealth, then he thinks he is 'made'.   
  
Money is his ***redeemer***. If he is in any trouble,   
he flies to his money and that must redeem him.   
  
Money is his ***comforter***. When he is sad he counts   
over his money, and with this golden harp he drives   
away the evil spirit.   
  
When you see a covetous man, you may say,   
**"There goes an idolater!"**  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  **An evil heart of unbelief**  
  
"**An evil heart of unbelief**." Heb 3:12  
  
An unbelieving heart is evil in the highest degree.   
It is full of the poison of hell. Unbelief is the foul   
*medley* of all sins—the *root* and *receptacle* of sin.  
  
Unbelief is a God-affronting sin. It calls in question   
God's power, mercy and truth. "The one who does   
not believe God, is actually calling God a liar!" Can   
a greater affront be cast upon the God of glory!   
  
Unbelief hardens the heart. These two sins are linked   
together—"He upbraided them with their unbelief and   
hardness of heart" (Mar 16:14). Unbelief breeds the   
stone of the heart. He who does not believe God's   
threatenings—will never fear Him. He who does not   
believe God's promises—will never love Him. What is   
said of the Leviathan, is true of the unbeliever. "Its   
heart is as hard as rock, as hard as a millstone!"  
(Job 41:24). Unbelief first *pollutes* the heart—and   
then *hardens* it!  
  
  
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**Let that room be washed with holy tears!**  
  
Holiness is the angels' glory. They are pure virgin-spirits.   
Take away purity from an angel—and he is but a devil!   
  
"Blessed are the *pure in heart*, for they shall  
see God." Mat 5:8  
  
The heart must especially be kept pure, because the   
heart is the chief seat or place of God's residence. God   
dwells in the heart. He takes up the heart for His own   
lodging, therefore it must be pure and holy.   
  
A king's palace must be kept from defilement, and   
especially his throne. How holy ought that to be! If   
the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, the heart   
is the holy of holies! Oh take heed of defiling the   
room where God chiefly dwells! **Let that room be   
washed with holy tears!**The heart must especially be pure, because it is   
the heart which sanctifies all that we do. If the   
heart is holy, all is holy—our affections holy, our  
duties holy.  
  
Purity of heart is that which beautifies a soul in God's   
eye. You are but a spiritual leper—until you are pure   
in heart. God is in love with the pure heart, for He sees   
His own picture drawn there. The pure in heart, have   
the embroidery and workmanship of the Holy Spirit   
upon them.  
  
The pure heart is God's paradise where He delights   
to walk. It is God's lesser heaven. The *dove* delights   
in the purest air. The Holy Spirit who descended in   
the likeness of a dove, delights in the purest soul.   
God says of the pure in heart, as of Zion, "This is   
My rest forever, here will I dwell" (Psa 132:14).   
  
God loves the loveliest complexion. The pure in heart   
is Christ's bride, decked and bespangled with the   
jewels of holiness. "You have ravished My heart with   
one of your eyes!" (Son 4:9). Your eyes, that is,   
your graces; these as a chain of diamonds, have   
drawn My heart to you.   
  
Of all hearts, God loves the pure heart best. You   
who dress yourself by the looking-glass of the Word   
and adorn 'the hidden person of your heart', are most   
precious in God's eyes, though you may be as bleary  
eyed as Leah, or as lame as Barzillai. Yet being 'pure   
in heart', you are the mirror of beauty and may say   
"Yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord!"   
(Isa 49:5). How may this raise the esteem of purity!   
  
  
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**Before conversion**   
 **Before conversion**, the sinner is compared . . .  
to a **stone** for his hardness of heart (Zec 7:12),  
to a **wolf** for his savageness (Mat 7:15)  
to a **lion** for his fierceness (Isa 11:6),  
to a **bee** for his sting (Psa 118:12),  
to an **adder** for his poison (Psa 140:3).  
  
  
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***Fading*, not *filling***  
  
"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for  
righteousness, for *they will be filled*." Mat 5:6  
  
Here is the excellency of *righteousness* above all   
other things. A man may hunger after the world   
and not be filled. The world is ***fading*, not *filling***.   
Cast three worlds into the heart—yet the heart is   
not full. But righteousness is a filling thing; nay,  
it so fills that it *satisfies!*   
  
A man may be filled and not satisfied. A sinner   
may take his fill of sin—but that is a sad filling.   
It is far from satisfaction. He shall have his belly   
full of sin; he shall have enough of it—but this is   
not a filling to satisfaction. This is such a filling   
that the damned in hell have! They shall be   
full of the fury of the Lord!  
  
  
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**Oh, take heed of this sweet poison!**  
  
The love of sin makes sin taste sweet, and this   
*sweetness in sin* bewitches the heart.   
  
It is worse to *love* sin than to *commit* it. A man   
may be overtaken with sin (Gal 6:1). He   
who has stumbled upon sin unawares will weep  
—but the love of sin hardens the heart and keeps  
the devil in possession. In true mourning there   
must be a grieving for sin. But how can a man   
grieve for that sin which his heart is in love with?   
**Oh, take heed of this sweet poison!** The love   
of sin freezes the soul in impenitence.  
  
  
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**Suck damnation out of the   
sweet flower of God's mercy!**  
"I will have peace even though I follow my  
own stubborn heart." Deu 29:19  
  
How many, spider-like, **suck damnation out of   
the sweet flower of God's mercy!** "Oh," says   
one, "Christ died for me!" Many a bold sinner plucks   
*death* from the *tree of life*, and through presumption,   
goes to hell by that ladder of Christ's blood—by which  
others go to heaven! It is sad when the goodness of   
God, which should 'lead to repentance' (Rom 2:4),   
leads to *presumption*.   
  
O sinner, do not *hope* yourself into hell. Take heed   
of being damned upon a presumption! You say   
"God is merciful"—and therefore you go on securely   
in sin. But who is mercy for—the *unrepentant* sinner   
or the *mourning* sinner? 'Let the wicked forsake his   
way, and return to the Lord, and He will have mercy   
upon him' (Isa 55:7). No mercy without forsaking sin!

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**288 opinions about the way to happiness**

*In what does happiness consist?*

Millions of people mistake both the *nature* of happiness, and the *way* there. Some of the learned have noted **288 opinions about the way to happiness**—and all have shot wide of the mark!  
  
How do men thirst after the *world*—as if the *pearl of happiness* hung upon an earthly crown! "Oh," says one, "if I had but such an *estate*—then I would be happy! Had I but such a *comfort*—then I would sit down satisfied!" Well, God gives him that comfort and lets him suck the very juice out of it—but, alas, it falls short of his expectation. It cannot fill the emptiness and longing of his soul!  
  
Happiness does not lie in the acquisition of worldly things. Happiness cannot by any chemistry—be extracted from the world. Christ does not say, 'Happy are the *rich,*' or 'Happy are the *noble.*' Yet too many idolize these things. How ready is man to terminate his happiness in external worldly things! If they have but worldly accommodations, they are ready to say with that *brutish fool* in the gospel, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years, take your ease—eat, drink and be merry!"   
  
But alas! The *tree of happiness* does not grow in an *earthly paradise.* Has not God 'cursed the ground' because of sin? Yet many are digging for happiness here—as if they would fetch a blessing out of a curse! A man may as well think to extract oil out of a stone, or fire out of water—as happiness out of earthly things!  
  
King Solomon had more worldly things than any man. His crown was hung full of jewels. He had treasuries of gold. He had the flower and quintessence of all delights—sumptuous fare, stately edifices, vineyards, lands, all sorts of music to enchant and ravish the senses with joy. If there were any rarity—it was present in king Solomon's court. Thus did he *bathe in the perfumed waters of pleasure.*

Never did the world cast a more smiling aspect upon any man! Yet when he comes to give his impartial verdict, he tells us that the world has 'vanity' written upon its frontispiece; and all those golden delights he enjoyed, were but a *painted felicity—a glorious misery!*"Behold! All was vanity!" Happiness is too noble and delicate a plant, to grow in this world's soil. Worldly joys are but *sugared lies—pleasant deceits*—which have not one grain of true happiness! Nothing on *earth* can satisfy the *soul's* desires!  
  
"The world passes away!" (1Jn 2:17). Worldly delights are winged. They may be compared to a flock of birds in the garden—which stay a little while—but when you come near to them—they take their flight and are gone! Just so, "riches make themselves wings; they fly away like an eagle toward heaven!" They are like a meteor which blazes—but soon burns out. They are like a castle made of snow—lying under the fiery beams of the sun. Worldly comforts are like tennis balls—which are bandied up and down from one to another. They are like a bouquet of flowers—which withers while you are smelling it. They are like ice—which melts away while it is in your hand.  
  
Those things which do more *vex* than comfort—cannot make a man truly happy. As riches are compared to *wind*—to show their vanity; so they are compared to *thorns*—to show their vexation. Thorns are not more apt to tear our garments—than riches to tear our hearts! They are thorns in the gathering—and they prick with anxious care. They pierce the *head* with care of getting, so they wound the *heart* with fear of losing. Happiness is not to be fetched out of the earth! Worldly comforts cannot make you happy. You might live rich—and die cursed! You might treasure up an estate—and God might treasure up wrath!

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**Most fish**  
  
**Most fish go to the Devil's net!** "Enter through   
the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad   
is the road that leads to destruction, and many   
enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow   
the road that leads to life, and only a few find it!"  
Mat 7:13-14

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**A godly man hates**  
  
A righteous person breathes after holiness (Psa 119:5).   
Though sin cleaves to his heart—yet his heart does not   
cleave to sin. "I do the very thing I hate!" (Rom 7:15).  **A godly man hates** the sin to which Satan most tempts,  
and his heart most inclines (Psa 119:128).

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**The depth of mercy, and the height of love!**  
  
"Behold! How great is the love the Father has lavished   
on us—that we should be called children of God!"   
1Jn 3:1  
  
God showed power in making us His *creatures*—but love   
in making us His *sons*. Plato gave God thanks that He had   
made him a man and not a beast—but what cause have   
they to adore God's love—who has made them His children!   
That we may the better behold God's love in making us   
His children, consider three things.  
  
1. We were deformed—so did not DESERVE to be made   
God's children. God did not adopt us when we were clothed   
with the robe of innocence in paradise, when we were hung   
with the jewels of holiness; but when we were in our blood   
and had our leprous spots upon us! The time of our loathing  
—was the time of God's loving!  
  
2. As we did not deserve to be made God's children, so   
neither did we DESIRE it. No rich man will force another to   
become his heir against his will. If a king should go to adopt   
a beggar and make him heir of the crown, if the beggar should   
refuse the king's favor and say, 'I had rather be a beggar still  
—I do not want your riches'; the king would take it in high   
contempt of his favor, and would not adopt him against his   
will. Thus it was with us. We had no willingness to be made   
God's children. We desired to be beggars still—but God out   
of his infinite mercy and indulgence, not only *offers* to make   
us children—but *makes* us willing to embrace the offer   
(Psa 110:3). What stupendous love was this!  
  
3. It is the wonder of love that God should adopt us for   
His children, when we were ENEMIES. No man would   
adopt an enemy to be his heir. But that God should make   
us Hs children—when we were His enemies; that He should   
make us heirs to the crown—when we were traitors to the   
crown—oh amazing, astonishing love!   
  
We had done God all the injury and spite we could, defaced   
His image, violated His law, trampled upon His mercies—but   
when we had angered Him, He adopted us! What stupendous   
love was this! Such love was never shown to the angels! When   
they fell, God did not make them children—but prisoners. They   
were heirs only to 'the treasures of wrath'! (Rom 2:5).  
  
Let us admire His wondrous love. When we were breathing   
forth enmity against God—He conquered our stubbornness   
with kindness, and not only pardoned—but adopted us! It is   
hard to say which is greater—the *mystery*, or the *mercy*.   
This is such amazing love as we shall be searching into and   
adoring to all eternity! The bottom of it cannot be fathomed   
by any angel in heaven. God's love in making us His children   
is a rich love. It is love in God to feed us—but it is rich love   
to adopt us! It is love to give us a *crumb*—but it is rich love   
to make us heirs to a *crown!*  
  
It is a distinguishing love, that when God has passed by so   
many millions, He should cast a favorable aspect upon you!   
Most are made vessels of wrath, and fuel for hell. And that   
God should say to you, 'You are My son!'—here is **the depth   
of mercy, and the height of love!** Who, O who, can tread   
upon these hot coals, and his heart not burn in love to God!

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***Pharisaic purity***  
  
"Blessed are the***pure in heart***, for they shall  
see God." Mat 5:8  
  
If the heart is not pure, we differ nothing from a   
***Pharisaic purity****.* The Pharisees' holiness consisted   
chiefly in externals. Theirs was an 'outside purity'.   
They never minded the inside of the heart. 'Woe   
unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You  
are so careful to clean the outside of the cup and   
the dish, but inside you are filthy—full of greed   
and self-indulgence! Hypocrites! You are like   
whitewashed tombs—beautiful on the outside   
but filled on the inside with dead people's bones   
and all sorts of impurity!' (Mat 23:25, Mat 23:27).   
The Pharisees were good only on the surface. They   
were like a rotten post, overlaid with fine paint.  
  
"For I tell you that unless your righteousness  
surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers  
of the law, you will certainly not enter the  
kingdom of heaven!" Mat 5:20

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**For every crumb of His patience**  
  
"When the sentence for a crime is not quickly carried  
out, the hearts of the people are filled with schemes  
to do wrong." (Ecc 8:11).   
  
God forbears *punishing*—therefore men forbear *repenting*.   
He does not smite upon their back by *correction*—therefore   
they do not smite upon their thigh by *humiliation* (Jer 31:19).   
The sinner thinks thus: "God has spared me all this while;   
surely He will not punish me." "He says to himself—God has   
forgotten; He covers His face and never sees!" (Psa 10:11).   
  
In infinite patience God sometimes adjourns His judgments a   
while longer. He is not willing to punish (2Pe 3:9). God is   
like the bee, which naturally gives *honey*—but *stings* only   
when it is provoked. But alas, how is His patience abused!   
God's patience hardens most. Because God stops the vial   
of His wrath—sinners stop the conduit of tears!   
  
To be hardened under God's patience, makes our condition far   
worse. *Incensed justice* will revenge *abused patience!* God was   
patient towards Sodom—but when they did not repent, He made   
the fire and brimstone flame about their ears! Sodom, which was   
once the wonder of God's patience—is now a standing monument   
of God's severity. Long *forbearance* is no *forgiveness*. God may   
keep off the stroke awhile—but His justice is not dead—but only   
sleeps. God has leaden feet but iron hands. The longer God is   
taking His blow—the sorer it will be when it comes. The longer   
a stone is falling—the heavier it will be at last. The longer God   
is whetting his sword—the sharper it cuts!  
  
How dreadful will their condition be—who sin because God is   
patient with them. **For every crumb of His patience**—God   
puts a drop of wrath into His vial. The longer God forbears   
with a sinner—the more interest he is sure to pay in hell.  
  
  
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**A watery eye and a whorish heart**  
  
"Blessed are those who mourn." Mat 5:4  
  
*Gospel-mourning* is joined with **self-loathing**. The   
sinner *admires* himself—the penitent *loathes* himself.   
"You shall *loath* yourselves in your own sight for all   
your evils." Eze 20:43 A true penitent is troubled   
not only for the *shameful consequence* of sin—but for   
the *loathsome nature* of sin; not only the sting of sin  
—but the deformed face of sin. The true mourner   
cries out, "O these impure eyes! O this heart which is   
a conclave of wickedness!" He not only leaves sin—  
but loathes sin.   
  
*Gospel-mourning* must be **purifying**. Our tears   
must make us more holy. We must so weep for sin,   
as to weep out sin. Our tears must drown our sins.   
We must not only mourn—but turn. "Turn to me   
with weeping" (Joe 2:12). What good is it, to   
have **a watery eye and a whorish heart?** True   
tears are cleansing. They are like a flood that carries   
away all the rubbish of our sins away with it. The   
waters of holy mourning are like the river Jordan,  
wherein Naaman washed and was cleansed of his   
leprosy. Though our sins be as scarlet—yet by   
washing in this river of repentance, they become   
white as snow.   
  
*Gospel-mourning* must be joined with **hatred of sin**.   
We must not only abstain from sin—but abhor sin.   
The dove hates the least feather of the hawk. A true   
mourner hates the least motion to sin. A true mourner   
is a *sin-hater*. He looks upon sin as the most deadly   
evil—as the essence of all evil. Sin looks more ghastly   
than death or hell. A true mourner is implacably incensed   
against sin. He will never admit of any terms of peace.   
*Anger* may be reconciled—*hatred* cannot. True mourning   
begins in the love of God—and ends in the hatred of sin.  
  
There is that in the best Christian, which is contrary to   
God. There is that in him, which deserves hell—and shall   
he not mourn? A ship that is always leaking must have   
the water continually pumped out. While the soul leaks by   
sin, we must be still pumping at the leak by repentance.  
The washing of our souls daily in the brinish waters of   
repentance, is the best way both to prevent and cure   
the falling into relapses.  
  
  
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**Set your affection on things above**  
  
"**Set your affection on things above**, not  
on things on the earth." Col 3:2  
  
He who has a heavenly spirit—shall go to the heavenly   
kingdom. Do you live above the world? The eagle does   
not catch flies—she soars aloft in the air. Do you pant   
after glory and immortality? Do you abhor that which is   
sordid and carnal? Can you trample upon all sublunary   
things? Is *heaven* in your eye—and *Christ* in your heart  
—and the *world* under your feet

÷**The Christian Soldier, or   
Heaven Taken by Storm**

by Thomas Watson, 1669

A practical handbook on Christian living,   
showing the holy violence a Christian is   
to put forth in the pursuit after glory.

"The Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and  
the violent take it by force." Mat 11:12

**CHOICE EXCERPTS**

**How do I mortify the flesh?**  
  
**The flesh** is a bosom traitor; it is like the Trojan horse  
within the walls, which does all the mischief. The flesh   
is a sly enemy—it kills by embracing. The embraces of   
the flesh are like the ivy embracing the oak; which sucks   
out the strength of it for its own leaves and berries. So the   
flesh by its soft embraces, sucks out of the heart all good.   
  
The pampering of the flesh, is the quenching of God's Spirit.   
The flesh chokes and stifles holy motions—the flesh sides with   
Satan. There is a party within us, which will not pray, which will   
not believe. The flesh inclines us more to believe a temptation   
than a promise. The flesh is so near to us, its counsels are more   
attractive. There is no chain of adamant which binds so tightly  
—as **the chain of lust**.  
  
In the best of saints, do what they can, sin will fasten its   
roots in them, and spring out sometimes with inordinate   
desires. There is always something which needs mortifying.   
"**Put to death**, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly   
nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and   
greed, which is idolatry." Col 3:5.  
  
**How do I mortify the flesh?**  
  
**1. Withdraw the fuel that may make lust burn.** Avoid   
all temptations. Take heed of that which nourishes sin.   
Those who pray that they may not be led into temptation  
—must not lead *themselves* into temptation.   
 **2. Fight against fleshly lusts with spiritual weapons**—faith and prayer. The best way to combat with sin is—upon   
our knees. Beg strength from Christ. Samson's strength lay in   
his *hair*; our strength lies in our *head—*Christ. This is a mystery   
to the major part of the world—who *gratify* the flesh rather   
than *mortify* it.

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**He wounded the old serpent three times!**  
  
What an infinite mercy it is, that God has blessed us   
with the **Scriptures!** The barbarous Indians have their   
golden mines—but not the Scriptures, which are 'more   
to be desired than much fine gold.'   
  
Our Savior bids us 'search the Scriptures'. We must not   
read these holy lines carelessly, as if they did not concern   
us, or run over them hastily—but peruse them with reverence   
and seriousness. The noble Bereans 'searched the Scriptures   
daily.' The Scripture is **the treasury of divine knowledge**;   
it is the rule and touchstone of truth; out of this well—we   
draw the water of life.   
  
Read the Word as **a book made by God Himself**. Other   
books may be written by holy men—but this book is inspired   
by the Holy Spirit. It is the library of the Holy Spirit!  
  
Read the Word as **the perfect rule of faith**; it contains all   
things essential to salvation. The Word teaches us how to please   
God; and how to order our lives in the world. It instructs us in   
all things that belong either to *prudence* or *piety*, and is 'able   
to make us wise unto salvation.'  
  
When you read the Word, look on it as a **soul-enriching   
treasury**. Search it as for 'hidden treasure!' In this Word   
are scattered many divine sayings—gather them up as so   
many jewels! This blessed book will enrich you—it fills your   
head with divine *knowledge,* and your heart with divine  *grace!* In this field, the Pearl of price is hidden! What are   
all the world's riches compared to these? Islands of spices,   
coasts of pearl, rocks of diamonds? These are but the riches  
which *reprobates* may have—but the Word gives us those   
riches which *angels* have!  
  
Look upon the Word as **a spiritual armory**, out of which   
you fetch all your weapons to fight against sin and Satan.   
  
Here are weapons to fight against SIN. The Word of God is   
*a holy sword*, which cuts asunder the lusts of the heart!   
When pride begins to lift up itself, the sword of the Spirit   
destroys this sin! When passion vents itself, the Word of   
God, like Hercules' club, beats down this angry fury! When   
lust boils, the Word of God cools that intemperate passion!   
  
Here are weapons to fight against SATAN. When the devil  
tempted Christ, **He wounded the old serpent three times**   
with the sword of the Spirit—"It is written!" Satan soon foils   
the Christian when he is unarmed, and without Scripture   
weapons.  
  
Look upon the Word as **a spiritual looking-glass** to dress   
yourselves by! It is a mirror for the blind—'The commands of   
the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes!' In other mirrors   
you may see your *faces*; in this mirror you may see your *hearts!*   
This mirror of the Word clearly represents Christ. He is . . .  
most precious;  
altogether lovely;  
a wonder of beauty;  
a paradise of delight!  
  
Look upon the Word as **a shop of spiritual antidotes and  
remedies**. If you find yourself dead in duty—here is a medicine.   
If you find your heart hard—the Word will soften and mollify it.   
If you are poisoned with sin—here is an herb to expel it.  
  
Look upon the Word as **a sovereign elixir to comfort you   
in distress**. It comforts you against all your sins, temptations,   
and afflictions. What are the *promises*—but divine cordials to   
revive fainting souls.

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**It makes men so filthy!**  
  
It is a part of our Christian profession—to fight   
under Christ's banner—against the world.   
  
The world is a flattering enemy. It shows its **golden   
apple**. It is given to some—as a snare. Take heed of   
being drowned in the world's luscious delights!  
  
It must be a strong brain that can bear heady wine.   
He had need have a great deal of wisdom and grace,  
who knows how to maintain a great estate. Riches   
often send up intoxicating fumes, which make men's   
heads giddy with pride. It is hard to climb up the *hill  
of God*—with too many *golden weights!*  
  
The world shows its *two breasts* of **pleasure** and **profit**  
—and many fall asleep with the breast in their mouth!  
  
The world never kisses us—except with an intention   
to betray us.   
  
The world is a silken halter.   
  
The world is no friend to grace; it chokes our love   
for heavenly things—the *earth* puts out the *fire*.   
  
Naturally we love the world. Too many are *wedded   
to their money—*they live together as man and wife.   
  
O let us take heed of being *entangled in this pleasing   
snare!* Many who have escaped *the rock of scandalous  
sins—*yet have *sunk in the world's golden quicksands!*   
  
The sin is not in **using** the world—but in **loving** it.   
"Do not love the world or anything in the world. If   
anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is   
not in him." 1Jn 2:15   
  
Believers are called out of the world. "They are not   
of the world, even as I am not of it." Joh 17:16.   
They are **in** the world—but not **of** it. A true saint is   
crucified in his affections, to the world, Gal 6:14.   
He is dead to the honors and pleasures of it. What   
delight does a dead man take in pictures or music?   
  
Jesus Christ gave Himself "to redeem us from this   
present evil world." Gal 1:4  
  
Living fish swim against the stream. We must swim   
against the world, else we shall be carried *down* the   
stream, and fall into the *dead sea* of hell!  
  
The world is DECEITFUL. Our Savior calls it, "The   
*deceitfulness* of riches." Mat 13:22. The world   
promises happiness—but gives weariness. It promises   
us Rachel—but gives us bleary-eyed Leah! The world   
promises to *satisfy* our desires—but only *increases*   
them. The world gives poisoned pills—but wraps   
them in sugar!  
  
The world is POLLUTING. "Religion that God our Father   
accepts as pure and faultless is this: . . . to keep oneself   
from being *polluted by the world*." It is called *filthy lucre*  
—because **it makes men so filthy!**  
  
Men will damn themselves to get the world. Ahab would   
have Naboth's vineyard, though he swam to it in blood.  
  
The world is PERISHING. "The world and its desires pass   
away." The world is like a *flower—*which withers while we   
are smelling it!

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**One of you is a devil!**  
  
"**Examine yourselves** to see whether you are in the faith;  
test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in  
you—unless, of course, you fail the test?" 2Co 13:5  
  
Self-examination is a *necessary*—but *difficult* work.  
  
Self-examination is the setting up a court in conscience and  
keeping a register there, that by strict scrutiny a man may  
know how things stand between God and his own soul. By   
a serious scrutiny of our hearts, we come to know to what   
prince we belong—whether to the Prince of *Peace*, or the   
prince of *darkness*.  
  
Self-searching is a **heart-anatomy**. As a surgeon, when he   
makes a dissection in the body, discovers the inward parts,   
the heart, liver, and arteries—just so, a Christian anatomizes   
himself.   
  
*Sentimentality* and *public opinion* are false rules to go by.   
We must judge the state of souls by the light of Scripture.  
  
Many have *foolish, presumptuous hopes.* They fancy their   
state to be good; and while they weigh themselves in the   
*balance of presumption*, they pass the test.   
  
Many take their salvation on *trust*. The foolish virgins thought   
they had oil in their lamps, the same as the wise. How confident   
are some of salvation—yet never examine their title to Heaven.  
  
Many rest in *the good opinions of others.* How vain is this!   
Alas, one may be *gold* and *pearl* in the eye of others—yet God   
may judge him to be reprobate silver! Others may think him a   
saint—and *God may write him down in His black book!* Judas   
was looked upon by the rest of the Apostles as a true believer  
—yet he was a traitor! "Then Jesus replied—Have I not chosen   
you, the Twelve? Yet **one of you is a devil!**" Joh 6:70  
  
Others can but see the outward behavior—but they cannot   
tell what evil is in the heart. Fair streams may run on the   
top of a river—but **vermin may lay at the bottom!**

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**We must either leap over them, or tread upon them!**  
  
"A man's enemies will be the members of his own household.   
Anyone who loves his father or mother more than Me is not  
worthy of Me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more  
than Me is not worthy of Me; and anyone who does not take  
his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me." Mat 10:36-38   
  
Take heed of **the snare in your family!** It is one of the   
Devil's great subtleties—to hinder us from piety by our   
nearest relations—and to shoot us with our own rib!   
  
He tempted Adam by his wife. Who would have suspected   
the Devil there? He tempted Job by his wife, "Are you still   
holding on to your integrity? Curse God and die!" Job 2:9   
Thus would the Devil have cooled Job's love for God; but   
the shield of his faith quenched this fiery dart!  
  
Take heed of such tempters! **It is better to go to Heaven   
with their hatred—than to Hell with their love!** If our  
dearest friends and family lie in our way to Heaven—**we   
must either leap over them, or tread upon them!**

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**The rat gets into his belly and eats his entrails**  
  
Take heed of a slothful, lazy disposition. A slothful  
person would gladly have Heaven—but is loathe to   
take it by storm. Sloth is the soul's sleep. Many,  
instead of *working* out salvation, *sleep* away salvation!  
Such as will not labor, must be put at last to beg. They   
must beg, as Dives in hell—for one drop of water.   
  
**God never made Heaven as a hive for drones!**   
Sloth is a disease apt to grow upon men—shake it off!   
  
A sluggish ship is a prey to the pirate.   
A sluggish soul is a prey to Satan!   
  
When the crocodile sleeps with his mouth open—**the   
rat gets into his belly and eats his entrails**. Just   
so, while men are asleep in sloth—the Devil enters   
and devours them!  
  
**Our sleeping time is Satan's tempting time!**

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**Stunted in grace**  
  
It is a pitiful thing, to be contented with **feeble grace**.   
Weak grace may live in the heart—but is sickly, and   
does not flourish into lively acts. **Weak grace** will not   
withstand strong temptations, or carry us through great   
sufferings. **Little grace** will not do God much service.   
A tree which has but little sap—will not have much fruit.   
It may be said that some Christians are **stunted in grace**.   
Oh, labor to grow to further degrees of sanctity. The more   
grace—the more strength! "But **grow in the grace** and   
knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him   
be glory both now and forever! Amen." 2Pe 3:18

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**If you live after the flesh**  
  
"**If you live after the flesh**—you shall die! But if  
you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the  
body—you shall live!" Rom 8:13  
  
**Take heed of the flesh!** As good consult with the Devil,  
as with the flesh. The flesh is a bosom traitor. An enemy   
within the walls, is the worst enemy! The flesh cries out,   
"There is a lion in the way!" The flesh says as Judas, "Why   
all this waste?" "Why all this praying and wrestling? Why   
do you waste your strength? Why all this waste?"   
  
The flesh cries out for **ease**—it is loathe to put its neck   
under Christ's yoke. The flesh is for **pleasure**—it would   
rather be playing games—than running the heavenly race.   
  
Here is a description of fleshly pleasures, "You lie on beds   
inlaid with ivory and lounge on your couches. You dine on   
choice lambs and fattened calves. You strum away on your   
harps like David and improvise on musical instruments.   
You drink wine by the bowlful and use the finest lotions."   
Amo 6:4-6. These are the delights of the flesh.   
  
There was one who tried to please all of his five senses   
at once. He had a room richly decorated with beautiful   
pictures; he had the most delectable music; he had all   
the choice aromatics and perfumes; he had all the   
sumptuous candies of the confectioner; he was lodged   
in bed with a beautiful paramour. Thus he indulged the   
flesh, and swore that he would spend all his estate to   
live one week like this—though he were sure to be   
damned in hell the next day.   
  
"There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and   
fine linen and lived in luxury every day. . . In hell, where   
he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far   
away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him,   
'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to   
dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue,   
because I am in agony in this fire!'" Luk 16:19, Luk 16:23-24  
  
  
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**They save one sin—and lose one soul!**  
  
Take heed of indulging any lust. Indulging in sin will   
spoil all effort for Heaven. **Sin enfeebles**; it is like the   
cutting of Samson's hair—then the strength departs.   
Sin is the soul's sickness. Sickness takes a man off his   
legs and so dispirits him, that he is unfit for any holy   
exercise. A sick man cannot run a race.   
  
Therefore lay the axe to the root! Let sin be hewn down!  
Do not only abstain from sin in the **act**—but let the **love**   
of sin be mortified, and let **every** sin be put to the sword!   
Many will leave all their sins but one. **They save one sin  
—and lose one soul!** One sin is a fetter! A man may lose   
the race as well by having one fetter on his leg, just as if   
he had many. I have read of a great monarch, who, fleeing   
from his enemy, threw away the crown of gold on his head  
—that he might run the faster. So, that sin which you wore   
as a crown of gold—throw it away that you may run the   
faster to the heavenly kingdom!  
  
  
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**All on fire for the world!**  
  
Take heed of too much pursuit after the world. The   
world cools holy affections. The *earth* puts out the *fire*.   
  
The world hindered the young man from following Christ,   
"he went away sorrowful!" Whereupon, says our Savior,   
"How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!"   
Luk 18:24. Demas' piety was buried in the earth,   
"Demas has forsaken me—having loved this present   
world." 2Ti 4:10  
  
The world so blinds men's **eyes**—that they do not see the   
narrow way to heaven! It so fetters their **feet**—that they   
do not run in the way of God's commandments.   
  
Mithridates, king of Pontus, being beaten by the Romans,   
and fearing he would not escape them—he caused a great   
deal of silver and gold to be scattered in the way, which   
while the Roman soldiers were busy gathering, he got   
away from them. Satan uses a similar strategy; knowing   
what tempting things riches are—he throws them as baits,   
in men's way, that while they are eagerly gathering these,   
he may hinder them in their pursuit of eternal happiness!  
  
It would hinder a man to climb up a steep rock, with   
heavy weights tied to his legs. Men's *golden weights*   
hinder them in climbing up this steep rock which leads   
to salvation!  
  
A man cannot seek both Heaven and earth at the same time.   
He cannot love both Christ and the world, 1Jn 2:15. He   
who is **all on fire for the world**—will be all **ice** for Heaven!   
Take heed of engaging your affections too far in these earthly   
things. Use the world as your **servant**—but do not follow it as   
your **master**.

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Though the sinner shall drink a **sea of wrath**—  
yet **he shall not drink one drop of injustice!**   
  
  
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**The glory of heaven!**  
  
If the mountains were gold; if every sand of the sea   
were a diamond; if the whole globe were a shining   
gem; it would all still be infinitely beneath **the glory   
of heaven!**   
  
1. In heaven, there shall be **freedom from sin**. Here   
on earth, sin keeps house with us; it is as natural to us   
to sin as to breathe. The soul that is most refined, and   
cleansed by grace, is not without some dregs of corruption.   
But a sinful thought shall not creep in to heaven. There   
is *beauty* which is not stained with lust, and *honor* which   
is not swelled with pride. "Nothing impure will ever enter   
it!" Rev 21:27   
  
2. In heaven, there shall be **freedom from the assaults   
of the red dragon**. It is sad to have Satan daily soliciting   
us by his temptations, and laboring to trick us into sin. But   
the old serpent is cast out of the heavenly Paradise!  
  
3. In heaven, there shall be **freedom from all afflictions**.   
Our lives now are interlined with troubles. "My life is consumed   
by anguish and my years by groaning; my strength fails because   
of my affliction, and my bones grow weak." Psa 31:10. There   
are many things to occasion disquiet; sometimes *poverty* afflicts;   
sometimes *sickness* tortures; sometimes *unkindness* of friends   
breaks the heart. Our lives, like the seas, are full of tempests.   
But in the kingdom of Heaven, there is nothing to give grief.   
There, all is serene and calm; nothing within to trouble, or   
without to molest.  
  
4. The delights of the heavenly kingdom are **unmixed**. The   
comforts here below, are checkered. Honor may be stained   
with disgrace; joy interwoven with sorrow. Our skies are mixed   
with clouds. But the delicacies of heaven are pure as well as   
pleasant. There is honey, which has not one drop of gall. The   
crystal spring of joy has no settlings of sorrow at the bottom.   
The rose in that paradise, is without prickles; the sun in that   
horizon, is without eclipse.  
  
Heaven will make amends for all our labor and pains!

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**Then the Devil shoots him with his fiery darts!**  
  
"While everyone was **sleeping**, his enemy came and  
sowed weeds among the wheat." Mat 13:25  
  
While men are idle in the vineyard, they are a prey to every   
temptation. Satan sows most of his seeds of temptation in   
hearts which lie fallow. When he sees people unemployed,   
he will find work for them to do—he will stir them up to one   
sin or other. When Satan finds men in a drowsy condition,   
**their sleeping time is his tempting time!**   
  
By watching and praying, we prevent the Devil's design—we  
are so busy with salvation that we have no leisure to listen to   
temptation.  
  
When the bird is flying—it is safe; but when it sits still on the   
bough—**it is in danger of being shot!** When a Christian sits   
still and is inactive—**then the Devil shoots him with his   
fiery darts!**  
  
"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation!"  
Mat 26:41

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**A divine magnet!**  
  
"The Spirit helps us in our weakness." Rom 8:26  
  
The Spirit helps us in all the duties of piety. The promises   
encourage us—and the Spirit enables us. In all earthly races   
a man runs in his own strength; but in the race to Heaven   
we have the Spirit of God helping us! He not only gives us   
the crown, when we have finished running—but **He gives   
us legs to run!** He gives us quickening and assisting grace!   
  
The Spirit of God helping us, makes our work easy. If another   
helps us to carry a burden—it is less difficult. If the magnet   
draws the iron—it is not hard for the iron to move. If the   
Spirit of God, as **a divine magnet**—draws and moves the   
heart in obedience, then the work goes on with more ease.  
  
"He gives strength to the *weary* and increases the power of  
the *weak*. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men  
stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew  
their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will  
run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."   
Isa 40:29-31

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This E-sword module was formatted by wlue777 and original document is found at www.gracegems.org

÷**The Christian Soldier (choice excerpts) cont'd**

**A pleasant, easy way to Heaven**  
  
Someone asked Him, "Lord, are only a few people  
going to be saved?" He said to them, "**Make every  
effort** to enter through the narrow door, because  
many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be  
able to!" Luk 13:23-24  
  
Though Heaven is given us freely—yet we must take   
pains for it. Canaan was given Israel freely—but they   
had to fight with the Canaanites. It is not a *lazy wish*,   
or a *sleepy prayer*—which will bring us to Heaven.  
  
We have **a long race** from earth to Heaven—but a little   
time to run; it will soon be sunset. In a race there's not   
only a laying aside of all weights which hinder—but a   
putting forth of all the strength of the body; a straining   
every joint that men may press on with all swiftness to   
lay hold on the prize.  
  
Many have made themselves **unfit** to run this blessed   
race; they are drunk with the pleasures of the world.   
A drunken man is unfit to run a race.  
  
Others **neglect** to run this race all their life; and when   
sickness and death approach—now they will begin! A   
sick man is very unfit to *walk*, much less to *run* a race!   
I acknowledge that true repentance is never too late;   
but when a man can hardly move his hand, or lift up   
his eyes—that is a very unfit time to begin the race   
from earth to Heaven.  
  
The Lord has in his eternal decree joined the *end* and   
the *means* together—striving and entering; the race and  
the crown. And a man can no more think to come to   
Heaven without striving, than he can think to come to   
the end of his journey, who never sets a step in the way!  
Who expects a harvest without plowing and sowing?   
How can we expect the harvest of glory without labor?   
  
Though our salvation with respect to Christ is a *purchase*  
—yet with respect to us, it is a *conquest*.  
  
**We have a precious soul to save!** What pains do we take   
for the feeding and enriching of the body, the brutish part?   
O then what pains should we use for the saving of the soul?   
The body is but a ring of clay; the soul is the diamond. If   
Christ thought the soul was worth the shedding of His blood,   
well may we think it worth spending our sweat.  
  
**We have a heavenly kingdom to gain!** What pains are   
used for earthly crowns and empires; men will wade to the   
crown through blood! Heaven is a kingdom which should   
make us strive for it—even to blood. The hopes of a kingdom   
(says Basil) should carry a Christian cheerfully through all   
labors and sufferings.  
  
Some imagine that there is **a pleasant, easy way   
to Heaven**—an idle wish, a deathbed tear. But it is   
not so easy a thing as men imagine. There are . . .  
so many precepts to obey;  
so many promises to believe;  
so many rocks to avoid,   
so many sins to mortify;  
so many temptations to resist;  
so many graces to quicken—   
that it is a difficult matter to be saved.   
  
Alas, there is a great work to be done; the bias of the   
heart must be changed. Man by nature does not only   
lack grace—but hates it! He has an envenomed spirit  
against God, and is angry with converting grace!   
Is it easy for the *proud* heart to be made humble?   
Is it easy for the *earthly* heart to be made heavenly?   
Can this be done without effort? It is all *up hill* to   
Heaven, and it will make us sweat before we get to   
the top of the hill.  
  
Is salvation-work so easy? Can a man be saved by a   
faint wish? Can he leap out of the Devil's arms—into   
Abraham's bosom? Oh no! there must be striving.  
  
A Christian must charge through the whole army of his   
lusts, every one of which is stronger than Goliath! He has   
no time to drowse; he must be either praying or watching.  
  
Some think free grace will save them; but it must be in   
the use of means. "Watch and pray." Others say, the   
promises will bring them to Heaven; but the promises   
of the Word are not to be separated from the precepts.   
The *promise* tells us of a crown—but the *precept* says,   
"Run in such a way as to get the prize!" 1Co 9:24.   
The promises are made to encourage faith, not to nourish   
sloth. But others say, Christ has died for sinners; and so   
they leave Him to do all for them and they will do nothing.   
Our salvation cost Christ blood; it will cost us sweat. The   
boat may as well get to shore without rowing, as we can   
get to Heaven without effort.

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**Not whom he may *bite*—but *devour!***  
  
We read in Scripture of Satan's *snares* and *darts*;   
**he hurts more by his *snares* than by his *darts!***  
  
Satan opposes us both by *open violence*, and *secret   
treachery*.  **1. Satan opposes by *open violence***—so he is called   
*the Red Dragon*. He labors to storm the castle of the   
heart; he stirs up passion, lust, and revenge. These are   
called "fiery darts," Eph 6:16, because they often set   
the soul on fire. Satan in regard to his *fierceness*, is   
called a **lion**, "Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy   
the devil prowls around like a *roaring lion* looking for   
someone to **devour**!" 1Pe 5:8. **Not whom he   
may *bite*—but *devour!*** Yes, there is "a lion in the   
way," but we must resolve upon fighting.  
  
**2. Satan opposes by *secret treachery***—so he is   
called *the Old Serpent*. What he cannot do by *force*,  
he will endeavor to do by *fraud*. Satan has *several   
subtle devices in tempting:*  
  
**Satan suits his temptations to the temper of the   
individual.**Satan studies our dispositions, and lays   
suitable baits. He knew Achan's s covetous heart,   
and tempted him with a wedge of gold. He tempts   
the youthful man with lust.  
 **Satan tempts to sin gradually.**He steals into   
the heart by degrees. He is at first, more modest.   
He did not say to Eve at first, "Eat the apple!" No!   
but he goes more subtly to work. He puts forth a   
question, *"Has God said?* Surely Eve, you are mistaken;   
the bountiful God never intended to debar one of the   
best trees of the garden. *Has God said?* Surely, either   
God did not say it; or if He did, He never really intended   
it." Thus by degrees he wrought her to distrust God, and   
then she took of the fruit and ate. Oh, take heed of   
Satan's first motions to sin, which seem more modest.  **He is first a *fox*, and then a *lion.***  
  
**Satan tempts to evil in lawful things.**It was lawful   
for Noah to eat the fruit of the grape; but he took too   
much, and so sinned. *Excess* turns that which is good—  
into evil. Eating and drinking may turn to intemperance.   
Industry in one's calling, when excessive, becomes   
covetousness. Satan draws men to an immoderate love   
of the creature, and then makes them sin in that which   
they love—as Agrippina poisoned her husband Claudius,   
in that food which he loved most.  
  
**Satan puts men upon doing good out of evil ends.**   
If he cannot hurt them by *scandalous* actions—he will by   
*virtuous* actions. Thus he tempts some to espouse religion   
out of ulterior motives. He tempts others to give to charity,   
for applause, that others may see their good works.  
  
"Take up the shield of **faith**, with which you can extinguish   
all the flaming arrows of the evil one!" Eph 6:16. We   
must resist the devil by faith. Faith is a wise, intelligent   
grace. **Faith can see a hook under the bait!** Faith keeps   
the castle of the heart, so that it does not yield. Faith beats   
back the temptation. Faith holds the promise in one hand,   
and Christ in the other. The promise encourages faith, and   
Christ strengthens it; so faith beats the enemy out of the field!  
 **We overcome Satan upon our knees!** A Christian by prayer   
fetches in auxiliary forces from Heaven. In all temptations, go   
to God by **prayer**. "Lord, teach me to use every piece of the   
spiritual armor—how to hold the *shield*, how to wear the *helmet*,   
how to use the *sword* of the Spirit. Lord, strengthen me in the   
battle; let me rather die a conqueror—than be taken prisoner,   
and led captive by Satan!"   
  
Remember that Christ has given Satan his death-wound   
upon the cross. He has bruised the head of the old Serpent!   
He is a **chained** enemy, and a **conquered** enemy; therefore   
do not fear him. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you!"   
Jas 4:7. "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under   
your feet!" Rom 16:20

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**Suck out the sweetness of a truth**  
  
**Meditation** is a holy exercise of the mind; whereby we   
bring the truths of God to remembrance, and seriously   
*ponder* upon them and *apply* them to ourselves. It is a   
work which cannot be done in a crowd. A Christian must   
retire from the world, to have serious thinking upon God.   
It is not a few transient thoughts that are quickly gone;  
but a fixing and staying of the mind upon heavenly   
objects.   
  
As the bee sucks the honey from the flower, so by   
meditation we **suck out the sweetness of a truth**.   
It is not the receiving of food into the mouth, but the   
digesting of it which makes it nutritious. So it is not   
the receiving of the most excellent truths in the ear,   
which nourishes our souls—but the digesting of them   
by meditation.   
  
Satan does what he can to hinder this duty. He is an   
enemy of meditation. The devil does not care not how   
much we read—so long as we do not meditate on what   
we read. Reading begets *knowledge*—but meditation   
begets *devotion*.   
  
"Oh, how I *love* Your law! I *meditate* on it all  
day long." Psa 119:97  
  
Holy meditation **quickens the affections**. The reason   
why our affections are so cold to heavenly things is   
because we do not warm them at the fire of holy   
meditation. As the musing on *worldly* objects makes   
the fire of lust burn; the musing on *injuries* makes   
the fire of revenge burn; just so, meditating on the   
transcendent beauties of *Christ*, would make our   
love to Christ flame forth.  
  
Meditation has a **transforming** power in it. The reading   
of the Word may affect us—but the meditating upon it   
transforms us. Meditation stamps the impression of divine   
truths upon our hearts. By meditating on God's holiness,   
we grow holy. While by meditation we look upon God's   
purity, we are changed into His likeness.  
  
Meditation produces **reformation**. "I have *considered*   
my ways and have *turned* my steps to Your statutes."   
Psa 119:59. If men would spend but one quarter of   
an hour every day in contemplating heavenly objects,   
it would leave a mighty impression upon them!

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**The looking-glass of self-love**  
  
"The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond  
cure. Who can understand it?" Jer 17:9.   
  
The heart is the greatest impostor.   
  
Little does a man know what secret atheism,   
pride, and lust is in his heart.  
  
As ignorance blinds, so self-love flatters.   
  
Every man is ready to think the best of himself.   
  
What Solomon says of love to our neighbor is most   
true of self-love; "it hides a multitude of sins." When   
a man looks upon himself in **the looking-glass of   
self-love**—his *virtues* appear greater than they are,   
and his *sins* less. Self-love makes one rather excuse   
what is amiss, than correct it.  
  
"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me  
and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is  
any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way  
everlasting." Psa 139:23-24

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**He came hewing and cutting down men's sins!**  
  
"Repent! for the kingdom of heaven is near!" Mat 3:2   
  
Hence learn, what kind of ministry is likely to do most good,   
namely, that which works upon the consciences of men. John   
the Baptist lifted up his voice like a trumpet, he preached the   
doctrine of repentance with power! **He came hewing and   
cutting down men's sins**, and afterwards preached Christ   
to them. First, he poured in the *vinegar of the law*, then the  *wine of the gospel.* This was that preaching which made men   
studiously seek after heaven. John did not so much preach to   
*please*—as to *profit*; he chose rather to reveal men's sins—than   
to show his own eloquence. The best mirror is not that which   
is most ornate, but that which shows the truest face. That   
preaching is to be preferred which makes the truest discovery   
of men's sins, and shows them their hearts!  
  
It is the greatest mercy, to have *a soul-searching ministry.*   
If one had a desperate wound, he would desire to have it   
probed to the bottom. Who would not be content to have   
their souls searched, so they may have them saved?  
  
John the Baptist was a burning and shining light; he did   
burn in his doctrine and shine in his life; and therefore   
men pressed into heaven. Joh 5:35

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**Error damns as well as vice**  
  
**Error** is the adultery of the mind; it stains the soul.   
**Error damns as well as vice.** A man may as well   
die by poison—as by pistol.  
  
**Truth** distinguishes a Christian from the world, as   
chastity distinguishes a virtuous woman from a harlot.   
We have not a richer jewel to trust God with than our  
souls; nor He a richer jewel to trust us with than His   
truths.

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**God's severity against sin**  
  
Meditate on **God's severity against sin**.   
  
Every arrow in God's quiver is shot against sin.   
  
Sin burned Sodom, and drowned the old world.   
  
Sin kindles hell.   
  
The meditation of this would frighten us out of   
our sins. There cannot be so much *sweetness* in   
sin—as there is *sting*. How dreadful is God's anger!   
"Who knows the power of His wrath?" All fire,   
compared with the fire of God's wrath—is but   
painted and imaginary fire.

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**Our words show what our heart is**  
  
"The good man brings good things out of the good  
stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil  
things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out  
of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks."   
Luk 6:45   
  
Our discourse demonstrates what our heart is. As the  
looking-glass shows what the face is—whether it be fair   
or foul; just so, **our words show what our heart is**.   
Vain discourse reveals a light, feathery heart. Gracious   
discourse reveals a gracious heart. The water of the   
conduit shows what the spring is.   
  
Holy discourse is very edifying. It enlightens the mind   
when it is ignorant—and settles it when it is wavering.   
A godly life adorns religion; godly discourse propagates it.  
  
Gracious discourse makes us resemble Christ. His words   
were perfumed with holiness: "grace was poured into   
His lips." Levi made Him a feast—and Christ feasted him   
with holy discourse. The more holy our discourse is, the   
more we are like Christ.  
  
God takes special notice of every good word we speak   
when we meet. "Then those who feared the Lord talked   
with each other, and the Lord listened and heard. A   
scroll of remembrance was written in His presence   
concerning those who feared the Lord and honored   
His name." Mal 3:16.   
  
When men entertain bad discourse, Satan draws near,   
and makes one of the company; but when they have holy   
and gracious discourse, Jesus Christ draws near, and   
wherever He comes, He brings a blessing along with Him.   
  
"Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned  
with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone."   
Col 4:6

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**Go in a feather-bed to Hell**  
  
Slothful professors are settled on their lees. They make   
a lazy profession of piety—but use no diligence. They   
are like the lilies, which neither toil, nor do they spin.   
They have some faint wishes, "Oh that I had Heaven!"   
But a man may desire venison, and lack it—if he does   
not **hunt** for it. "The sluggard craves and gets nothing,   
but the desires of the diligent are fully satisfied." Pro 13:4   
  
Men would be content to have the kingdom of Heaven;   
but they are loath to fight for it. They choose rather to  **go in a feather-bed to Hell**, than to be carried to   
Heaven in a "fiery chariot" of zeal and diligence. How   
many sleep away, and play away, their **time**—as if   
they were made merely to rest, or amuse themselves!  
  
Such as have accustomed themselves to an idle, lazy   
disposition, will find it hard to shake off, "I have taken   
off my robe—must I put it on again?" Son 5:3.   
The spouse had laid herself upon the bed of sloth, and   
though Christ knocked at the door, she was reluctant to   
rise and let Him in.

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**Enslaved**  
  
"**Enslaved** by all kinds of passions and pleasures."   
Tit 3:3  
  
Lust is an inordinate desire or impulse, provoking the   
soul to the gratifying of its carnal desires. Aristotle calls   
them 'brutish lusts' because when lusts are violent, they  
will not let reason or conscience be heard; but a man is   
carried brutishly to the satisfying of the flesh.  
  
Men are enslaved by their **drunken** lusts. Though death   
is in the cup, they will drink it up. One having almost lost   
his eye-sight, the physician told him there was no cure for   
him, unless he would leave off his excessive drinking.   
"Then," replied he, "farewell sweet light!"  
  
Men are enslaved by their **impure** lusts. Men are said to   
"burn in lusts," Rom 1:27. The apostle intimates that   
lust is a kind of fever. Feverish heats are not more deadly  
to the body, than lust is to the soul. O what folly is it—for   
a drop of pleasure to drink a sea of wrath!  
  
Men are enslaved by their **covetous** lusts. Covetousness   
is the soul's idolatry. Their God is made of gold, and to it   
they bow down. Those who bowed down on their knees to   
drink of the waters, were accounted unfit soldiers for Gideon.   
So are those unfit for Christ, who stoop immoderately to the   
care of earthly things. Those who are enslaved by the world,   
what have they but the wind? "What does he gain, since he   
toils for the wind?" Ecc 5:16. The world cannot enrich the   
soul, it cannot remove pain. If pangs of conscience come,   
the world can no more give comfort, than a crown of gold   
can cure a head-ache.

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**The dregs of old age!**  
  
Someone asked Him, "Lord, are only a few people  
going to be saved?" He said to them, "**Make every   
effort to enter** through the narrow door, because   
many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be   
able to." Luk 13:23-24  
  
Many put off seeking for heaven, until old age. When   
they are fit for no other work, then they will begin this   
taking heaven by storm.   
  
No man says, "I will learn my trade when I am old."  
  
It is imprudence for one to begin to work for Heaven,   
when he is past his time for labor. There is a night of   
sickness and death coming, and our Savior says, "The  
night comes, when no man can work." Surely a man   
can put forth but little effort for Heaven when old age,   
and old sins are upon him. Besides, how unworthy and   
insincere it is—to give the **Devil** the *flower of youth;*   
and **God the dregs of old age!**There is little hope of   
their salvation—who are never seek for Heaven, until   
they are on the borders of eternity.

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**Many seek heaven hypocritically**  
  
**Many seek heaven hypocritically**. They would have   
Heaven and their lusts too. But let not such seekers   
ever think to find happiness; let them not think they  
can lie in Delilah's lap—and go to Abraham's bosom   
when they die.

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**What makes men so loathe to die?**   
  
Because their conscience accuses them that   
they are not fit for heaven—so now death looks   
ghastly! They are afraid death will carry them   
as prisoners to hell!   
  
At the hour of death, sinners will awaken out   
of their lethargy—and fall into a frenzy of horror  
and despair!  
  
But the Christian who has been active in piety, and   
has spent his time in the service of God, can look   
death in the face with comfort. Death shall do him no   
hurt; it shall not be a destruction, but a deliverance!   
It shall purge out sin and perfect glory!

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**He who digs in a gold mine sweats**  
  
"Christ's love compels us!" 2Co 5:14  
  
Love to Christ made Paul labor more than all the other   
apostles. A man will only strive for that which he loves.   
Why are men so eager in their pursuit after gold—but   
because they love it? Love causes delight, and delight   
causes diligence. Love is like oil to the wheels. Get love   
for Christ and piety—and you will never be weary; you   
will count those the best hours which are spent with God.   
When a man has warmed himself by this fire, he is fittest   
for holy work.  
  
**He who digs in a gold mine sweats**—yet love for   
the gold makes his labor delightful.

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**It cost more to redeem us, than to make us**  
  
Great was the work of creation; but greater the work of   
redemption. **It cost more to redeem us, than to make   
us**. In the one, there was only the speaking a *Word*, Psa 148:5  
in the other, the shedding of *blood*, Heb 9:22. The   
creation was the work of God's *fingers*, Psa 8:3; the   
redemption was the work of his *arm*, Luk 1:5. In creation   
God gave us ourselves; in redemption He gives us Himself!

÷**The Doctrine of Repentance (choice excerpts)**

By Thomas Watson, 1668

CHOICE EXCERPTS  
  
 **If any ingredient is left out**  
  
"Unless you repent, you will also perish." Luk 13:5  
  
Repentance is a grace of God's Spirit, whereby a  
sinner is inwardly humbled and outwardly reformed.  
Repentance is **a spiritual medicine** made up of  
*six special ingredients:*  
1. Sight of sin  
2. Sorrow for sin  
3. Confession of sin  
4. Shame for sin  
5. Hatred for sin  
6. Turning from sin  
**If any ingredient is left out**, it loses its virtue.  
  
"I preached that they should repent and turn to God  
and prove their repentance by their deeds." Act 26:20  
  
  
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**When we are lepers in our own eyes!**   
  
"Then you will remember your evil ways and wicked  
deeds, and *you will loathe yourselves for your sins*  
and detestable practices!" Eze 36:31  
  
A true penitent is a sin-loather. If a man loathes that   
which makes his *stomach* sick, much more will he loathe   
that which makes his *soul* sick! It is greater to *loathe*   
sin—than to *leave* it. The nauseating and loathing of   
sin, argues a *detestation* of it.   
  
Christ is never loved—until sin is loathed.   
  
Heaven is never longed for—until sin is loathed.   
  
When the soul sees its filthiness, he cries out, "Lord,   
when shall I be freed from this body of death! When   
shall I put off these filthy garments of sin—and be  
arrayed in the robe of Your perfect righteousness!   
Let all my self-love be turned into self-loathing!"  
  
We are never more precious in God's eyes—than   
**when we are lepers in our own eyes!   
  
The more bitterness we taste in sin—**  
the more sweetness we shall taste in Christ!  
  
  
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**The damned in hell would be most penitent**  
  
"Unless you repent, you will also perish." Luk 13:5  
  
There are several *counterfeits* of repentance.  
  
A man has gone on long in sin. At last God arrests  
him, shows him what desperate hazard he has run  
—and he is filled with anguish! But after a while,  
the tempest of conscience is blown over, and he is  
quiet. Then he concludes that he is a true penitent  
because he has felt some bitterness in sin.  
  
Do not be deceived! This is not true repentance!  
Both Ahab and Judas had great trouble of mind.  
It is one thing to be a *terrified* sinner—and another  
to be a *repenting* sinner. Sense of guilt is enough  
to breed terror in the conscience. Only infusion of  
divine grace, breeds true repentance. If pain and  
trouble were sufficient to repentance—then **the  
damned in hell would be most penitent**, for  
they are most in anguish.  
  
"Men gnawed their tongues in agony, and cursed  
the God of heaven because of their pains and their  
sores, *but they refused to repent* of what they had  
done!" Rev 16:10-11  
  
  
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**A voyage to hell**  
  
"Who of us can dwell with everlasting burnings!"   
Isa 33:14  
  
Sin is like *oil*, and God's wrath is like *fire*. As long   
as the damned continue *sinning*—so long will the fire  
continue *scorching!* "They cursed the God of heaven   
for their pains and sores. But they refused to repent   
of all their evil deeds!" Rev 16:11  
  
But men question the truth of this, and are like impious   
Devonax who, being threatened with hell for his villainies,   
mocked at it and said, *"I will believe there is a hell when   
I come there—and not before!"* We cannot make hell  
enter into men—until they enter into hell.   
  
If, for all this, men will persist in sin and are resolved   
upon **a voyage to hell**—who can hinder their damnation?   
They have been told what *a soul-damning rock* sin is—but   
if they will voluntarily run upon it and damn themselves—  
their blood is upon their own head!  
  
  
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**Satan warms himself at the fire!**

Sin is a foolish thing. What greater foolishness is  
there, than to gratify an enemy! Sin gratifies Satan.   
When lust or anger burn in the soul—**Satan warms   
himself at the fire!** Men's sins feast the devil.   
  
Samson was called out to amuse the Philistines.   
Likewise the sinner amuses the devil! Nothing   
more satisfies him—than to see men sin. How he  
laughs to see them hazarding their souls for the   
world, as if one would trade diamonds for straws;   
or would fish for gudgeons with golden hooks!   
  
Every wicked man shall be indicted as a fool, at   
the day of judgment. "But God said to him—You   
fool! This very night your life will be demanded   
from you. Then who will get what you have  
prepared for yourself?" Luk 12:20   
  
  
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**Ask him now how he likes his bargain!**   
  
"The *deceitfulness* of sin" Heb 3:13   
  
Sin is a mere cheat. While it pretends to please us,  
it beguiles us! Sin does as Jael did. First she brought   
the milk and butter to Sisera, then she pounded the   
tent peg through his head! (Jdg 5:26). Sin first   
*courts*, and then *kills!* It is first a *fox*—and then a   
*lion*. Whoever sin betrays—it kills!   
  
Those locusts in Revelation are fit emblems of sin:   
"They had gold crowns on their *heads* . . . They   
had *tails* that stung like scorpions, with power to   
torture people" (Rev 9:7-10).   
  
Judas pleased himself with the thirty pieces   
of silver—but they proved deceitful riches. **Ask him now how he likes his bargain!**~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
 **Worse than the torments of hell**  
  
Sin is worse than hell. Torment has its epitome  
in hell—yet nothing in hell is as bad as sin.   
  
Hell is of God's making—but sin is not of God's   
making. Sin is the devil's creature.   
  
The torments of hell are a burden only to the   
sinner—but sin is a burden to God.   
  
In the torments of hell, there is something   
which is good, namely, the execution of divine   
justice. There is justice to be found in hell—but   
sin is a piece of the highest injustice. Sin would   
rob God of his glory, Christ of his purchase, the   
soul of its happiness.   
  
Sin is the most hateful thing—for it is **worse   
than the torments of hell**.  
  
  
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**A holy antipathy against sin**  
  
There is no better sign of true repentance—than **a   
holy antipathy against sin**. Sound repentance   
begins in love to God—and ends in the hatred of sin.  
  
How may true hatred of sin be known?   
  
When a man's HEART is set against sin. Not only   
does the *tongue* protest against sin—but the *heart*   
abhors it. However lovely sin is painted—we find it   
odious—just as we abhor the picture of one whom   
we mortally hate, even though it may be well drawn.   
  
Suppose a dish be finely cooked and the sauce good  
—yet if a man has an antipathy against the meat, he   
will not eat it. So **let the devil cook and dress sin**   
with pleasure and profit—yet a true penitent has a   
secret abhorrence of it, is disgusted by it, and will   
not meddle with it.   
  
True hatred of sin is UNIVERSAL. There is a dislike   
of sin not only in the *judgment*—but in the *will* and  *affections*. Many a one is convinced that sin is a vile   
thing, and in his judgment has an aversion to it—yet   
he tastes sweetness in it—and has a secret delight in   
it. Here is a disliking of sin in the *judgment*—and an   
embracing of it in the *affections!* Whereas in true   
repentance, the hatred of sin is in all the faculties,  
not only in the mind—but chiefly in the will: "I do   
the very thing I hate!" (Rom 7:15). Paul was   
not free from sin—yet his will was against it.   
  
He who truly hates one sin—hates all sins. He who   
hates a serpent—hates all serpents. "I hate **every**false way!" (Psa 119:104). Hypocrites will hate   
some sins which mar their credit. But a true convert   
hates all sins—gainful sins, complexion sins, the   
very stirrings of corruption.   
  
A holy heart detests sin for its intrinsic pollution.   
Sin leaves a stain upon the soul. A regenerate   
person abhors sin not only for the *curse*—but for   
the *contagion*. He hates this serpent not only for   
its sting but for its poison. He hates sin not only   
*for* hell—but *as* hell.   
  
Those who have no antipathy against sin, are   
strangers to repentance. Sin is in them—as poison  
in a serpent, which, being natural to it, affords   
delight. How far are they from repentance who,   
instead of *hating* sin*—love* sin! To the godly—sin   
is as a thorn in the eye; to the wicked—sin is as   
a crown on the head! "They actually rejoice in   
doing evil!" (Jer 11:15).   
  
*Loving* of sin is worse than *committing* it. What is   
it, which makes a swine love to tumble in the mire?   
Its love of filth. O how many there are—who love   
the forbidden fruit! They love their sin—and hate   
holiness.  
  
There should be a deadly antipathy between the   
heart and sin. What is there in sin, which may   
make a penitent hate it?   
  
Sin is the accursed thing, the most deformed monster!  
Look upon the origin of sin, from whence it comes. It   
fetches its pedigree from hell: "He who commits sin is   
of the devil!" (1Jn 3:8). Sin is the devil's special   
work. How hateful is it to be doing that which is the   
special work of the devil—indeed, that which makes   
men into devils!  
  
  
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**Powerful orators for mercy**  
  
"Mary knelt behind Him at His feet, weeping.  
Her tears fell on His feet, and she wiped them  
off with her hair. Then she kept kissing His feet  
and putting perfume on them." Luk 7:38   
  
Mary brought two things to Christ—perfume and   
tears. Her tears were better than her perfume.   
Tears are **powerful orators for mercy**. They   
are silent—yet they have a *voice.* "The Lord has   
heard the *voice* of my weeping." Psa 6:8  
  
They say that tears have four qualities: tears are   
hot, moist, salty, and bitter. It is true of repenting   
tears. They are . . .  
**hot**—to warm a frozen conscience;  
**moist**—to soften a hard heart;  
**salty**—to season a soul putrefying in sin;  
**bitter**—to wean us from the love of the world.   
And I will add a fifth. They are **sweet**, in that   
they make the heart inwardly rejoice "Your   
sorrow shall be turned into joy!" Joh 16:20  
  
  
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**The devil has two places he dwells in**  
  
"I love foreign gods, and I must go after them!"  
Jer 2:25   
  
A hard heart is a dwelling for Satan. As **God** has   
two places He dwells in—heaven and a humble   
heart; so **the devil has two places he dwells   
in**—hell and a hard heart.  
  
  
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**Worse than affliction**  
  
Sin is **worse than affliction**. There is more malignity   
in a drop of sin—than in a sea of affliction—for sin is   
the cause of affliction, and the cause is more than   
the effect. The sword of God's justice lies quiet in   
the scabbard—until sin draws it out!   
  
Affliction is good for us: "It is good for me, that   
I have been afflicted" (Psa 119:71).   
  
Affliction causes repentance (2Ch 33:12).  
The viper, being stricken, casts up its poison.   
Just so, when God's rod strikes us with affliction,  
we spit away the poison of sin!   
  
Affliction betters our grace. Gold is purest, and   
juniper sweetest—when in the fire.   
  
Affliction prevents damnation. "We are being   
disciplined—so that we will not be condemned   
with the world." (1Co 11:32).   
  
Thus, affliction is in many ways for our good—but   
there is no good in sin. *Manasseh's affliction* brought   
him to humiliation and repentance—but *Judas' sin*   
brought him to desperation and damnation. Affliction   
only reaches the body—but sin goes further—it   
poisons the mind, disorders the affections. Affliction   
is corrective; sin is destructive. Affliction can but   
take away the *life*; sin takes away the *soul* (Luk 12:20).   
  
  
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**You cannot make a beast blush**  
  
"The wicked know no shame." Zep 3:5  
  
Many have sinned away shame. It is a great shame,  
not to be ashamed. "Are they ashamed of their   
loathsome conduct? No, they have no shame at all;   
*they do not even know how to blush!"* (Jer 6:15).   
The devil has stolen shame from men. When men   
have hearts of stone and foreheads of brass—it is a   
sign that the devil has taken full possession of them!   
  
There is no creature capable of shame but man. The   
brute beasts are capable of fear and pain—but not of   
shame. **You cannot make a beast blush**. Those   
who cannot blush for sin, do too much resemble the   
beasts. There are some so far from this holy blushing,  
that they are proud of their sins. They are so far from   
being ashamed of sin, that they glory in their sins!  
They look on sin as a piece of gallantry. The swearer   
thinks his speech most graceful when it is interlarded   
with oaths. The drunkard counts it a glory that he is   
mighty to drink. But when men shall be cast into the  
fiery furnace, heated seven times hotter by the breath   
of the Almighty—then let them boast of sin!  
  
  
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**A swine with a man's head**  
  
Sinners are compared . . .  
to foxes (Luk 13:32),  
to wolves (Mat 7:15),  
to donkeys (Job 11:12),  
to swine (2Pe 2:22).   
  
A sinner is **a swine with a man's head**. He who   
was once little less than the angels in dignity—has   
now become like the beasts! The ungodly are, in a   
manner—wholly brutified! They do not act rationally,   
but are carried away by the violence of their lusts   
and passions. Our sins have taken away that noble,   
holy spirit which once we had. The crown has fallen   
from our head. God's image is defaced, reason is   
eclipsed, conscience stupified!  
  
  
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**Sin must drown**  
  
"Unless you repent, you will also perish." Luk 13:5  
  
The two great graces essential to a saint in this  
life, are faith and repentance. These are the two  
wings by which he flies to heaven.  
  
Moist tears of repentance dry up sin—and quench  
the wrath of God. Repentance is the nourisher of  
piety—and the procurer of mercy.  
  
Worldly tears fall to the earth; but godly tears of  
repentance are kept in a bottle. "You keep track  
of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears  
in your bottle. You have recorded each one in  
your book." Psa 56:8.  
  
Either **sin must drown** in the tears of repentance  
—or the soul must burn in hell.   
  
  
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**Lose Christ and heaven**  
  
"How long will you love what is worthless?"   
Psa 4:2  
  
An unbeliever would rather **lose Christ   
and heaven**—than his lusts!   
  
  
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**The cancer of the soul**  
  
"Slothfulness casts into a deep sleep" Pro 19:15  
  
Sloth is **the cancer of the soul**. Men had rather go   
*sleeping* to hell—than *weeping* to heaven! When Satan   
has by his witcheries lulled men asleep in sloth—then   
he destroys them!

This E-sword module was formatted by wlue777 and original document is found at www.gracegems.org

÷**The Duty of Self-Denial (self excerpts)**  
Thomas Watson, 1675

CHOICE EXCERPTS  
  
  
**A bad *Jacob's ladder* to climb up to heaven!**  
  
A Christian must deny his own righteousness—his moralities,   
duties, and good works. The *spider* weaves a web out of her   
own body. A hypocrite would *spin a web of salvation* out of   
his own righteousness. But Paul, like the *bee*, sucked salvation   
from the flower of Christ's righteousness. "That I may be found   
in Him—not having my own righteousness." Php 3:9  
  
Put gold in the fire—and out comes the dross. Our most   
golden services are mixed with sin. "Our righteousness   
are as filthy rags." Isa 64:6  
  
We must never trust in our duties—but only in Christ's   
righteousness, for salvation. Noah's dove made use of   
*her wings* to fly—but trusted the *ark* for safety!  
  
And if we must deny our *holy* things in point of justification,   
then much more our *civilities* and *moralities*. A stake may be   
finely painted—but it has no root. A man maybe *painted with  
morality*—and yet have no root of grace. A moral person is only   
externally washed—not internally changed. The life may be   
civil to men—when the heart is wicked against God; just as  
the sea may be calm—when the water is salty. The Pharisee   
could say he was no adulterer—but he could not say he was   
not proud. Luk 18:11  
  
*The moral person* may have a secret antipathy against godliness.   
He may hate grace—as much as vice. Morality is but a cracked   
title to heaven. A piece of brass may shine—but, lacking the King's   
image—it will not pass as currency. A man may shine with moral   
virtues—but lacking the image of God, consisting in holiness—he   
will not pass as currency at the day of judgment. Morality is good,  
but God will say, "You still lack one thing!" Luk 18:22. Morality   
is a good *Jacob's staff* to walk with among *men*—but it is **a bad   
*Jacob's ladder* to climb up to heaven!**  
  
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**Blown down with a breath of a young girl!**  
  
"Peter replied—Even if all fall away on account of You,  
**I never will**." Mat 26:33  
  
But how soon was his *self-confidence* shaken and **blown   
down with a breath of a young girl!** "He denied it with   
an oath, saying, I don't know the man!" Peter's denying of   
Christ, was the result of not denying his self-confidence.   
  
Deny *self-confidence*. It is just with God, that he who   
*trusts* himself—should be *left* to himself! The vine being   
weak—twists around the oak to support it. A godly man,   
being conscious of his own imbecility—twists by faith   
around Christ. Sampson's strength lay in his *hair*. Ours   
lies in our *head*, Christ. "I can do all things through   
Christ's strengthening me." Php 4:13  
  
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**High, supercilious thoughts of yourselves**  
  
"*Vain man* would be wise." Job 11:12  
  
In the Hebrew it is *"Empty man!"* Man is *a proud   
piece of flesh!* He is apt to have a high opinion of   
himself.   
  
Such as view themselves in *the flattering looking-glass   
of self-love*, appear bigger in their own eyes than they   
are! They think their *spark*—is a *sun!* They think their  *drop*—is a *sea!*That you may deny all **high, supercilious thoughts   
of yourselves**, consider that self-conceit is a great sin.   
Chrysostom calls it *"the mother of hell."* It is a kind of   
idolatry, a self-worshiping. *This should pull down the   
plumes of pride and self-conceit!*  
  
"What makes you better than anyone else? What do you  
have that God hasn't given you? And if all you have is  
from God, why *boast* as though you have accomplished  
something on your own?" 1Co 4:7  
  
Consider that, whatever noble endowments you have,   
are **borrowed**. What wise man would be proud of a   
jewel which was *lent* to him? The moon has no cause   
to be proud of her *borrowed* light.   
  
Consider what a *hell of sin* you carry about you! Sin is   
*the accursed thing*, Jos 5:13. It is the quintessence   
of evil. It was typified by the menstrual cloth, which   
was the most unclean thing under the Law. This may   
demolish all proud imaginations.  
  
Grace can never thrive where pride and self-conceit grow.   
As a body with cancer cannot thrive—so neither can the   
soul thrive, which is *cancered with pride and self-conceit.*   
A proud *head*—makes a barren *heart!*  
A supercilious conceitedness is odious to God. The more  
one values himself—the less God values him. Such as   
have a high opinion of their own excellencies, are on the   
fast track to eternal ruin! The Lord sometimes lets vain,   
conceited people fall—not only *foully*, but *finally!* "The   
doves," says Pliny, "take pride in their *feathers*, and in   
their *flying high*. But they *soar so high*, that they are   
prey to the hawk!" Just so, when men fly high in pride,  
they become prey to the *prince of the air!*  
  
All this should make us *kill the worm of self-conceit!*  
  
Let *Paul* be our pattern. Though he was the chief of the   
Apostles, he says, *"I am less than the least of all God's   
people."* Eph 3:8. *"I am nothing."* 2Co 12:11.   
This illustrious Apostle, a star of the first magnitude,  
shrank into nothing in his own eyes!   
  
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**Many dig their graves, with their teeth!**   
  
A Christian must deny his appetite.   
  
More are hurt by *excess in lawful things*—than by   
meddling with *sinful* things. More are killed by *wine*  
—than by *poison*. Many make their belly their god,   
Php 3:19. And to this god, they pour their   
*drink offerings!*  
  
One writes of a fish whose *heart* is in his *belly*. This is   
an emblem of epicures—whose heart is in their belly;   
they are *devoted to their appetite*. Excess in food or   
drink—  
clouds the mind,   
chokes holy affections,  
provokes lust, and  
shortens life!  **Many dig their graves, with their teeth!**   
  
Seneca could say he was born to higher things, than to   
be *a slave to his body*. What a shame is it—that the soul,   
that *princely* part, which sways the scepter of reason,   
should be enslaved to the *brutish* part! What has God   
given conscience for—but to be a golden bridle to check   
the inordinacy of the appetite! Deny the sinful cravings   
of the flesh!  
  
"I beat my body and make it my slave." 1Co 9:27  
  
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**Take life easy!**  
  
"**Take life easy**; eat, drink and be merry!" Luk 12:19  
  
A Christian must deny his **ease**. "Ease slays the simple."   
The flesh is prone to sloth and softness. It is loath to take   
pains for heaven. Weeds and vermin grow in *untilled*   
ground; and all vices grow in **an idle, untilled heart**.   
  
How can they expect to reap a *harvest of glory*—who   
never sowed any seed? Is Satan so busy in his diocese,   
1Pe 5:8, and are Christians idle? Are they like the   
lilies—which neither toil, nor spin? O deny your ease!   
We must force our way to paradise.   
  
God puts no difference between the *slothful* servant   
and the *wicked* servant, "You wicked and lazy servant!"   
Mat 25:26.   
  
Those slothful people in Eturia, who like *drones* enter   
into the hive and *consumed the honey*, were expelled   
from others and condemned to exile. Such as idle away   
the day of grace and fold their hands to sleep when they   
should be working out salvation—God will condemn to a   
perpetual exile in hell.  
  
**Let us shake off sloth—as Paul did the viper!**  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
**Pull down these *flags* of vanity!**  
  
A Christian must deny sinful fashions. Rom 12:2,   
"Be not conformed to this world." That is—do not be   
conformed to the fashions and mode of it.   
  
If the *old Christians* were to rise out of their graves  
—our *new fashions* might frighten them into their   
graves again!   
  
Was there ever such excess in hair? 1Co 11:14,  
"Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has   
long hair it is a disgrace to him." More money is often  
laid out for a wig to cover one head—than would clothe  
twenty poor people. One asked Pastor Dod why he did   
not preach against 'those ruffians who wore long hair'.   
He replied, "If grace comes into their heart—it will make  
them cut off their hair."  
  
Nor can the women be excused for their excess in apparel.   
"The Lord will strip away their artful beauty—their ornaments,   
headbands, and crescent necklaces; their earrings, bracelets,   
and veils of shimmering gauze. Gone will be their scarves,   
ankle chains, sashes, perfumes, and charms; their rings,   
jewels, party clothes, gowns, capes, and purses; their mirrors,   
linen garments, head ornaments, and shawls." Isa 3:18-23.   
  
Seneca complained of those in his time who hung two or three   
*houses* on their ears! Some wear half their incomes upon their   
backs! Lysander would not allow his daughters to be too gorgeously   
attired, saying "it would make them more *common*—than *lovely*.   
  
What painted faces and bare shoulders appear in the congregations!   
That professors should conform and comply with others in their antic   
dresses, is a reproach of piety! A *tear* in the eye—would more adorn   
than a *tower* on the head. O deny yourselves! **Pull down these   
*flags* of vanity!** 1Ti 2:9, "I want women to be modest in   
their appearance. They should wear decent and appropriate clothing   
and not draw attention to themselves by the way they fix their hair   
or by wearing gold or pearls or expensive clothes." Let the hidden   
man of the heart, be beautified and bespangled with grace. "The   
king's daughter is all glorious *within*." Psa 45:13  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**Blown to hell with the breath of popular applause!**   
  
A Christian must never aim at fame, or self-applause.   
He must not look with one eye at piety—and aim at   
himself with the other eye.   
  
"Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before   
men, to be seen by them." Mat 6:1. They prayed   
and gave alms—that they might be seen by men. **The   
oil of vain-glory fed their lamp!**It is a saying of Spanhemius, that there is in every man   
by nature—*a measure of Pharisaism*—a seeking after the   
glory and applause of the world. "Everything they do is   
done for men to see: They make their phylacteries wide   
and the tassels on their garments long; they love the   
place of honor at banquets and the most important   
seats in the synagogues; they love to be greeted in   
the marketplaces and to have men call them, *Rabbi*."   
Mat 23:5-7. Luther confessed that, although he   
was never tempted with *covetousness*—yet he was   
sometimes with vain-glory!   
  
The moth breeds in the finest cloth; and self-seeking   
is apt to breed in the best duties. Sinister aims corrupt   
piety. A good aim will not make a bad action, good—  
but **a bad aim** will make a good action, bad.  
  
Some ships which have escaped the *rocks*, have been   
wrecked upon the *sands*. Many who have escaped the   
*rocks of gross scandals* have been wrecked upon the   
*sands of self-seeking.*   
  
*Popular applause* is the **golden arrow** which glitters   
in the eye—but wounds the heart! How many have been  **blown to hell with the breath of popular applause!**  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **There are nails in that cross!**  
  
Some think of *reigning* with Christ—but not of *suffering*   
with Christ. *The* ***cross*** *leads to the* ***crown****!* "If we suffer,   
we shall also reign with Him." 2Ti 2:12  
  
"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself  
and *take up his cross daily* and follow Me." Luk 9:23   
  
Christ shows us His cross. If we will not have Him upon   
these terms, the match is not likely to go on. Sufferings   
are waiting for us, Act 20:23. "Everyone who wants to   
live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution."   
*The devil has not grown kinder.* "Your enemy the devil   
prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone   
to devour!" 1Pe 5:8  
  
The flesh cries out, "That cross is painful! **There are  
nails in that cross** which tear me!"  
  
Can wicked men be content to suffer for their   
lusts—and shall we not suffer for Christ?  
  
The prophet Isaiah sawn in half.   
Jeremiah was killed by stoning.   
Amos was killed with an iron bar.   
Luke was hanged on an olive tree.  
  
I read that Irenaeus was carried to a place where a   
cross was set on one side—and an idol on the other.   
He was given a choice either to bow to the idol—or   
suffer on the cross. He chose the latter.  
  
Basil speaks of a virgin condemned to the fire. She   
was offered her life and estate if she would bow down   
to an image. She answered, "Let life and money go;   
welcome Christ!"  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**He will go laughing to hell**  
  
"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself  
and *take up his cross daily* and follow Me." Luk 9:23   
  
This justly indicts those who live in a contradiction to the   
text, who instead of *denying* themselves—they let loose   
the reins and give themselves up to all manner of pleasure   
and licentiousness. *Pleasure* enchants men's minds, and   
transforms them into beasts!  
  
There is a place in Africa called *Tombutium*, where the   
inhabitants spend all their time in singing and dancing.   
And have we not many who consume their hours in plays   
and brothels? As if God has made them like the leviathan  
—to play in the sea. How will their countenances be   
changed when God shall say, "Give an account of your   
stewardship!" *These frolicking sensualists* live as if there   
were no world to come. They pamper their bodies—but   
starve their souls! As if one should feed his dog—but   
starve his wife!  
  
Do epicures deny themselves? Indeed, in one sense they do.   
Enjoying their lusts—they deny themselves a part in heaven!   
  
In the country of Sardinia there is an herb-like balm, that   
if a man eats of it—he shall die laughing. Such an herb is   
'pleasure'. If one feeds immoderately on it—**he will go   
laughing to hell**.  
  
Esau lost the blessing while he was hunting. O! How many,   
while they are hunting after worldly pleasures, lose eternal   
blessedness? There is a *'sin cup'* brewing which will spoil the   
sinner's mirth. Psa 75:8, "For the Lord holds a cup in His   
hand; it is full of foaming wine mixed with spices. He pours   
the wine out in judgment, and all the wicked must drink it,   
draining it to the dregs!" This wine is the wrath of God, and   
it is mixed; the *never-dying worm* and the *eternal fire* are   
mixed the cup! The Lord will proportion a sinner's torment   
to his pleasure. Rev 18:7, "She has lived in luxury   
and pleasure, so match it now with torments and sorrows!"

This E-sword module was formatted by wlue777 and original document is found at www.gracegems.org

÷**The Godly Man's Picture, Drawn with a  
Scripture Pencil, or, Some Characteristic  
Marks of a Man who is Going to Heaven**

By Thomas Watson

CHOICE EXCERPTS

**White feathers—but black skin**  
  
"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you  
*hypocrites!* You are like whitewashed tombs, which  
look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are  
full of dead men's bones and everything unclean.  
In the same way, on the outside you appear to  
people as righteous but on the inside you are full  
of hypocrisy and wickedness." Mat 23:27-28   
  
Here is a sharp rebuke to such as are "glittering dross"   
Christians, who only make a *show* of godliness. These   
our Savior calls *whitewashed tombs*. Their beauty is all   
paint! Many are painted over with a religious profession,   
whose seeming luster dazzles the eyes of beholders; but   
within there is nothing but putrefaction!   
  
Hypocrites are like the *swan*, which has **white feathers  
—but black skin**; or like that *flower*, which has a lovely   
appearance—but a foul scent.  
  
The hypocrite deceives others while he lives—but deceives   
himself when he dies! What good will it do a man when he   
is in hell—that others think he has gone to heaven? Oh,   
beware of this!   
  
Counterfeit piety is double iniquity. What is this but to abuse   
God to His face, and to serve the devil in Christ's livery?   
  
To have only a pretense of godliness will yield no comfort   
after death. Will *painted gold* enrich a man? Will *painted   
wine* refresh him who is thirsty? He who has only a *painted   
holiness* shall have only a painted happiness! Let us take   
heed of this *pious pageantry* and *devout stage-play!*~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~**You blind fools!**  
  
"Yes, He is *very precious* to you who believe!"   
1Pe 2:7   
  
There is nothing in Christ, but what is precious. His   
*name* is precious, His *virtues* are precious, His *blood*   
is precious—more precious than the world. The *Rose   
of Sharon* is always sweet!   
  
We cannot prize Christ at too high a rate. We may prize   
other things above their value. That is our sin. *We commonly   
overrate the creature*; we think there is more in it than there   
is; therefore *God withers our gourd*, because we over-prize it.   
  
But we cannot raise our esteem of Christ high enough.   
He is beyond all value! There is no ruby or diamond, but   
the jeweler can set a fair price on it. But *Christ's worth*   
can never be fully known. No seraphim can set a due   
value on Him. His riches are unsearchable! Eph 3:8.   
Christ is more precious than heaven!  
  
True Christians prize Christ, as most precious. He is  
their chief treasure and delight. **This reason why   
millions perish**, is because they do not prize Christ.   
  
The ungodly choose things of no value, before Christ!   
"**You blind fools!**" Mat 23:17. If a person chooses   
an *apple* before a *priceless diamond*—he is judged to   
be a fool. How many such **idiots** are there, who choose   
the gaudy, empty things of this life—before the Prince   
of Glory!   
  
**Give a baby a rattle***—*and it will not want *gold*.   
**Give a worldling his lusts**—and he will be content   
enough without Christ.  
  
We value Christ above honor and riches. This *Pearl  
of Great Price* lies nearest our heart. He who prizes   
Christ esteems the *gleanings* of Christ—better than   
the world's vintage. He counts the *worst* things of   
Christ—better than the best things of the world.   
Moses "regarded *disgrace* for the sake of Christ   
as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt."   
Heb 11:26   
  
If we are the prizers of Christ, we cannot live without   
Him. A man may live without *music*, but not without *food*.  
A child of God can lack health and friends—but he cannot   
lack Christ. "Give me children," said Rachel, "or else I die!"  
Gen 30:1. So the soul says, "Give me Christ—or else I   
shall die! Give me one drop of *the water of life* to quench   
my thirst."   
  
If we are prizers of Christ, then we shall not complain at   
any pains to get Him. He who prizes gold, will *dig* for it in   
the mine. "My soul follows hard after God!" Psa 63:8.   
He in whose eye Christ is precious, never rests until he   
has gained Him: "I sought Him whom my soul loves; I   
held Him, and would not let Him go!" Canticles 3:1,4  
  
If we are prizers of Christ, then we take great pleasure   
in Christ. What joy a man takes, in that which he counts  
his treasure! He who prizes Christ makes Him his greatest   
joy. He can delight in Christ, when earthly delights are gone.  
Though a *flower* in a man's garden dies, he can still delight   
in his *money* and *jewels*. He who esteems Christ, can solace   
himself in Christ, when there is a dearth of all other comforts.  
  
If we are prizers of Christ, then we will part with our dearest   
pleasures for Him. He who esteems Christ, will pull out that   
lust which is as precious as his right eye! He who sets a high   
value on Christ, will set his feet on the neck of his sins!  
  
How can they be said to prize Christ—who will not leave   
a *vanity* for Him; or who prefer a **damning pleasure**   
before a **saving Christ!**  
  
"Yes, He is *very precious* to you who believe!"  
  
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**God's palace!**  
  
"**Your boasting is not good!**" 1Co 5:6   
  
Pride is the greatest sacrilege; it robs God of His   
glory. What a horrid sin is pride! Chrysostom calls   
it *"the mother of hell."* Pride encompasses all vice.   
Pride is a spiritual drunkenness; it flies up like wine   
into the brain and intoxicates it. Pride is idolatry; a   
proud man is a self-worshiper. How odious is this   
sin to God! "Everyone who is proud in heart, is an   
abomination to the Lord!" Pro 16:5. "I hate   
pride and arrogance!" Pro 8:13.  
  
Those who look at themselves in the *magnifying   
mirror of self-love*, appear better in their own eyes  
than they are. There is no idol like **self**; the proud   
man bows down to this idol.  
  
Many are proud of their **riches**. Their hearts swell   
with their estates. Pride is the rich man's cousin.   
"Your heart has become proud because of your   
wealth." Eze 28:5.  
  
Many are proud of their **apparel**. They dress in such   
fashions, as to make the devil fall in love with them!  
Painted faces, gaudy attire, naked breasts—what are   
these, but the banners which sinful pride displays?   
  
Many are proud of their **beauty**. The body is but *dust   
and blood kneaded together*. Solomon says, "Beauty   
is vain." Pro 31:30. Yet some are so vain—as   
to be proud of vanity! Shall *dust* exalt itself?   
  
Many are proud of their **gifts** and **abilities**. These   
trappings and ornaments do not approve them in God's   
eyes. An *angel* is a creature of great abilities; but *take   
away humility from an angel—*and he is a devil! God   
loves a humble soul. It is not our *high birth*; but our  *humble hearts*, which God delights in.  
  
Oh, let us search if there is any of this *leaven of pride*   
in us! Man is naturally a proud piece of flesh. This *sin   
of pride* runs in the blood. There are the *seeds of this   
sin of pride* in the best of Christians—but the godly   
do not *allow* themselves in it. They strive to *kill this   
weed*, by mortification.   
  
But certainly where this sin of pride *reigns* and *prevails*,   
it cannot stand with grace. You may as well call him who   
lacks wisdom, a prudent man; as him who lacks humility,  
a godly man. "*Clothe yourselves with humility* toward one   
another, because God opposes the proud, but gives grace   
to the humble." 1Pe 5:5. Put humility on, as an   
embroidered robe. It is better to lack anything, rather   
than humility.   
  
The more value any man has, the more humble he is.   
***Feathers* fly up—but *gold* descends!** The *golden   
saint* descends in humility. Look at a humble Savior  
—and let the plumes of pride fall off!  
  
**A humble heart is God's palace!** "For this is what   
the high and lofty One says; He who lives forever,   
whose name is holy—I live in a high and holy place,   
but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit."  
Isa 57:15 A humble heart glories in this—that it is   
the presence chamber of the great and glorious King!  
  
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**They have many scars and spots**  
  
"He has not beheld iniquity in Jacob." Num 23:21  
  
"Let us draw near to God with a *sincere heart*." Heb 10:22   
  
If the heart is sincere, God will wink at many failings.   
God's love does not make Him blind; He can see our   
infirmities. *But how does God look at a believer's sins?*   
Not with an eye of *revenge*—but of *pity*, as a physician   
sees a disease in his patient—so as to heal him. God   
does not see iniquity in Jacob—so as to *destroy* him;  
but to *heal* him!   
  
How much pride, vanity, passion, does the Lord pass   
by in His sincere ones! He sees the *integrity*—and   
pardons the *infirmity*. We esteem a picture, though   
it is not drawn *full length*. Just so, the graces of God's   
people are not drawn to their full length. **They have   
many scars and spots**—yet being sincere, they shall   
find mercy. God loves the sincere, and it is the nature   
of *love* to cover infirmity.  
  
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***"Lord, smite this sin!"***  
  
"Your Word is completely pure, and Your  
servant loves it." Psa 119:140  
  
Do we love the **holiness** of the Word? The Word is   
preached—to beat down sin, and advance holiness.   
Do we love it for its spirituality and purity? Many   
love the Preached Word only for its eloquence and   
notion. They come to a sermon as to a performance,  
Eze 33:31-32, or as to a garden to pick flowers;  
but not to have their lusts subdued or their hearts   
purified. These are like a foolish woman who paints   
her face—but neglects her health!  
  
Do we love the **convictions** of the Word? Do we   
love the Word when it comes home to our conscience   
and shoots its arrows of reproof at our sins? It is the   
minister's duty sometimes to reprove. He who can   
speak smooth words in the pulpit—but does not know   
how to reprove, is like a sword with a fine handle, but   
without an edge! "Rebuke them sharply!" Tit 2:15.   
Dip the nail in *oil*—reprove in *love*—but strike the nail  
home!  
  
Now Christian, when the Word touches on your sin   
and says, "You are the man!" do you love the reproof?   
Can you bless God that "the sword of the Spirit" has   
divided between you and your lusts? This is indeed a   
sign of grace, and shows that you are a lover of the   
Word.  
  
A corrupt heart loves the *comforts* of the Word—but   
not the *reproofs*: "You hate the one who reproves...  
and despise him who tells the truth!" Amo 5:10.   
"Their eyes flash with fire!" Like venomous creatures   
that at the least touch, spit poison! "When they heard   
these things, they were *enraged* in their hearts and   
gnashed their teeth at him!" Act 7:54. When   
Stephen touched their sins, they were furious and   
could not endure it.  
 *How shall we know that we love the reproofs of the Word?*  
  
When we desire to sit under a heart-searching ministry.   
Who cares for medicines that will not work? A godly man   
does not choose to sit under a ministry that will not work   
upon his conscience.  
  
When we pray that the Word may meet with our sins. If   
there is any traitorous lust in our heart—we would have   
it found out, and executed. We do not want sin *covered*;  
but *cured!* We can open our heart to the sword of the   
Word and say, ***"Lord, smite this sin!"***  
  
When we are thankful for a reproof. "Let a righteous   
man strike me—it is a kindness; let him rebuke me—it   
is oil on my head. My head will not refuse it." Psa 141:5.

David was glad for a reproof.   
  
Suppose a man were in the mouth of a lion, and another   
should shoot the lion and save the man; would he not be   
thankful? So, when we are in the mouth of sin, as of a   
lion, and the minister by a reproof shoots this sin to   
death—shall we not be thankful?   
  
A gracious soul rejoices, when the sharp *lance of the Word*   
has pierced his *abscess of sin!* He wears a reproof like a jewel   
on his ear: "Like an earring of gold or an ornament of fine gold   
is a wise man's rebuke to a listening ear." Pro 25:12.   
  
To conclude, it is convincing preaching which must do the   
soul good. A nipping *reproof* prepares for *comfort*—as a   
nipping *frost* prepares for the sweet flowers of spring.  
  
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**Then you will be thankful**  
  
If you wish to be thankful, get a heart deeply   
humbled with the sense of your own vileness.   
A *broken* heart is the best pipe to sound forth   
God's praise. He who studies his sins, wonders   
that he has anything, and that God should shine   
on such a dunghill: "I was once a blasphemer   
and a persecutor and a violent man—but I was   
shown mercy!" 1Ti 1:13. How thankful   
Paul was! How he trumpeted forth free grace!   
  
A proud man will never be thankful. He looks on   
all his mercies as either of his own *procuring* or  *deserving*. If he has an estate, this he got by his   
wits and industry; not considering that scripture,   
"Always remember that it is the Lord your God   
who gives you power to become rich" Deu 8:18.   
Pride stops the current of gratitude. O Christian,   
think of your unworthiness; see yourself as the   
least of saints, and the chief of sinners—and  **then you will be thankful**.  
  
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**The golden bait**  
  
*Gain* is **the golden bait**, with which Satan fishes   
for souls! This was the last temptation he used   
with Christ: "All these things will I give You!" But   
Christ saw the hook under the bait! Many who have   
escaped gross sins, are still *caught in a golden net!*   
  
A godly man dare not travel for riches, along the   
devil's highway. Those are **sad gains**, which make   
a man lose heaven at last!  
  
"What good will it be for a man if he gains the  
whole world, yet forfeits his soul?" Mat 16:26  
  
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**The curtain-sinner**  
  
A godly man does not indulge himself in any sin.  
  
Though sin lives in him—yet he does not live in sin.   
A godly man may *step* into sin through infirmity—  
but he does not keep on that road.   
  
*What is it to indulge sin?* To indulge sin is to give the   
breast to it and feed it. To indulge sin is to commit it   
with delight. The ungodly "delight in wickedness,"   
2Th 2:12. In this sense, a godly man does not   
indulge sin. Though sin is in him—he is troubled at it   
and would gladly get rid of it.   
  
There is as much difference between sin in the   
wicked, and sin in the godly—as between poison   
being in a serpent, and poison being in a man.   
Poison in a serpent is in its natural place and is   
delightful—but poison in a man's body is harmful   
and he uses antidotes to expel it. So sin in a   
wicked man is delightful, being in its natural   
place—but sin in a child of God is burdensome   
and he uses all means to expel it.   
  
A godly man will not allow himself in **secret** sins.   
Some are more modest than to commit open gross   
sin. That would be a stain on their reputation. All   
will not sin on a *balcony*—but perhaps *they will   
sin behind the* ***curtain****!*   
  
But a godly man dare not sin secretly, for he knows   
that God can neither be deceived by our subtlety, nor   
excluded by our secrecy. He knows that secret sins are   
in some sense worse than others. They reveal more   
deceit and atheism. "He knows the secrets of every   
heart," Psa 44:21.  
  
But **the curtain-sinner** thinks that God does not see:   
"Have you seen what the leaders of Israel are doing with   
their idols in *dark rooms?* They are saying—*The Lord   
doesn't see us!"* Eze 8:12. How it provokes God, that   
men's atheism should give the lie to His omniscience! "He   
who formed the eye—shall He not see?" Psa 94:9.  
  
A godly man knows that secret sins shall not escape God's   
justice. A judge on the bench cannot punish the treason of   
the heart. But *the sins of the heart* are as visible to God,  
*as if they were written upon the forehead!* As God will   
reward secret duties; so He will revenge secret sins!  
  
A godly man enters his protest against sin: "Oh,   
what a miserable person I am! Who will free me   
from this life that is dominated by sin?" Rom 7:24  
A child of God, while he commits sin, hates   
the sin he commits!   
  
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**The harlot in your bosom!**   
  
"Let us throw off everything that hinders and **the  
sin that so easily entangles**, and let us run with  
perseverance the race marked out for us." Heb 12:1  
  
There is usually one sin that is the **favorite**—the sin   
which the heart is most fond of. A godly man will not   
indulge his *darling* sin: "I kept myself from *my* iniquity."  
Psa 18:23. "I will not indulge the sin to which the   
bias of my heart more naturally inclines."   
  
"Fight neither with small nor great—but only with the   
*king.*" 1Ki 22:31. A godly man fights this **king**  
sin. If we would have peace in our souls, we must   
maintain a war against our favorite sin, and never   
leave off until it is subdued.  
  
Question: How shall we know what our beloved sin is?  
  
Answer 1: The sin which a man does not love to have   
reproved—is the **darling** sin. Herod could not endure   
having his incest spoken against. If the prophet meddles   
with that sin—it shall cost him his head! "Do not touch   
my Herodias!" Men can be content to have other sins   
reproved—but if the minister puts his finger on the   
sore, and touches this sin—their hearts begin to burn  
in malice against him!  
  
Answer 2: The sin on which the thoughts run most, is   
the *darling* sin. Whichever way the thoughts go, the   
heart goes. He who is in love with a person cannot   
keep his thoughts off that person. Examine what sin   
runs most in your mind, what sin is first in your   
thoughts and greets you in the morning—that is   
your **predominant** sin.  
  
Answer 3: The sin which has most power over us, and   
most easily leads us captive—is the one **beloved** by the   
soul. There are some sins which a man can better resist.   
If they come for entertainment, he can more easily put   
them off. But the **bosom** sin comes as a suitor, and he   
cannot deny it—but is overcome by it. The young man in  
the Gospel had repulsed many sins—but there was one   
sin which soiled him, and that was covetousness.   
  
Mark what sin you are most readily led captive by—that   
is **the harlot in your bosom!** It is a sad thing that a   
man should be so bewitched by lust, that if it asks him   
to part with the kingdom of heaven—he must part with   
it, to gratify that lust!  
  
Answer 4: The sin which men most defend, is the   
beloved sin. He who has a *jewel in his bosom*, will   
defend it to his death. The sin we advocate and   
dispute for, is the **besetting** sin. The sin which we   
plead for, and perhaps wrest Scripture to justify it  
—that is the sin which lies nearest the heart.  
  
Answer 5: The sin which a man finds most difficulty in   
giving up, is the **endeared** sin. Of all his sons, Jacob   
found most difficulty in parting with *Benjamin*. So the   
sinner says, "This and that sin I have parted with—but   
must *Benjamin* go! Must I part with this delightful sin?   
That pierces my heart!" A man may allow some of his   
sins to be demolished—but when it comes to one sin,   
that is the taking of the castle; he will never agree to   
part with that! That is the **master** sin for sure.  
  
The besetting sin is, of all others, most *dangerous*.   
As Samson's strength lay in his hair—so the strength   
of sin, lies in this beloved sin. This is like a poison   
striking the heart, which brings death. A godly man   
will lay *the axe of repentance* to this sin and hew it   
down! He will sacrifice this *Isaac*; he will pluck out   
this *right eye*—so that he may see better to go to   
heaven.  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**One sin lived in**  
  
A godly man considers the mischief which  **one sin lived in**, will do.   
  
1. One sin lived in, gives Satan as much advantage   
against you as more sins. The fowler can hold a bird   
by one wing. Satan held Judas fast by one sin.  
  
2. One sin lived in, proves that the heart is not sound.   
He who hides one *rebel* in his house is a traitor to the   
crown. The person who indulges one sin is a traitorous   
hypocrite!  
  
3. One sin lived in, will make way for more—as a little   
thief can open the door to more. Sins are linked and   
chained together. One sin will draw on more. David's   
adultery made way for murder. *One sin never goes alone!*   
If there is only *one nest egg*—the devil can brood on it!  
  
4. One sin lived in, is as much a breach of God's law as   
more sins. "Whoever keeps the entire law, yet fails in one   
point, is guilty of breaking it all" Jas 2:10. The king   
may make a law against felony, treason and murder. If a   
man is guilty of only one of these—he is a transgressor.  
  
5. One sin lived in, prevents Christ from entering. One   
stone in the *pipe* keeps out the water. One sin indulged   
in, obstructs the soul and keeps the streams of Christ's   
blood from running into it!  
  
6. One sin lived in, will spoil all your good duties. One   
dead fly will spoil the whole box of precious ointment.   
A *drop of poison* will spoil a glass of wine. Abimelech,   
a bastard-son, destroyed seventy of his brethren, Jdg 9:5  
*One bastard-sin* will destroy seventy prayers.   
  
7. One sin lived in will be a cankerworm to eat out the   
peace of conscience. "Alas! What a scorpion lies within!"   
(Seneca). One sin is a *pirate—*to rob a Christian of his   
comfort. One jarring string puts all the music out of tune.  
One sin lived in—will spoil the music of conscience.  
  
8. One sin lived in, will *damn* as well as more sins. One   
*disease* is enough to kill. If a *fence* is made ever so strong,   
and only *one gap* is left open; the wild beast may enter and   
tread down the corn. If only one sin is allowed in the soul,   
you leave open a gap for the devil to enter! A *soldier* may   
have only one gap in his armor—and the bullet may enter   
there. He may as well be shot there—as if he had no armor   
on at all. So if you favor only one sin, you leave a part of   
your soul unprotected—and the bullet of God's wrath may   
enter there—and shoot you! One sin lived in, may shut you   
out of heaven! What difference is there, between being shut   
out of heaven for one sin—or for many sins? One *millstone*   
will sink a man into the sea—as well as a hundred!  
  
Therefore, beware of cherishing one sin! Give a certificate   
of divorce to every sin. Kill the Goliath sin! "Let not sin *reign*   
over you." Rom 6:12. In the original it is "Let not sin *king*   
it over you." Grace and sin may be together—but grace and *the   
love of sin* cannot. Therefore parley with sin no longer—but with   
the *spear of mortification*, spill the heart-blood of every sin!   
  
"For if you live after the flesh, you shall die: but if you through  
the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live."   
Rom 8:13.   
  
"So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you."   
Col 3:5  
  
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**Gospel bruising**  
  
"He will not break a *bruised* reed." Mat 12:20   
  
Will Christ not break a bruised reed? See, then, the   
gracious disposition of Jesus Christ—He is full of mercy   
and sympathy. Though He may *bruise* the soul for sin,   
He will not *break* it. The surgeon may lance the body   
and make it bleed—but he will bind up the wound.   
  
As Christ has beams of majesty, so He has *a heart of   
mercy.* Christ has both the *lion* and the *lamb* in His   
escutcheon: the **lion***—*in respect of his fierceness to   
the wicked (Psa 50:22), and the **lamb**—in respect of   
His mildness to His people. His *name* is Jesus—a Savior;   
and His *office* is a healer (Mal 4:2). Christ made a   
plaster of His own blood—to heal a broken heart!   
  
Christ is the quintessence of love. Someone said, "If   
the sweetness of all flowers were in one flower, how   
sweet that flower would be!" Christ is that flower! How   
full of mercy is Christ, in whom all mercy meets! Christ   
has **a skillful hand and a tender heart**. "He will not   
break a bruised reed."  
  
This text is a spiritual honeycomb, dropping consolation   
into all *bruised hearts*. This text is comforting to a poor   
soul who sits with Job among the ashes, and is dejected   
at the sense of its *unworthiness*. "Ah!" says the soul, "I   
am unworthy of mercy; what am I, that ever God should   
look on me? Alas! I am unworthy." Does your unworthiness   
trouble you? What more unworthy than a bruised reed?   
Though you are despicable in your own eyes—just a poor   
shattered reed—yet you may be glorious in the eyes of   
the Lord. Do not let your unworthiness discourage you.   
*If you see yourself as vile and Christ as precious*—this   
promise is yours! Christ will not break you—but will bind   
up your wounds. "He will not break a bruised reed."  
  
But how shall I know that I am *savingly bruised?*  
  
When your spirit is so troubled that you are willing   
to let go those lusts which brought in the greatest   
income of pleasure and delight. When not only is sin  *discarded* but you are *disgusted* with it—then you   
have been bruised enough. The medicine is strong   
enough, when it has purged out the disease. The soul   
is bruised enough, when the love of sin is purged out.  
  
Did God ever bring you to your knees? Has your proud   
heart been humbled? Did you ever see yourself as a   
sinner and nothing but a sinner? Did you ever, with   
a weeping eye, look on Christ? (Zec 12:10) And did   
those tears drop from the eye of faith? (Mar 9:24)   
This is **gospel bruising**. Can you say, "Lord, though   
I do not see You—yet I love You; though I am in the   
dark—yet I cast anchor on You!" This is to be a   
bruised reed.  
  
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**Self-love is self-hatred**  
  
"If anyone would come after Me, **he must  
deny himself** and take up his cross daily  
and follow Me. Luk 9:23  
  
Self-*ease*, self-*ends*, self-*love*, whatever comes   
in competition with (or stands in opposition to)   
Christ's glory and interest—must be denied!   
  
Self is the great snare! The rich young man in the   
Gospel might have followed Christ—but something   
of *self* hindered him. **Self-love is self-hatred.**   
The man who cannot get beyond himself—will   
never get to heaven.  
  
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**It is of infinite concern!**  
  
"Redeeming the time." Eph 5:16  
  
How you spend your time, is a matter of great   
importance. Many people *fool* away their time—  
some in idle visits, others in recreations and   
pleasures which secretly bewitch the heart, and   
take it away from better things. What are our  *golden hours* for—but to attend to our souls?   
Time misspent is not time *lived*—but time *lost!*  
  
Time is a *precious* commodity. As salvation is to   
be worked out in it, and a conveyance of heaven   
depends on using it well—**it is of infinite concern!**  
  
Think of your *short stay* in the world. "We are here   
for only a *moment*, visitors and strangers in the land   
as our ancestors were before us. Our days on earth   
are like a *shadow—*gone so soon without a trace!"   
1Ch 29:15  
  
There is only a span between the *cradle* and the *grave!*   
Solomon says there is "a time to be **born** and a time to   
**die**"—but mentions no time of **living**—as if that were so   
short, it was not worth naming!   
  
Time, when it has once gone, can never be recalled.   
  
"My life passes more swiftly than a runner. It flees away,   
filled with tragedy. It disappears like a swift boat, *like an   
eagle* that swoops down on its prey." Job 9:25-26  
  
This Scripture compares time to a flying eagle. Yet time   
differs from the eagle in this: the eagle flies forward and   
then back again—but time has wings only to fly forward  
—it never returns! "Time flies irrevocably."  
  
The serious thoughts of *our short stay* here in this world,  
would be a great means of promoting godliness. Whoever   
considers how *flitting* and *winged* his life is—will hasten   
his repentance.  
  
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**Pull off the mask!**  
  
"*Godliness* with contentment is *great gain*."   
1Ti 6:6   
  
It is like digging in a gold mine. Godliness makes   
God Himself our portion! "The Lord is the portion   
of my inheritance" Psa 16:5. If God is our   
portion—all our estate lies in jewels! Where God   
gives Himself—He gives everything else. Whoever   
has the *castle*, has all the royalties belonging to it.   
God is a portion that can be neither spent nor lost.  
"God is the strength of my heart and my portion   
forever!" Psa 73:26.   
  
Godliness is "profitable for all things." 1Ti 4:8.   
What else is profitable, besides godliness?   
*Food* will not give a man wisdom;   
*gold* will not give him health;   
*honor* will not give him beauty.   
But godliness is profitable for all things:   
it fences off all troubles;  
it supplies all needs;   
it makes soul and body completely happy.  
  
Consider how vain and contemptible other things are,   
which people void of godliness, busy themselves about.  
Men are taken up with the things of this life, and "what   
profit has he who has labored for the wind?" Can the   
wind fill? What is gold but dust, which will sooner choke   
than satisfy! **Pull off the mask** of the most beautiful   
thing under the sun—and look what is inside. There is  *care* and *vexation!* Worldly joys are as fleeting as a   
bubble floating down the stream.  
  
Godliness is an *enduring* substance. All *worldly*   
delights have a *death's-head* set on them. They  
are only *shadows* and they are *fleeting*. Earthly   
comforts bring a man to his grave—and then   
take their farewell. But godliness is a possession   
which we cannot be robbed of. It runs parallel   
with eternity. Force cannot weaken it; age cannot   
wither it. It outbraves sufferings; it outlives death.   
Death may pluck the *stalk of the body*—but the *flower of grace* is not hurt.  
  
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**He tumbles in!**   
  
"Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked.  
A man reaps what he sows." Gal 6:7  
  
This *way* of sin seems pleasant—but the *end*   
is damnable. The ungodly man treads on the   
precipice of the bottomless pit; and when  
*death* gives him a jog—**he tumbles in!**"You fool! You will die this very night!"   
Luk 12:20  
  
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**Satan is their pilot!**  
  
"For those who are after the flesh—do mind the  
things of the flesh; but those who are after the  
Spirit—the things of the Spirit." Rom 8:5  
  
The ungodly walk according to the flesh. If a   
drunken or unclean lust calls—they gratify it!   
Lust is the *compass* they sail by! **Satan is their   
pilot, and hell the port they are bound for!**  
  
"For if you live after the flesh—you shall die: but  
if you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of  
the body—you shall live." Rom 8:13  
  
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**Swim in a sea of mercy!**  
  
"The God who fed me all my life long unto this day."   
Gen 48:15  
  
What **temporal favors** we have received! Every day   
we see a new tide of mercy coming in. The wings of   
mercy have covered us; the breast of mercy has fed   
us! What snares laid for us have been broken! What   
fears have blown over! He has taken such care of us,   
as if he had no one else to take care of. Never was   
the *cloud of providence* so black—but we might see   
a *rainbow of love* in the cloud. We have been made   
to **swim in a sea of mercy!** Does not all this call   
for thankfulness?  
  
That which may put another string into the instrument   
of our praise, and make it sound louder—is to consider   
what **spiritual blessings** God has conferred on us. He   
has opened the wardrobe of heaven and fetched us out   
a better garment than any of the angels wear! He has   
given us the best robe, and put on us the ring of faith,   
by which we are married to Him. These are mercies of   
the first magnitude, which deserve to have an asterisk   
put on them! More—God keeps the best wine until last!   
Here on earth, He gives us temporal mercies only in   
small quantities; but the greatest things are laid up in   
heaven! Here on earth, there are some *honey drops*   
and *foretastes* of God's love; the *rivers* of pleasure are   
reserved for paradise! Well may we take the harp and   
violin and triumph in God's praise. Who can tread on   
these hot coals of God's love—and his heart not burn   
in thankfulness!  
  
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This E-sword module was formatted by wlue777 and original document is found at www.gracegems.org

÷**The Godly Man's Picture (choice excerpts) cont'd**

**What is godliness?**  
  
Godliness is a REAL thing.  
It is not a fantasy, but a fact. Godliness is not the   
feverish fantasy of a sick brain; a Christian is no   
enthusiast, one whose religion is all made up of theory.   
  
Godliness is an INTRINSIC thing.  
It lies chiefly in the heart. The *dew* lies on the leaf,   
the *sap* is hidden in the root. The moralist's religion   
is all in the leaf; it consists only in externals—but   
godliness is *a holy sap* which is rooted in the soul.   
"Surely You desire truth in the inner parts; You teach   
me wisdom in the inmost place" Psa 51:6.  
  
Godliness is a SUPERNATURAL thing.  
By nature we inherit nothing but evil. We sucked in   
sin as naturally as our mother's milk. But godliness   
is breathed in from heaven. God must light up the   
lamp of grace in the heart. *Weeds* grow by themselves;  *flowers* are planted. Godliness is a celestial plant. A   
man has no more power to make himself godly, than   
to create himself.  
  
Godliness is an EXTENSIVE thing.  
It is a sacred leaven which spreads itself into the whole   
soul. There is light in the *understanding*, order in the  *affections*, pliableness in the *will*, exemplariness in the  
*life*. He who is good only in some part is not godly.   
Grace is called "the new *man,*" Col 3:10, not a new  *eye*, or *tongue*—but a new *man*. He who is godly is   
good all over; though he is regenerate only in part;  
yet it is in every part.  
  
Godliness is a GLORIOUS thing.  
As the jewel to the ring, so is piety to the soul,   
bespangling it in God's eyes. *Godliness* is glory in   
the seed, and *glory* is godliness in the flower.  
  
Godliness is a PERMANENT thing.  
There is a great deal of difference between a stake   
in the hedge—and a tree in the garden. A stake rots   
and molders—but a tree, having life in it, abides and   
flourishes. When godliness has taken root in the soul,   
it abides to eternity. Godliness being engraved in the   
heart by the Holy Spirit, as with the point of a   
diamond, can never be erased.  
  
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**A living principle**  
  
As *gold* is the most precious among the metals, so   
is *faith* among the graces. Faith cuts us off from the   
wild olive tree of nature—and grafts us into Christ.   
Faith is the vital artery of the soul: "The just shall   
*live* by his faith." Such as are destitute of faith may   
breathe—but they lack spiritual life.   
  
Saving faith is **a living principle**. Faith enlivens all the  **graces**; not a grace stirs until faith sets it working.   
  
Faith excites **repentance**. When I believe God's   
love to me—this makes me weep that I should sin   
against so good a God.   
  
Faith is the mother of **hope**; first we believe the   
promise, then we hope for it. Faith is *the oil which   
feeds the lamp of hope.* Faith and hope are *two   
turtledove graces*; take away one, and the other   
languishes. If the sinews are cut, the body is   
lame; if this sinew of faith is cut, hope is lame.   
  
Faith is the ground of **patience**; he who believes   
that God is *his* God, and that all providences work   
for his good, patiently yields himself to the will of   
God.   
  
Faith is a panacea—a remedy against all troubles.   
It is a godly man's anchor which he casts out into   
the sea of God's mercy, and is kept from sinking   
in despair.   
  
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**They distill consolation into the soul**  
"He has given us His very great and precious  
promises." 2Pe 1:4  
  
The promises are comforting—for their being suitable  
for the Christian's every condition. The promises are   
like an herb garden. There is no disease but some   
herb may be found there to cure it. The promises of   
themselves cannot comfort us—but only as the Spirit   
enables us to suck consolation from these honeycombs.   
The promises are like a *still* full of herbs—but this *still*   
will not drop unless the fire is put under it. So when   
the Spirit of God (who is compared to fire) is put to the  *still* of the promises—then **they distill consolation   
into the soul**.   
  
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**The devil has entered into these swine!**  
"If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he   
does not belong to Christ" Rom 8:9  
  
And if he does not belong to Christ—then whose is he?   
To what regiment does he belong? Do those who are  
malicious and unclean have God's Spirit? It would be  
blasphemy to say these have the *Holy* Spirit. Will the   
blessed Spirit leave his celestial palace to come and   
live in a foul prison? A sinner's heart is a jail, both for   
darkness and obnoxiousness, and will God's free Spirit   
be confined to a prison? (Psa 51:12) A sinner's heart  
is the emblem of hell. What would God's Spirit do there?   
Wicked hearts are **not a temple—but a pigsty**, where   
the unclean spirit makes his abode—"the prince of the   
power of the air, the spirit who now works in the   
children of disobedience" Eph 2:2.   
  
We would be loath to live in a house haunted by evil   
spirits; a sinner's heart is haunted! "After the sop *Satan   
entered*" Joh 13:27. Satan abuses the godly—but   
enters into the wicked. When the devils went into the   
herd of swine, "the whole herd *rushed* down the steep   
bank into the sea and perished in the water" Mat 8:32.   
Why is it that men *rush* so greedily to the commission of   
sin—but because **the devil has entered into these swine!**~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **A whispering in God's ear!**   
  
"Let everyone who is godly pray to You."   
Psa 32:6  
  
A godly man is a praying man. As soon as grace   
is poured in—prayer is poured out!   
  
"But I give myself unto prayer" Psa 109:4.   
In the Hebrew it is, "but I prayer." *Prayer and   
I are all one.*   
  
Prayer is the soul's communion with heaven.   
God comes down to us by His Spirit—and we   
go up to Him by prayer.   
  
Caligula placed his idols—as whispering in Jupiter's  
ear;  
  
**Prayer is a whispering in God's ear!**   
  
A godly man cannot live without prayer. A man   
cannot live—unless he takes his breath; nor can   
the soul live—unless it breathes forth its desires   
to God. As soon as the babe of grace is born, it   
cries. No sooner was Paul converted than "behold,   
he prays!" Act 9:11. No doubt he prayed before,   
being a Pharisee—but it was either superficially or   
superstitiously. But when the work of grace had   
been done in his soul, behold, now he prays!   
  
A godly man is on the mount of prayer every day.   
He begins the day with prayer. Before he opens his   
shop—he opens his heart to God! We burn sweet   
incense in our houses; a godly man's house is "a   
house of incense"; he airs it with the incense of   
prayer. He engages in no business without seeking   
God. A godly man consults God in everything; he   
asks God's permission and his blessing. A true   
saint continually shoots up his heart to heaven,   
by sacred prayers.  
  
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**The devil's tennis ball**  
  
"We hear that some among you are idle."   
2Th 3:11  
  
Piety never did grant a patent for idleness.   
  
An idle person is **the devil's tennis ball**, which   
he bandies up and down with temptation—until   
at last the ball goes out of play!  
  
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**Evangelical obedience**  
  
Is it possible for anyone to walk according to the   
full breadth of God's law, and to follow God fully?  
  
There is a twofold obeying of God's law.   
  
The first is perfect, when all is done, which the   
law requires. This we cannot arrive at in this life.   
  
Secondly, there is an incomplete obedience which   
is accepted in Christ. This consists in four things:  
  
(1) An *approving* of all God's commands: "the   
commandment is holy and just and good . . .   
I consent unto the law that it is good"  
Rom 7:12, Rom 7:16.  
  
(2) A *sweet delight* in God's commands: "I will   
delight myself in Your commandments, which I   
have loved" Psa 119:47.  
  
(3) A *cordial desire* to walk in all God's commands:  
"O that my ways were directed to keep Your statutes"   
Psa 119:5.  
  
(4) A *real endeavor* to tread in every path of the   
command: "I turned my feet unto Your testimonies"   
Psa 119:59.   
  
**Evangelical obedience** is true in its essence,   
though not perfect in its degree; and where it   
comes short, Christ puts His merits into the   
scales, and then there is full weight.  
  
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**Walking above the earth**  
  
"Noah walked with God." Gen 6:9  
  
The age in which Noah lived was very corrupt:   
"the wickedness of man was great in the earth"   
(v.5). But the iniquity of the times, could not   
put Noah off his walk.  
  
**What is it, to walk with God?**  
Walking with God imports five things:  
  
1. Walking as under God's eye. Noah reverenced God.   
A godly man sets himself as in God's presence, knowing   
that his Judge is looking on: "I have set the Lord always   
before me." Psa 16:8  
  
2. The familiarity and intimacy which the soul has with   
God. Friends walk together and console themselves with   
one another. The godly make known their requests to   
God—and He makes known His love to them. There is   
a sweet fellowship between God and His people: "Our   
fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus   
Christ" 1Jn 1:3.  
  
3. **Walking above the earth**. A godly man is elevated   
above all sublunary objects. The person who walks with   
God must ascend very high. A dwarf cannot walk among   
the stars—nor can a dwarfish, earthly soul walk with God.  
  
4. Visible piety. Walking is a visible posture. Grace must   
be conspicuous to the onlookers. He who reveals something   
of God in his behavior, walks with God. He shines forth in   
biblical conduct. He is a walking Bible.  
  
5. Continued progress in grace. It is not only a *step*—but   
a *walk*. There is a going on towards maturity. A godly man   
does not sit down in the middle of the way—but continues  
on. He may through infirmity step aside (as Peter did)—  
but he recovers by repentance, and goes on in progressive   
holiness: "The righteous will hold to their ways, and those   
with clean hands will grow stronger." Job 17:9.  
  
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**The new has come!**  
  
"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is  
a new creation; the old has gone, **the  
new has come!**" 2Co 5:17   
  
When the *truth* of grace is in the heart—  
the *beauty* of grace is seen in the walk!  
  
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**Spider or bee?**  
  
A godly man strives to be an instrument for making   
others godly. He is not content to go to heaven alone,   
but wants to take others there. **Spiders** work only for   
themselves—but **bees** work for others.   
  
A godly man is **both a diamond and a magnet**—a   
*diamond* for the sparkling luster of grace; and a *magnet*   
for his attractiveness. He is always drawing others to   
embrace piety. Living things have a propagating virtue.   
*Where piety lives in the heart*, there will be an endeavor   
to propagate the life of grace in those we converse with.  
"My son, Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds"   
Philemon 10. Though God is the *fountain of grace*—yet   
the saints are the *pipes* which transmit the living streams   
to others!   
  
Grace is like **fire**—which assimilates and turns everything   
into its own nature. Where there is the *fire of grace* in the   
heart—it will endeavor to inflame others.   
  
Grace is a holy **leaven**, which will be seasoning and   
leavening others with divine principles.   
  
Grace makes the heart **tender**. A godly man pities those   
who are in the gall of bitterness. He sees what a deadly cup   
is brewing for the wicked! They must, without repentance,   
be bound over to God's wrath! The fire which rained on   
Sodom was but a *painted fire—*in comparison with hell fire!  
This is a fire with a vengeance: "Suffering the vengeance   
of eternal fire" Jud 1:7.   
  
Now when a godly man sees Satan's captives ready to be   
damned—he strives to convert them from the error of their   
way: "Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men!"   
2Co 5:11. A godly man will be careful that his children   
should know God. He would be very sad if any of his   
children should burn in hell.   
  
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**God's garden**  
  
A holy heart is the *garden* where God plants the   
flower of His love. God's love to His people is an   
ancient love, it dates from eternity. (Eph 1:4)   
He loves them with a choice, distinguishing love;   
they are the "dearly beloved of His soul." Jer 12:7.   
  
The men of the world have bounty dropping from   
God's *fingers*—but the godly have love dropping

from God's *heart*. He gives to one—a golden *cup;*  
to the other—a golden *kiss*.   
  
God loves the godly, just as He loves Christ (Joh 17:26)  
It is the same love in kind, though not in   
degree. Here the saints merely sip God's love; in   
heaven they shall drink of rivers of pleasure (Psa 36:8).  
The love of God to His people is *permanent*.   
Death may take their life away from them—but not   
God's love: "I have loved you with an everlasting   
love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness!"   
Jer 31:3.  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
**Continually weeding his heart**  
  
The ungodly do not understand the iniquity   
of their own hearts. You will sometimes hear   
them swear that their heart is good.  
  
But a child of God sees much heart corruption.   
Though some *flowers of grace* grow there, he   
still sees how fast the *weeds of sin* grow—and   
is therefore **continually weeding his heart**   
by repentance and mortification.  
  
"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test  
me and know my thoughts. Point out anything  
in me that offends You, and lead me along the  
path of everlasting life." Psa 139:23-24  
  
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**Satan's kindness**  
  
"We are not ignorant of his devices" 2Co 2:11   
  
The godly foresee a temptation, and will not come   
near. They see a snake under the beautiful flowers!   
They know that **Satan's kindness**—is craftiness!  
  
The godly set their feet—where worldly men set   
their heart!  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**Most receive the mark of the beast!**   
  
Someone asked him, "Lord, *are only a few people  
going to be saved?"* He said to them, "Make every  
effort to enter through the narrow door, because  
*many*, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be  
able to." Luk 13:23-24  
  
There are only a few godly people. **Most receive   
the mark of the beast!** The devil keeps open   
house for all comers, and he is never without guests!  
  
If the number of the saints is so small, how we   
should strive to be found among these *pearls!*   
**It is better to go to heaven with the few—  
than to hell in the crowd!** Christ's flock is a   
little one. "Don't be afraid, *little flock*, because   
your Father delights to give you the kingdom!"   
Luk 12:32   
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**If their *fall* had not knocked their brains out!**  
  
Godliness is most rational. If, while he remains in   
*nature's soil*, he is poisoned with sin—no more actually   
fit for communion with God, than a toad is fit to be   
made an angel—then it is the highest act of reason,   
to become a Christian.  
  
It is rational because this change is for the better. Will   
not anyone be willing to exchange a dark prison—for a   
king's palace? Will he not exchange his brass—for gold?   
You who become godly, change for the better: you change   
your pride—for humility; you change your uncleanness—for   
holiness. You change a lust which will damn you—for a   
Christ who will save you!   
  
If men were not besotted, **if their *fall* had not knocked   
their brains out**—they would see that it is the most   
rational thing in the world to become godly.  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**A Christian's joy**  
  
Godliness does not destroy **a Christian's   
joy**—but refines it.   
  
"I have spoken these things to you so that  
**My joy** may be in you, and **your joy** may  
be complete." Joh 15:11  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**Kills with her golden darts!**  
"Love not the world." 1Jn 2:15  
  
Take heed of the world. Many would like to be   
godly—but the honors and profits of the world   
divert them. Where the world fills both head   
and heart—there is no room for Christ. The   
world eats the heart out of godliness, as the   
ivy eats the heart out of the oak. The world   
**kills with her golden darts!**~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **It would produce a wonderful alteration**  
  
"*I thought on my ways*, and turned my  
feet unto Your testimonies" Psa 119:59  
  
By holy thoughts, the *head* grows clearer and   
the *heart* better. *Serious meditation* represents   
everything in its true color. It shows the *evil of  
sin*, and the *luster of grace.* If men would step   
aside a little out of the noise and hurry of life,   
and spend only half-an-hour every day thinking   
about their souls and eternity, **it would   
produce a wonderful alteration** in them!   
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**The day we eat of this tree**  
  
"To him who overcomes, I will give the right  
to eat from the tree of life, which is in the  
paradise of God" Rev 2:7  
  
This tree of life is the Lord Jesus. This tree  
infuses life—and prevents death. **The day   
we eat of this tree**—our eyes shall indeed   
be opened—to see God!  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**God laid you steeping in Christ's blood**  
  
You who are enriched with the treasures of   
godliness—bless God for it! *This flower does   
not grow in nature's garden!*   
  
You had enlisted yourselves under the devil and   
taken pay on his side, fighting against your own   
happiness—and then God came with *converting   
grace* and put forth a loving and gentle violence,   
causing you to espouse His cause against Satan!   
  
You had lain many years *soaking in wickedness*,   
as if you had been *parboiled for hell*—and then   
**God laid you steeping in Christ's blood** and   
breathed holiness into your heart!   
  
Oh, what cause you have to write yourselves down  
—as *eternal debtors to free grace!* Oh, acknowledge   
the sovereign love of God! Admire distinguishing   
mercy! Set the crown of your praise—on the head   
of free grace! It is good that there is an eternity   
coming, when the saints shall make His praise   
glorious!  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**A heap of stones and a hammer**  
  
In hell there is nothing to be seen, but **a heap   
of stones and a hammer**. A heap of stones—  
that is hard hearts; a hammer—that is God's   
power and justice, breaking them in pieces.  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**Inter-weavings of sin and grace**  
  
As fire may be hidden in the embers, so grace   
may be hidden under many disorders of soul.   
  
Often in the godly, **a little grace is mingled   
with much corruption**. There are, in the best   
saints, **inter-weavings of sin and grace**:   
a dark side with the light;   
much pride mixed with humility;   
much earthliness with heavenliness.  
  
No, in many of the regenerate there is *more   
corruption than grace!* So much passion that   
you can hardly see any meekness. Jonah, a   
peevish prophet, quarrels with God, no—he   
justifies his anger: "I do well to be angry, even   
unto death!" Jon 4:9. Here there was so   
much anger, that it was hard to see any grace.   
  
A Christian in this life is like a glass which has   
more froth than wine, or like a diseased body   
that has more illness than vigor. It may humble   
the best Christian—to consider how much   
corruption is mingled with his grace.  
  
The trembling soul thinks it will be swallowed   
up by sin. But God preserves a little quantity of   
grace in the heart—no, no, He makes that spark   
prevail over corruption! God sees the sincerity—  
and overlooks many infirmities. He nourishes the   
least sparks of grace, and blows them gently with   
the breath of His Spirit until they break forth into   
a flame. A little grace is grace—though it is   
smothered under much corruption.  
  
I confess it is a matter of astonishment, that   
grace should not be wholly annihilated, especially   
if we consider two things:  
  
(1) The malice of Satan. He is a malignant spirit   
and lays barriers in our way to heaven. The devil,   
with the *wind of temptation*, tries to blow out the   
*spark of grace* in our hearts. If this will not do, he   
stirs up wicked men and raises the militia of hell   
against us. What a wonder it is that this *bright star   
of grace*, should not be swept down by the tail of   
the dragon!  
  
(2) The world of corruption in our hearts. Sin makes   
up the major part in a Christian. There are more dregs   
than grace in the holiest heart. The heart swarms with   
sin. What a great deal of pride there is in the soul! Now   
is it not astonishing, that this lily of grace should be able   
to grow among so many thorns? It is as great a wonder   
that a little grace should be preserved in the midst of   
so much corruption—as to see a candle burning in the   
sea and not extinguished!  
  
But though grace lives with so much difficulty, like the   
infant that struggles for breath—yet being born of God,   
it is immortal. Grace conflicting with corruption is like a   
ship tossed and beaten by the waves—yet it weathers   
the storm and at last gets to the desired haven.   
  
But how is it that grace, even the least degree of it, is not   
quenched? It is from the mighty operation of the Holy Spirit.   
The Spirit of God, who is the source, continually excites and   
awakens grace in the heart. He is at work in a believer every   
day. He pours in oil, and keeps the *lamp of grace* burning.   
Grace is compared to a river of life, Joh 7:38. The river   
of grace can never be dried up, for the Spirit of God is the   
spring which feeds it.  
  
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**Gunpowder!**  
  
Preserve a holy watchfulness over your hearts.   
The man who has gunpowder in his house, fears   
lest it should catch fire and explode. Sin in the   
heart is like **gunpowder!** It may make us fear   
lest a *spark of temptation* should fall on us and   
blow us up!   
  
There are two things which may make us always   
watchful of our hearts: the *deceits* of our hearts,  
and the *lusts* of our hearts.   
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**The hypocrite picks and chooses**  
  
"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you  
hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint,  
dill and cummin. But you have neglected the more  
important matters of the law—justice, mercy and  
faithfulness" Mat 23:23  
  
This is one great difference between a child of God and   
a hypocrite. **The hypocrite picks and chooses** in   
religion. He will perform some duties which are easier,   
and gratify his pride or interest—but other duties he   
takes no notice of.   
  
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**Kissing and hugging their dolls**  
  
"For, as I have often told you before and now say  
again even with tears—many live as enemies of  
the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction,  
their god is their stomach, and their glory is in  
their shame. **Their mind is on earthly things**."   
Php 3:18-19   
  
To be *godly* and *earthly,* is a contradiction. Those   
who are eaten up with the world will be rejected,   
as ungodly, at the bar of judgment. We read that   
the earth swallowed up Korah alive, Num 16:32.   
This judgment is on many—the earth swallows up   
their time, thoughts and discourse. They are buried   
twice; their hearts are buried in the earth before their   
bodies. How sad it is that the soul, that princely thing,  
which is made for communion with God and angels,   
should be put to the mill to grind, and made a slave   
to the earth! How like the prodigal the soul has   
become, choosing rather to converse with swine and   
feed upon husks—than to aspire after communion   
with the blessed Deity! Thus does Satan befool men,   
and keep them from heaven by making them seek   
a heaven here on earth.  
  
God himself sounds a retreat to us to call us off the   
world. "Love not the world" 1Jn 2:15. "Be not   
conformed to this world" Rom 12:2. Do not   
hunt after its honors and profits.   
  
Consider how much below a Christian it is to be   
earthly-minded. We sometimes laugh at children   
when we see them busying themselves with toys,   
**kissing and hugging their dolls**, etc.—when   
we do the same thing! At death, what will all the   
world be, which we so hug and kiss—but like a   
rag doll? It will yield us no more comfort then.   
How far it is below a heaven-born soul to be   
taken up with these things!   
  
Consider what a poor, contemptible thing the   
world is. It is not worth setting the affections on;  
it cannot fill the heart. The creature will no more   
fill the soul than a drop will fill the bucket. That   
*little sweet* which we suck from the creature, is   
intermixed with bitterness. And this *imperfect*  
sweet will not last long: "the world passes away."   
The world constantly *changes*. It is never constant   
except in its disappointments. How quickly we may   
remove our lodgings and make our pillow in the dust!  
The world is but a great inn where we are to stay a   
night or two, and then be gone. What madness it is   
so to set our heart upon our inn—as to forget our   
eternal home!  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**Christ is precious in His benefits**

By Christ all **dangers** are removed.   
Through Christ all **mercies** are conveyed.   
In His blood flows—  
justification (Act 13:39);  
sanctification (Heb 9:14);  
fructification (Joh 1:16);  
pacification (Rom 5:1);  
adoption (Gal 4:5);  
perseverance (Heb 12:2);  
glorification (Heb 9:12).   
  
This will be a matter of sublimest joy for all eternity.   
We shall sing hallelujahs to the Lamb who has redeemed   
us from sin and hell, and has translated us into that   
glorious paradise, where we shall see God forever and ever.  
  
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**A Godlike disposition**  
  
"Partakers of the divine nature" 2Pe 1:4  
  
A godly man is like God. He has the same judgment   
as God; he thinks of things as God does. He has **a   
Godlike disposition**. A godly man bears both God's   
*name* and *image*. Godliness is Godlikeness. It is one   
thing to *profess* God, another thing to *resemble* Him.  
Where God sees His likeness, there He gives His love.  
  
A godly man is like God in holiness. Holiness is the   
most brilliant pearl in the King of Heaven's crown:   
"glorious in holiness" Exo 15:11.   
God's **power** makes Him mighty;   
His **mercy** makes Him lovely; but   
His **holiness** makes Him glorious.  
  
The holiness of God is the intrinsic purity of His   
nature and his abhorrence of sin. A godly man   
bears some kind of analogy with God in this.   
  
Holiness is the badge and mark of Christ's people:  
"The people of Your holiness" Isa 63:18. The   
godly are a *holy,* as well as a *royal* priesthood.  
They have written upon their heart, "Holiness to   
the Lord". The holiness of the saints consists in   
their conformity to God's will, which is the rule   
and pattern of all holiness.  
  
The godly set themselves against evil, both in   
purpose and in practice. They are fearful of that   
which looks like sin (1Th 5:22).   
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**Eaten up with self-love**  
  
"People will be lovers of themselves, lovers   
of money, lovers of pleasure rather than  
lovers of God." 2Ti 3:2, 2Ti 3:4   
  
People are for the most part **eaten up with   
self-love**; they love their ease, their worldly   
profit, their lusts—but they do not have a   
drop of true love to God.   
  
A soul devoid of divine love is a temper   
which best suits damned spirits.

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**God has two hands**  
  
The ungodly are vile people. Sin makes men base; it blots their name; it taints their blood. "They are all together become filthy" Psa 14:3. In the Hebrew it is "they have become stinking." If you call wicked men ever so bad, you cannot call them worse than their name deserves: they are *swine* (Mat 7:6); *vipers* (Mat 3:7); *devils* (Joh 6:70). The wicked are *dross* and refuse (Psa 119:119), and heaven is too pure to have any dross mingled with it.  
  
The ungodly, while they live, are exposed to the wrath of God. "He who believes not, the wrath of God abides on him" Joh 3:36. Over his head hangs the sword of God's justice; and under him hell-fire burns!  
  
**God has two hands**: one of mercy and one of justice. With the one, He will draw the godly to heaven; with the other, He will thrust the sinner to hell. The ungodly at death, must undergo God's fury and indignation. "The wicked shall be turned into hell" Psa 9:17.  
  
And oh, how dreadful is that place! It is called a *fiery lake* (Rev 20:15). That is, a lake to denote the *many* torments in hell, a fiery lake to show the *fierceness* of the punishment. Fire is the most torturing element. Strabo in his "Geography" mentions a lake in Galilee of such a pestiferous nature that it scalds off the skin of whatever is thrown into it. But alas, that lake is cool, compared with this fiery lake into which the damned are thrown.   
  
This fire is inextinguishable: the wicked shall be choked in the flames, though not consumed: "And they shall be tormented day and night forever and ever" Rev 20:10. See the deplorable condition of all ungodly people! In the eternal world, they shall have a life which always dies, and a death which always lives. May this not frighten men off their sins and make them become godly, unless they are resolved to feel how hot hell-fire is?

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**It will vent itself at the lips!**  
  
A godly man is heavenly in his speech. His words are sprinkled with salt to season others (Col 4:6). As soon as Christ had risen from the grave—He was "speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God" Act 1:3. No sooner has a man risen from the grave of unregeneracy—than he is speaking of heaven. "The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious" Ecc 4:12. He speaks in such a heavenly manner—as if he were already in heaven. The love he has for God, will not allow him to be silent. The spouse being sick with love, her tongue was like the pen of a ready writer: "My beloved is white and ruddy, his head is as the most fine gold . . . " Son 5:10-11. Where there is a principle of godliness in the heart—**it will vent itself at the lips!**  
  
How can they be termed godly—who are possessed with a dumb devil? They never have any good discourse. They are fluent and discursive enough in secular things: they can speak of their wares and shops, they can tell what a good crop they have—but in matters of religion they are as if their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth! There are many people in whose company you cannot tell what to make of them—whether they are Turks or atheists, for they never speak a word of Christ!  
  
How can they be termed godly—whose tongues are set on fire by hell? Their lips do not drop honey—but poison, to the defiling of others! Plutarch says that speech ought to be like gold, which is of most value when it has least dross in it. Oh, the unclean, malicious words that some people utter! What an unsavory stench comes from these dunghills! Those lips which gallop so fast in sin, need David's muzzle. "I will watch my ways and keep my tongue from sin; I will put a muzzle on my mouth" Psa 39:1. Can the body be healthy—when the tongue is black? Can the heart be holy—when the devil is in the lips? A godly man speaks "the language of Canaan". "Those who feared the Lord spoke often one to another" Mal 3:16.  
  
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**A dumb minister**  
  
Godly ministers must be:  
  
The Godly Man's Picture (choice excerpts) cont'd(1) **Painstaking**. "Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction" 2Ti 4:2. The minister must not be idle. Sloth is as inexcusable in a minister, as sleeping in a sentry. John the Baptist was a "voice crying" Mat 3:3. **A dumb minister** is of no more use, than a dead physician. A man of God must *work* in the Lord's vineyard. It was Augustine's wish that Christ might find him at his coming either praying or preaching.  
  
(2) **Knowledgeable**. "For the lips of a priest ought to preserve knowledge, and from his mouth men should seek instruction—because he is the messenger of the Lord Almighty" Mal 2:7. The prophets of old were called "seers" 1Sa 9:9. It is absurd to have blind *seers*. Christ said to Peter, "*Feed* my sheep" Joh 21:16. But how sad it is when the shepherd needs to be fed! Ignorance in a minister is like blindness in an optometrist. Under the law, he who had the plague in his *head*, was unclean, Lev 13:44.  
  
(3) A **plain** preacher, suiting his matter and style to the capacity of his audience (1Co 14:19). Some ministers, like eagles, love to soar aloft in abstruse metaphysical notions, thinking they are most admired when they are least understood. Those who preach in the clouds, instead of hitting their people's conscience, shoot over their heads.  
  
(4) **Zealous** in reproving sin. "Rebuke them sharply" Tit 1:13. A man of God must suck the *fire of zeal* out of the breasts of Scripture! Zeal in a minister is as proper as fire on the altar. Some are afraid to reprove, like the swordfish which has a sword in his head, but is without a heart. So they carry the sword of the Spirit with them—but have no heart to draw it out in reproof against sin. How many have sown pillows under their people, Eze 13:18, making them sleep so securely, that they never awoke until they were in hell!  
  
(5) **Holy in heart.** How sad it is for a minister to preach that to others, which he never felt in his own soul; to exhort others to holiness and himself be a stranger to it. Oh, that this were not too often so! How many blow the Lord's trumpet with foul breath!  
  
(6) **Holy in life.** Under the law, before the priests *served* at the altar, they *washed* in the laver. Such as serve in the Lord's house, must first be washed from gross sin in the laver of repentance. The life of a minister should be a walking Bible. A minister must imitate John the Baptist, who was not only "a voice crying"—but "a light shining" Joh 5:35. Those who live in contradiction to what they preach, disgrace this excellent calling. And though they are angels by office—yet they are devils in their lives! (Jer 23:15).

÷**The Lord's Prayer**

By Thomas Watson

CHOICE EXCERPTS

**A vexing vanity!**  
  
"Deliver us from evil." Mat 6:13  
  
In this petition, we pray to be delivered from the   
evil **world**. "He died for our sins, just as God our   
Father planned—in order **to rescue us from this   
evil world** in which we live." Gal 1:4  
  
It is an evil world, as it is a DEFILING world. The   
**opinions** and **examples** of the world are defiling.   
How easily are we hurried to sin, when we have the   
*tide* of natural corruption, and the *wind* of example   
to carry us! "You shall not follow a multitude to do   
evil." Exo 23:2. Bad examples are contagious.   
"They mingled among the pagans—and adopted   
their evil customs." Psa 106:35.   
  
Living in the world, is like traveling on a dirty road.   
It requires a high degree of grace to keep ourselves   
"unspotted by the world." Jas 1:27.  
  
It is an evil world, as it is an ENSNARING world. The   
world is full of snares. *Company* is a snare; *recreation*  
is a snare; *riches* are golden snares. The apostle John  
speaks of the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes   
and the pride of life." 1Jn 2:16. The lust of the *flesh*   
is beauty; the lust of the *eye* is money; the *pride of life*   
is honor. These are *the natural man's trinity.*   
  
The world is a *flattering* enemy. Whom it kisses—it betrays;   
it is a silken halter. The pleasures of the world, like opium,   
cast men into the sleep of carnal security. Lysimachus sold   
his crown for a cup of water. Just so, many part with heaven  
—for the world. *They are enslaved with the world's golden   
fetters!* The world bewitched Demas. 2Ti 4:10. One   
of Christ's own apostles was caught with a *silver* bait. It is   
hard to drink the *wine of prosperity*—and not be giddy. The   
world, through our innate corruption, is evil, as it is a snare.   
  
It is an evil world, as it is a DEADENING world. It dulls and   
deadens the affections to heavenly objects. Earthly things  
choke the seed of the Word. A man entangled in the world   
is so taken up with secular concerns, that he can no more   
mind the things above—than an elephant can fly in the air!   
And even such as have grace in them—when their affections   
are *beslimed with earth*, they find themselves much   
indisposed to meditation and prayer; it is like swimming   
with a heavy stone around the neck!  
  
It is an evil world, as it is a DECEITFUL world. The  
world makes us believe it will *satisfy* our desires—  
but it only *increases* them!  
  
It is an evil world, as it is a VEXING world. It is full of   
trouble. "In this world you will have *trouble*." Joh 16:33.  
  
Basil was of opinion that before the fall—the rose grew   
without prickles; but now *every sweet flower of our life   
has its thorns!* There are many things which cause trouble.  
Some are troubled that they have *no* children, others that   
they *have* children. The world is **a vexing vanity!** If a   
man is poor—he is despised by the rich; if he is rich—he   
is envied by the poor. If we do not find an *ensnaring*   
world, we shall find it an *afflicting* world; it has more   
in it to *trouble* us than *tempt* us.   
  
The world is a **sea**, where we are *tossed upon the surging   
waves of sorrow*, and often in danger of shipwreck!   
  
The world is a **wilderness**, full of fiery serpents!   
  
What great need then, have we to pray, "Lord,   
deliver us from being hurt by this evil world!"  
  
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**The Trojan horse**  
  
"Deliver us from evil." Mat 6:13  
  
In this petition, we pray to be delivered from the   
evil of our **heart**, that it may not entice us to sin.   
  
The heart is the **poisoned fountain**, from whence   
all actual sins flow. "For *from within, out of the heart   
of man*, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft,   
murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit,   
sensuality, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness."   
Mar 7:21-22.   
  
The cause of all evil lies in a man's own bosom—all   
sin begins at the heart. Lust is first conceived in the   
heart—and then it is midwifed into the world. Whence   
comes rash anger? The heart sets the tongue on fire. *The heart is the shop where all sin is contrived and   
hammered out.*   
  
The heart is **the greatest seducer**. "Each one is   
tempted when he is carried away and enticed by   
his own lust." Jas 1:14. *The devil could not hurt   
us—if our own hearts did not give consent.* All that   
he can do is to lay the bait—but it is our fault to   
swallow it! How needful, therefore, is this prayer,  
"Deliver us from the evil of our hearts!"  
  
It was Augustine's prayer, "Lord, deliver me from   
that evil man—myself!"  
  
Beware of the *bosom traitor*—the flesh. The heart   
of a man is **the Trojan horse**—out of which comes   
a whole army of lusts! O let us pray to be delivered   
from the lusts and deceits of our own heart!   
  
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**Looking for some victim to devour!**  
  
"Deliver us from evil." Mat 6:13  
  
In this petition, we pray to be delivered from the   
evil of Satan—"the wicked one." Mat 13:19.  
  
In what respect is Satan the wicked one?  
  
He was the first inventor of evil. Joh 8:44.  
  
His inclination is only to evil. Eph 6:12.  
  
His constant practice is doing evil. 1Pe 5:8.  
He has some hand in all the evils and mischief   
which happen in the world.  
  
He hinders from all good.   
  
He provokes to evil. The devil blows the fire of lust   
and strife. When men are proud, the old serpent has   
poisoned them, and makes them swell!   
  
He is a *restless* adversary—he never sleeps.   
  
Satan is a *subtle* contriver; there is no place that   
can secure us from his assaults and inroads.   
  
Satan is a *mighty* adversary. He is called the   
"strong man." Luk 11:21. He takes men captive   
at his pleasure. "Who are taken captive by him   
at his will." 2Ti 2:26.   
  
The devil glories in the damnation of souls. His work   
is to angle for men's souls; he lays *suitable baits*.   
  
He allures the *ambitious* man with honor.   
  
He allures the *covetous* man with riches;   
he baits his hook with *silver!*   
  
He allures the *lustful* man with beauty;   
he tempts men to Delilah's lap—to keep them   
from Abraham's bosom!   
  
How needful then is this prayer, "Lord, deliver  
us from the evil one!"  
  
"Be careful! Watch out for attacks from the  
Devil, your great enemy. He prowls around  
like a roaring lion, **looking for some victim  
to devour!**" 1Pe 5:8.  
  
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**The burdens of prosperity**  
  
People are usually better in adversity, than prosperity.   
A prosperous condition is not always so safe. True, it   
is more *pleasing* to the flesh—but it is not always *best*.   
In a prosperous state, there is more *burden*. Many   
look at the shining and glittering of prosperity—but   
not at **the burdens of prosperity**.  
  
[1] There is the burden of CARE. Therefore God calls   
riches "cares." Luk 8:14. A rose has its prickles—so   
have riches. We think them happy, who flourish in   
their silks and gold—but we do not see the troubles  
and cares which attend them! A shoe may have silver   
lace on it—yet pinch the foot. Many a man who goes   
to his hard labor, lives a more contented life than he   
who has millions. *Disquieting care* is the evil spirit   
which haunts the rich man. When his chests are full   
of gold—his heart is full of care how to *increase* them,   
or how to *secure* what he has gotten. A large estate,   
like a long, trailing garment—is often more   
troublesome than useful.  
  
[2] In a prosperous estate there is the burden of   
ACCOUNT. Such as are in high places, have a far   
greater account to give to God than others. "Unto   
whom much is given—of him shall be much required."   
The more golden talents any are entrusted with—the   
more they have to answer for. The more their *revenues*  
—the more their *reckonings*. God will say, "I gave you   
a great estate—what have you done with it? How have   
you employed it for My glory?"   
  
[3] A prosperous condition has more DANGER in it.   
Such as are on the top of the pinnacle of honor—are   
in more danger of falling. They are subject to many   
temptations. Their table is often a snare. Millions are  
drowned in the sweet waters of pleasure.   
  
A large sail overturns the vessel. Many, by having a too   
large sail of prosperity, have had their souls overturned!   
He has need of much wisdom and grace, to know how   
to wisely bear a high condition. It is hard to carry a full   
cup without spilling—and a full estate without sinning!  
  
Prosperity breeds pride. When the tide rises higher in   
the river, the boat rises higher; so, when the tide of an   
estate rises higher, many men's hearts rise higher in   
pride. Prosperity breeds carnal security. Samson fell   
asleep in Delilah's lap—so do men in the lap of ease   
and plenty. The world's *golden* sands, are *quick*sands.   
  
God knows what is best for us. If we have less estate, we   
are in less danger. If we lack the riches and honors of   
others—so we lack their temptations. "How hard it is for   
rich people to get into the Kingdom of God! It is easier   
for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a   
rich person to enter the Kingdom of God!" Luk 18:24-25.  
  
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**The sword which wounds the red dragon!**  
  
"In every situation take **the shield of faith**, and  
with it you will be able to extinguish the flaming  
arrows of the evil one!" Eph 6:16  
  
No grace more bruises the serpent's head—than **faith**.   
It is both a *shield* and a *sword*, defensive and offensive.   
It is a shield to guard the head and defend the vitals.   
The shield of faith prevents the fiery darts of temptation   
from piercing us through. Faith is also **the sword which   
wounds the red dragon!**  
  
How does faith come to be so strong—that it can resist   
Satan and put him to flight?  
  
Because faith brings the strength of Christ into the soul.   
Samson's strength lay in his hair—ours lies in Christ. If a   
child is assaulted—it runs and calls to its father for help.   
Just so, when faith is assaulted, it runs and calls Christ,   
and in His strength overcomes!  
  
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**Buffeted by Satan's temptations**  
  
**Why does God allow His people to be buffeted   
by Satan's temptations**? He does it for many wise   
and holy ends.  
God allows His children to be tempted, to test their **love**.   
Our love to God is seen, when we can look a temptation   
in the face—and turn our back upon it. Though the devil   
comes as a subtle serpent, and offers a golden apple—yet   
the one who loves God will not touch the forbidden fruit.   
When the devil offered Christ all the kingdoms of the   
world, and the glory of them—such was Christ's love to   
His Father, that He abhorred the temptation. True love   
will not be bribed. When the devil's darts are most fiery  
—a saint's love to God is most fervent. "If you love Me,   
you will keep My commandments." Joh 14:15   
  
God allows His children to be tempted, to test their **courage**.   
Many have no heart to resist a temptation. No sooner does   
Satan come with his solicitations—but they yield. They are   
like the coward, who as soon as the thief approaches, delivers   
his purse. He is a valorous Christian, who brandishes the sword   
against Satan, and will rather die than yield. The heroic spirit   
of a saint is never more seen than in a battlefield, when he is   
fighting with the red dragon—and by the power of faith puts   
the devil to flight!   
  
God allows His children to be tempted, that they may be kept   
from **pride**. Pride keeps grace low, so that it cannot thrive. As   
the head swells—the other parts of the body waste away. Just   
so, as *pride* swells—*grace* wastes away. God resists pride; and,   
that He may keep His children humble, He sometimes allows   
them to fall into temptation. "To keep me from getting puffed   
up, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan   
to torment me and keep me from getting proud." *The thorn   
in the flesh was to burst the bubble of pride!* Better is the   
temptation which humbles me—than the duty which makes   
me proud. Rather than a Christian should be proud, God lets   
him fall into the devil's hands a while—that he may be cured   
of swelling pride.  
  
God allows His children to be tempted, that they may be fitter   
to **comfort** others who are in the same distress, and speak a   
word in due season to such as are weary. Paul was trained up   
in *the fencing-school of temptation*, and was able to acquaint   
others with Satan's wiles and stratagems, 2Co 2:11. A man   
who has ridden over a place where there are quicksands, is   
the fittest to guide others through that dangerous way. Just   
so, he who has been buffeted by Satan, and has felt the claws  
of the roaring lion—is the fittest man to deal with one who is   
tempted.  
  
God allows His children to be tempted, to make them long   
more for **heaven**, where they shall be out of gunshot, and   
freed from the hissing of the old serpent! Satan vexes and   
molests the saints. He lays his snares, and throws his fireballs!   
But this only makes the children of God long to be gone from   
hence, and pray that they had the wings of a dove, to fly   
away and be at rest! Heaven is the place of rest—no bullets   
of temptation fly there! The eagle that soars aloft in the air,   
and sits perching upon the tops of high trees—is not troubled   
with the stinging of serpents below. Just so, when believers   
have got into heaven above, they shall not be stung by the   
old serpent! The devil is cast out of the heavenly paradise.   
Heaven is compared to an exceeding high mountain. It is so   
high, that Satan's fiery darts cannot reach up to it! Death calls   
the saints off the battlefield, where the bullets of temptation   
fly thick—so that they may receive a victorious crown!  
  
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**To damn them with delights!**   
  
"So that Satan will not outsmart us. For we are very  
familiar with his evil schemes." 2Co 2:11   
  
The serpent beguiled Eve with his subtlety; let   
us not be beguiled by his hellish snares and plots.   
  
Satan has a dexterity in subtle contrivances.   
  
He hurts more as a *fox* than a *lion*.   
  
His *snares* are worse than his *darts*.   
  
His error damns as well as His vice;   
poison kills as well as a pistol.  
  
Satan bewitches and ensnares men, by setting   
pleasing baits before them; as the riches, pleasures,  
and honors of the world. "All these things will I give   
you." Mat 4:9. How many does he tempt with   
this golden apple! Pride, idleness, luxury—are the   
three worms which are bred by prosperity. "Those   
who will be rich fall into temptation and a snare."   
1Ti 6:9. Satan kills with these *silver* darts!   
How many are ensnared by his luscious delights!   
  
*The pleasures of the world* are the great engine by   
which Satan batters down men's souls. His policy is to   
tickle them to death—**to damn them with delights!**   
The flesh would gladly be pleased, and Satan prevails   
by this temptation—he drowns them in the sweet   
waters of pleasure.   
  
Such as have abundance of the world, walk in the   
midst of *golden snares!* We had need watch our hearts   
in prosperity, and pray not to be led into temptation.  
We have as much need to be careful that we are not   
endangered by prosperity—as a man has to be careful   
at a feast where there are some poisoned dishes of food.  
  
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**This lion of hell is ever hunting after his prey!**  
  
"Be careful! Watch out for attacks from the Devil,  
your great enemy. He *prowls around* like a roaring  
lion, looking for some victim to devour!" 1Pe 5:8  
  
Consider Satan's **diligence** in tempting. He neglects   
no time. He who would have us idle—is always busy   
himself. **This lion of hell is ever hunting after his   
prey!** He compasses sea and land to make a proselyte.   
*He prowls around*—he watches where he may throw in   
the fireball of temptation. He is a restless spirit; if we  
repulse him, he will not desist—but come again with   
a new temptation.   
  
Satan's diligence in tempting, is seen in the **variety**   
of temptations he uses. He does not confine himself   
to one kind of temptation—he has more plots than   
one. He has many tools to work with. If he finds one   
temptation does not prevail—he will utilize another.   
  
If he cannot tempt to *lust*—he will tempt to *pride*.   
If temptation to *covetousness* does not prevail—he   
will tempt to *extravagance*.   
  
If he cannot make men *profane*—he will try to make  
them *religious formalists*.   
  
If he cannot make them *wicked*—he will tempt them  
to be *erroneous*. Error damns as well as vice. Vice   
pistols; error poisons!  
  
Satan has acquired long experience in *the art of   
temptation.* He has been a tempter for as long as   
he has been a devil. Having such experience, he   
knows what the temptations are, which have foiled   
others, and are most likely to prevail—as the fowler  
lays those snares which have caught other birds.   
  
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**God is either blind or forgetful**  
  
"Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven,  
whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose  
sin the Lord does not count against him."   
Psa 32:1-2   
  
All the curses of God stand in full force against  *an unpardoned sinner*. It is astonishing, that an   
unpardoned man could be merry, who is heir to   
all God's curses!  
  
Luther professed there were three things   
which he dared not think of, without Christ:  
his sins,   
death,   
the day of judgment.   
  
Death to a Christless soul, is the "king of terrors."   
Death is sent to the unpardoned soul with dreadful  
tidings. Death is *God's jailer* to arrest him. Death   
is a prologue to damnation. It takes away all earthly   
comforts; it takes away sugared morsels; no more   
mirth or music. "The music of harpists and musicians,  
flute players and trumpeters, will never be heard in   
you again." Rev 18:22. The sinner shall never more  
taste of luscious delights, for all eternity; his honey   
shall be turned into the "gall of asps." Job 20:14.   
  
The sinner dying unpardoned, must go into damnation!   
This is the second death—an undying death. He must   
forever bear the anger of a sin-revenging God. As long   
as God is God—so long the vial of His wrath shall be   
dropping upon the damned soul.   
  
Oh! how sad, then, is it to live and die unpardoned!   
You may lay a grave-stone upon that man, and write   
this epitaph upon it, "It would have been good for that   
man—if he had never been born!" He will be engulfed   
in a dreadful a labyrinth of fire and brimstone for all   
eternity!  
  
Now, if the misery of an unpardoned state is so   
inexpressible—what is the reason why so few seek   
after pardon? If they lack *health*—they go to the   
physician; but if they lack forgiveness of sin, they   
seem to be unconcerned, and do not seek after it.  *Why is this?*  
  
Men do not seek earnestly after forgiveness of sin,   
*for lack of conviction*. Few are convinced what a   
dreadful thing sin is—that it is distillation of all evil,   
that it brings all plagues on the body, and curses   
on the soul. Unless a man's sins are forgiven, there   
is not the vilest creature alive—the rat, serpent or   
toad, which is in a worse condition than the sinner!  
For when they die they go but into the earth; but   
he, dying without pardon, goes into hell torments   
forever! Men are not convinced of this—so they  
play with the *viper of sin!*  
  
Men do not seek earnestly after forgiveness of sin,   
*because they are seeking other things*. They seek   
the world immoderately. The world is a golden snare.   
"The riches of the world, are the snares of the devil."   
The *wedge of gold* hinders many from seeking after   
pardon.   
Men do not seek earnestly after forgiveness of sin,   
*out of hope of impunity*. They flatter themselves in   
sin, and because they have been spared so long,   
therefore think God never intends to reckon with   
them. "He has said in his heart—God has forgotten;   
He hides His face and will never see it." Psa 10:11.   
They think that **God is either blind or forgetful**.   
But let sinners know—that *long forbearance* is not   
forgiveness. God bore with Sodom a long time, but   
at last rained down fire and brimstone upon them.  
The adjourning of the court, does not acquit the   
prisoner. The longer God is taking the blow—the   
heavier it will be at last, if sinners repent not!  
  
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**They are never separated**  
  
"You were **sanctified**, you were **justified**."   
1Co 6:11  
  
*Justification* and *sanctification* are not the same.   
  
Justification is without us—sanctification is within us.   
The one is by righteousness imputed—the other is by   
righteousness imparted. Justification is once and for   
all—sanctification is gradual. One person is sanctified   
more than another—but one cannot be more justified   
than another. One has more grace than another—but   
he is not more justified than another.   
  
The matter of our justification is perfect, namely,   
Christ's righteousness; but our sanctification is   
imperfect, there are the *spots* of God's children. Our   
graces are mixed with sin, our duties are defiled.  
  
Thus justification and sanctification are not the same.   
  
Yet, for all that, **they are never separated**. God never   
pardons and justifies a sinner—but He also sanctifies him.   
"This is He who came by water and blood, even Jesus   
Christ." 1Jn 5:6. Christ comes to the soul by *blood*,   
which denotes remission of sin; and by *water*, which   
denotes sanctification. *Let no man say he is pardoned,   
who is not made holy!* This I urge against those who   
talk of their sin being forgiven, and having a part in   
Christ—and yet remain unconverted, and live in the   
grossest sins!   
  
Where God pardons, He purifies. Whoever God forgives,   
He transforms. Let no man say his sins are forgiven—who   
does not find an inherent work of holiness in his heart.  
"I will place My Spirit within you and *cause* you to follow   
My statutes and carefully observe My ordinances."   
Eze 36:27  
  
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**Three worms which often breed in prosperity**  
  
"Give us this day our *daily bread*." Mat 6:11  
  
To make us content with "daily bread," though God   
straitens us in our allowance, think seriously of *the****danger*** *there is in a high, prosperous condition.*   
  
Some are not content with "daily bread," but desire   
to have their barns filled, and heap up silver as dust;   
which proves a snare to them. "Those who will be rich   
fall into a snare." 1Ti 6:9. *Pride*, *idleness*, and *lust*—  
are **three worms which often breed in prosperity**.   
  
Prosperity often deafens the ear against God. "I spoke   
unto you in your prosperity, but you said—I will not hear."   
Jer 22:21. *Soft pleasures harden the heart.* In the body,   
*the more fat—the less vitality.* Just so, the more outward   
plenty—often the less piety.   
  
Prosperity has its *honey*—and also its *sting! Anxious care*   
is the evil spirit which haunts the rich man—and will not   
let him rest. When his chests are full of money—his heart   
is full of care, either how to *manage* or how to *increase*,   
or how to *secure* what he has gotten.   
  
Should this not make us content with that allowance which   
God gives us—if we have daily bread, though not dainties?   
Think of *the danger of prosperity!* The spreading of a full   
table may be the spreading of a snare! Many have been   
sunk to hell, with *golden weights!*   
  
"People who want to get rich fall into temptation and   
a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that  
plunge men into ruin and destruction!" 1Ti 6:9.   
  
The world's *golden* sands are *quick*sands, which should   
make us take our daily bread, though it be but coarse,   
contentedly. If we have less prosperity—we have less   
snares. As we lack the rich provisions of the world—so   
we lack their temptations. "If we have food and clothing,   
we will be content with that." 1Ti 6:8.   
  
If God keeps us to a spare diet—if He gives us less of   
temporal things—He has made it up in spiritual things.   
He has given us the *Pearl of great price*—the Lord Jesus,  
who is the quintessence of all good things. To give us   
Christ, is more than if God had given us all the world.   
He can make more worlds—but He has no more Christs   
to bestow. Christ is such a golden mine, that the angels   
cannot dig to the bottom! His riches are unsearchable!   
Eph 3:8. From Christ we have justification, adoption   
and glorification!  
  
Consider that it is not having an abundance, which makes   
us content. It is not a *fancy* cage which will make the bird  
sing. Having an abundance may make one less content.   
One staff may help the traveler—but a bundle of staffs   
will be a burden to him. A great estate may be like a   
long trailing garment—*more burdensome than useful.*   
  
He who can say, "My God," has enough to rock his   
heart quiet in the lowest condition. What can he lack  
—who has the all-sufficient God for his portion!  
  
"Keep your lives free from the love of money and be  
content with what you have, because God has said,   
Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."   
Heb 13:5  
  
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**Here is a strange sight!**  
"*Happy* is the man whom God corrects." Job 5:17  
  
Affliction is a means to make us happy. It seems   
strange to flesh and blood—that affliction should   
make us happy. When Moses saw the bush burning   
and not consumed, he said, "I will turn aside and see   
this strange sight!" Exo 3:3. Likewise, **here is a   
strange sight**—a man afflicted, and yet happy. The   
world counts them happy—who can *escape* affliction;   
but truly happy is the man whom God corrects.  
  
How do afflictions contribute to our happiness?  
  
Afflictions make us happy—as they are a means of   
bringing us nearer to God. The *loadstone of prosperity*does not draw us so near to God, as the *cords of affliction*.   
When the prodigal was pinched with need, he said, "I will   
arise—and go to my father!" Luk 15:18. As the deluge   
brought the dove to the ark—the *floods of sorrow* make   
us hasten to Christ, our ark!  
  
Afflictions make us happy—as they are safe guides to   
glory. The *storm* drives the ship into the harbor. Blessed  
storm—which drives the soul into the heavenly harbor!   
Is it not better—to go through *momentary affliction* to   
eternal glory—than to go through *momentary pleasure* to   
eternal misery? The wicked must drink a *sea of wrath*;  
but the godly have only a *cup of affliction*.  
  
Think, O Christian—what affliction leads to! It leads to   
paradise, where rivers of pleasure are always running!   
  
"Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we  
are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed  
day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are  
achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs  
them all." 2Co 4:16-17  
  
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**God's file and flail**  
 *"God disciplines us for our profit."* Heb 12:10  
**What profit is in affliction?** Afflictions are   
disciplinary. Afflictions teach us—they are *the   
school of the cross.*   
  
**Affliction shows us more of our own hearts.**   
Water in a glass looks clear—but set it on the fire,  
and the scum boils up. Just so, when God sets us   
upon the fire—corruption boils up which we did not   
discern before. Sharp afflictions are to the soul, as   
a soaking rain to the house; we do not know that   
there are holes in the roof until the shower comes  
—but then we see it drop down here and there. Just   
so, we do not know what unmortified lusts are in   
the soul, until the storm of affliction comes—then   
the hidden evils of the heart come dropping down   
in many places. Affliction is a sacred eye-salve, it   
clears our eyesight. Thus *the rod* gives wisdom.  
  
**Affliction quickens the spirit of prayer.** Jonah   
was asleep in the ship—but at prayer in the whale's   
belly. Perhaps in a time of health and prosperity we   
prayed in a cold and formal manner, we put no coals   
to the incense. Then God sends some affliction or   
other—to stir us up to take hold of Him. "They   
*poured* out a prayer—when Your chastening was   
upon them." Isa 26:16. In times of trouble   
we pray feelingly and fervently.  
 **Affliction is a means to purge out our sins.**   
Affliction cures the *pestilence of pride*—and the   
*fever of lust*. Affliction is **God's file**—to scrub   
off our rust. Affliction is **God's flail**—to thresh   
off our husks. The water of affliction is not to   
drown us—but to wash off our spots.  
  
**Affliction is a means to wean us the world.**   
The world often proves, not only a spider's web—but   
a cockatrice egg. Corrupting worldly things, are great   
enchantments. They hinder us in our passage to heaven.   
Affliction sounds a retreat, to call us off the immoderate   
pursuit of earthly things. When two things are frozen  
together—the best way to separate them is by fire; so,   
when the *heart* and the *world* are together—God has no   
better way to separate them than by the fire of affliction.  
**Affliction is a means to purify us.** It works us up to   
further degrees of sanctity. "God disciplines us for our   
profit—that we may share in His holiness." Heb 12:10.  
The *vessels of mercy* are the brighter for scouring. As you   
pour water on your linen when you would whiten it—so   
God pours the waters of affliction upon us to whiten our   
souls. Afflictions are in themselves bitter—but they bring   
forth the *sweet fruits of righteousness.* Heb 12:11.  
  
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**God shoots many kinds of arrows**  
  
"May Your will be done." Mat 6:10  
  
We pray here, that we may have grace to submit   
to God's will patiently—in whatever He inflicts.   
  
*Patient submission to God's will*, is a gracious frame   
of soul, whereby a Christian is content to be at God's   
disposal, and acquiesces in His wisdom. "It is the Lord's   
will—let Him do what He thinks best." 1Sa 3:18  
  
Patient submission to the will of God, lies in seeing *His  
hand* in the affliction. "Affliction does not spring from   
the soil, and trouble does not sprout from the earth."   
Job 5:6. *Affliction does not come by chance!* Job eyed  *God* in all that befell him. "The Lord gave me everything   
I had, and *the Lord has taken it away.* Praise the name   
of the Lord!" Job 1:21. Job looks beyond second causes  
—he sees *God* in the affliction! "The Lord has taken it   
away." There can be no submission to God's will—until   
there is an acknowledging of God's hand in the affliction.  
  
Patient submission to God's will, lies in justifying God.   
God is holy and just, not only when He punishes the   
wicked—but when He afflicts the righteous. "Now we   
are being punished because of our wickedness and our   
great guilt. But we have actually been punished far   
less than we deserve." Ezr 9:13  
  
While we live here in this *valley of tears*, patient   
submission to God's will is much needed. The Lord   
sometimes lays **heavy** afflictions upon us. "**Your   
arrows** have struck deep, and Your blows are   
crushing me!" Psa 38:2. God sometimes lays  **many** afflictions upon us. "He *multiplies* my   
wounds." Job 9:17. **God shoots many kinds   
of arrows.**God sometimes afflicts with POVERTY—which is a   
great affliction. To have an estate reduced almost to   
nothing, is hard to flesh and blood. "The Almighty has   
made life very *bitter* for me. I went away full, but the   
Lord has brought me home *empty*." Rth 1:20-21  
  
God sometimes afflicts with REPROACH. *Dirt* may be   
cast upon a pearl; and those names may be blotted,  
which are written in the book of life. Piety shields   
from hell—but not from slander.  
  
God sometimes afflicts with the DEATH of loved ones.   
"Son of man, I am going to take away your dearest   
treasure. Suddenly she will die!" Eze 24:16  
  
God sometimes afflicts with INFIRMITY of body.   
Sickness takes away the comfort of life. Sometimes   
God lets the infirmity continue long. Some diseases   
are chronic, and linger and hang about the body   
for many years. The Lord is pleased to exercise   
many of His precious ones with *chronic affliction*.   
  
God tries His people with various afflictions—so that   
they have need of patient submission to His will.  
  
*Murmuring* is not consistent with submission to   
God's will. Murmuring is the height of impatience,   
it is a kind of mutiny in the soul against God. "They   
began to murmur against God." Num 21:5   
  
When water is hot—then the *scum* boils up; when   
the heart is heated with anger against God—then   
*murmuring* boils up!  
  
**Murmuring springs from pride!** Men think they   
have deserved better at God's hand; and, when   
they begin to swell with pride—they spit poison!  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**Your dying day**  
  
"Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father  
has been pleased to give you the kingdom!"   
Luk 12:32   
  
What little cause have the saints to fear death!   
Are any afraid of going to a glorious kingdom?   
What is there in this world that should make us   
desirous to stay here? Is not this world "a valley   
of tears"—and do we weep to *leave* it? Are we   
not in a wilderness among fiery serpents—and   
are we afraid to leave these serpents?   
  
God is ever displaying the banner of His love in   
heaven, and is there any love like His? Are there   
any sweeter smiles, or softer embraces than His?   
What hurt can death do to them—but lead them   
to a glorious kingdom! Let this be a *gospel   
antidote* to expel the fear of death.  
  
Christian, **your dying day** will be your wedding   
day—and do you fear it? Is a slave afraid to be   
set free? Is a virgin afraid to be matched into the   
crown? Death may take away a few worldly comforts  
—but it gives that which is better; it takes away a   
flower—and gives a jewel! If the saints possess a   
kingdom when they die, they have no cause to   
fear death. A prince would not be afraid to cross   
the sea, though tempestuous—if he were sure to   
be crowned as soon as he came to shore!  
  
Faith gives a *title* to heaven—but death gives a  *possession* of heaven! Death brings us to the end   
of our sorrow, and the beginning of our joy! Death   
is the entrance into a blessed eternity!   
  
"Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father  
has been pleased to give you the kingdom!"   
Luk 12:32  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**First she looked—and then she lusted!**  
  
"Watch!" Mar 13:37  
  
Many have lost heaven, for lack of watchfulness.   
Our *hearts* are ready to decoy us into sin, and   
the *devil* lies in ambush with his temptations.   
We must every day keep sentinel in our souls.   
"I will stand upon my watch." Hab 2:1.

Watch your **eyes!** "I made a covenant with my   
eyes." Job 31:1. Much sin comes in by the eye.   
First Eve *saw* that the tree was good for food,   
and pleasant to the *eyes*—then she took and ate   
it! **First she looked—and then she lusted**. The   
eye, by beholding an impure object, sets the heart   
on fire. The devil often creeps in, at the window   
of the eye! Watch your eyes!  
  
Watch your **ears!** Much poison is conveyed through   
the ear. Let your ear be open to God—and shut to sin!  
  
Watch your **hearts!** "The human heart is most   
deceitful and desperately wicked." Jer 17:9.  
  
Watch your heart when you are about *holy* things—it   
will be slipping out to vanity. When Christ had been   
praying and fasting, the devil tempted Him. Mat 4:3.   
After combating with Satan in prayer, we are apt to   
grow secure and take our spiritual armor off—and   
then the devil falls on us and wounds us!  
  
Watch your hearts when you are in *bad* company.   
The *breath* of the wicked is infectious. Nay, watch   
your hearts when you are in *good* company. The   
devil is subtle, and he can as well creep into the  *dove—*as he did once into the *serpent*. Satan   
tempted Christ by an apostle.   
  
Watch your hearts in *prosperity*. Now you are in   
danger of pride! The higher men's estates rise—the   
higher their hearts are lifted up in pride. It is hard   
to carry a full cup without spilling. Just so, it is hard  
to carry a full, prosperous estate without sinning.   
As Samson fell asleep in Delilah's lap—so many   
have fallen so fast asleep in the *lap of prosperity*,  
that they never awoke until they awoke in hell!   
  
Oh, if you would get to heaven, be always upon your   
watch-tower! Keep close sentinel in your souls. Who   
would not watch—when it is for a glorious kingdom!

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**The Delilah in the bosom!**  
  
If you would not come short of the kingdom of heaven,   
take heed of indulging any sin. One millstone will drown,   
as well as more. *One sin lived in* will damn, as well as more.   
If any one sin reigns—it will keep you from reigning in the   
kingdom of heaven.   
  
Especially keep from sins of your natural constitution;   
*your darling sin*. "I kept myself from *my* iniquity"—that   
sin which my heart would soonest decoy and flatter me   
into. As in the hive there is one master bee—so in the   
heart there is *one master-sin.* Oh, take heed of this!  
  
*How may this darling-sin be known?*  
  
1. That sin for which a man cannot endure the arrow of   
a reproof, is the bosom-sin. Men can be content to have   
other sins declaimed against; but if a minister puts his   
finger upon the sore, and touches upon that one special   
sin—then their eyes flash with fire, they are enraged,   
and spit the venom of malice!  
  
2. That sin which a man's heart runs out most to, and he   
is most easily captivated by—is **the Delilah in the bosom!**   
One man is overcome with wantonness, another by worldliness.   
It is a sad thing for a man to be so bewitched by a beloved sin  
that he will part with the whole kingdom of heaven—to gratify   
that lust!  
  
3. That sin which a man is least inclined to part with, is the   
endeared sin. Of all his sons, Jacob could most hardly part with  *Benjamin*. "Will you take *Benjamin* away!" Gen 42:35. So says   
the sinner, "This and that sin I have left—but must *Benjamin* go   
too? Must I part with this delightful sin? That goes to my heart!"  
  
Take heed especially of this master-sin. The *strength of sin*   
lies in the beloved sin, which, like a cancer striking at the   
heart, brings death.   
  
I have read of a monarch, who being pursued by the enemy,   
threw away the crown of gold on his head—that he might run   
the faster. Just so, the sin which you wore as a crown of gold   
must be thrown away—that you may run the faster to the   
kingdom of heaven.   
  
Oh, if you would not lose glory, mortify the beloved sin! Set it,   
as Uriah—in the forefront of the battle to be slain. By plucking   
out this *right eye*—you will see the better to go to heaven!

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**The world's golden sands!**   
  
"Do not love the world or anything in the world.  
If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father  
is not in him." 1Jn 2:15  
  
If you would not fall short of the kingdom of heaven,  
take heed of worldly-mindedness. A *covetous* spirit   
chokes holy affections, as the earth puts out the fire.   
  
"The riches of the world, are the snares of the devil!"   
  
Riches are *golden snares!* If a man were to climb up a   
steep rock, and had weights tied to his legs—it would   
hinder him in his ascent. Just so, many *golden weights*   
will hinder us from climbing up the steep rock which   
leads to heaven.   
  
The *world* is no friend to *grace*. The more the babe   
sucks—the weaker the mother is. Just so, the more   
the world sucks—the weaker our grace is.   
  
Had a man a monopoly of all the wealth of the world;   
could he heap up riches to the stars—yet his heart   
would not be filled. Covetousness is never satisfied.   
Joshua could stop the course of the sun—but could not   
stop Achan in his covetous pursuit of the wedge of gold.   
He whose heart is locked up in his *chest*, will be locked   
out of heaven!  
  
Some ships which have escaped the *rocks*—have   
been wrecked upon the *sands*. Just so, many who   
have escaped gross sins—have been wrecked upon  **the world's golden sands!**

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **An eyesore to the damned in hell**  
  
"There will be weeping there, and gnashing of teeth,  
when you **see** Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the  
prophets in the kingdom of God, *but you yourselves   
thrown out!"* Luk 13:28   
  
A great aggravation of the loss of heaven will be to   
look upon others who have gained the kingdom. The   
happiness of the godly in heaven, will be **an eyesore   
to the damned in hell**. When the wicked shall see   
those whom they hated and scorned—exalted to the   
kingdom, and shine with robes of glory, and they   
themselves miss the kingdom—it will be a dagger at   
the heart, and make them gnash their teeth for envy!

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**The prosperity of the wicked**  
  
"I envied the arrogant when I saw *the prosperity  
of the wicked.* This is what the wickedare like—  
always carefree, they increase in wealth. Surely  
in vain have I kept my heart pure; in vain have   
I washed my hands in innocence."   
Psa 73:3, Psa 73:12-13   
  
The children of God have little cause to envy *the   
prosperity of the wicked.* They may have all they   
can desire; nay, they may have "more than heart   
can wish." Psa 73:7. They steep themselves in   
pleasure! "They sing to the music of tambourine   
and harp; they make merry to the sound of the   
flute." Job 21:12. The wicked are high—when   
God's people are low in the world.  
  
The *goats* scramble up the mountains of prosperity;  
when *Christ's sheep* are below in the valley of tears!   
The wicked are clothed in purple; while the godly   
are in sackcloth. **The prosperity of the wicked** is   
a great stumbling block. But there is no cause to   
envy them, if we consider two things:  
  
First—that **this is all they have!** "Son, remember   
that you in your lifetime received your good things"  
—you had all your heaven here.   
  
Secondly—that **God has laid up better things for   
His children**. He has prepared a kingdom of glory for   
them! They shall have the beatific vision; they shall   
be crowned with the pleasures of paradise forever!   
Oh, then do not envy the fleeting prosperity of the   
wicked!   
  
The wicked go through a pleasant way—to *execution!*   
The godly go through a foul way—to *coronation!*   
  
See how happy all the saints are at death! They go   
to a kingdom! They shall see God's face, which shines   
ten thousand times brighter than the sun in its meridian   
glory. The godly at death shall be installed into their   
honor, and have the royal crown set upon their head.   
They have in the kingdom of heaven—the quintessence   
of all delights. They shall lie in Christ's bosom, that bed   
of spices.   
  
There is such a pleasant *variety* in the happiness of heaven,   
that after millions of years it will be as fresh and desirable   
as the first hour's enjoyment! In the kingdom of heaven,   
the saints are crowned with all those perfections which they   
are capable of. The desires of the glorified saints are infinitely   
satisfied; there is nothing *absent* which they could wish might   
be enjoyed; there is nothing *present* which they could wish   
might be removed.   
In the kingdom of heaven there is . . .  
knowledge without ignorance,  
holiness without sin,  
beauty without blemish,  
strength without weakness,  
light without darkness,  
riches without poverty,  
ease without pain,  
liberty without restraint,  
rest without labor,  
joy without sorrow,  
love without hatred,  
plenty without surfeit,  
honor without disgrace,  
health without sickness,  
peace without discord,  
contentment without cessation,  
glory in its highest elevation!   
Oh, the happiness of those who die in the   
Lord! They go into this blessed kingdom!

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**True faith**  
  
**True faith** is joined with holiness. As a little   
musk sweetens, so a little faith purifies. Though   
faith does but touch Christ—it fetches a healing   
virtue from Him. Justifying faith does that in a   
spiritual sense, which miraculous faith does—it   
removes the mountains of sin, and casts them   
into the sea of Christ's blood!  
  
**True faith** is prolific. It brings forth fruit; it has   
Rachel's beauty—and Leah's fruitfulness. Faith is   
full of good works. It believes as if it did not work  
—and it works as if it did not believe. Faith is the   
spouse-like grace which marries Christ; and good   
works are the children which it bears!  
  
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**The fire, the worm, the prison are eternal!**

"And they will go away into eternal punishment,  
but the righteous into eternal life." Mat 25:46  
  
See what opposite ways, the godly and the wicked go   
at death! The godly go to a glorious kingdom; the   
wicked go to a loathsome prison! The devil is the jailer,   
and they are bound with the chains of darkness. Jude 6. *What are these chains?* Not iron chains—but worse; the   
chain of God's *decree*, decreeing them to righteous   
torment; and the chain of God's *power*, whereby He   
binds them fast under eternal wrath!   
  
The deplorable condition of impenitent sinners, is that   
when they die—they go to a dreadful dungeon. Oh,   
think what horror and despair will possess the wicked,   
when they see themselves engulfed in misery, and their   
condition *hopeless, helpless, endless!* They are in a fiery   
prison—and there is no possibility of getting out!  
  
A servant under the law, who had a hard master—at   
every seventh year might go free. But in hell there is   
no year of release when the damned shall go free—  
**the fire, the worm, the prison are eternal!**If the whole world, from earth to heaven, were filled with   
grains of sand, and once in a thousand years an angel   
should come and fetch away one grain—how many millions   
of ages would pass before that vast heap of sand would be   
spent! Yet, if after all this time the sinner might come out   
of hell, there would be some hope. But this word *"forever!"*breaks the heart with despair!

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**My sweet pomegranate wine**  
  
"Christ's love compels us." 2Co 5:14  
  
True love to love God turns the soul into a seraphim;   
it makes it burn in a flame of affection. Love is the   
truest touchstone of sincerity.   
  
Love is the queen of the graces; it commands the   
whole soul. If our love to God is genuine, we let Him   
have the supremacy of our love. We will set Him in   
the highest place of our soul. We will give Him the   
purest of our love. "I would give You spiced wine to   
drink, **my sweet pomegranate wine**." Canticles 8:2.   
If the spouse had anything better—a cup more juicy   
and spiced—Christ would drink of that!   
  
We give the creaturethe *milk* of our love;  
but **God gets the cream!**~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **No serpent of sin will breed there**  
  
"Nothing impure will ever enter it." Rev 21:27  
  
The kingdom of heaven excels all other kingdoms in   
*holiness*. Earthly kingdoms are for the most part unholy;   
there is a *common sore of luxury and uncleanness* running   
in them. Earthly kingdoms are stages for sin to be acted on.   
"All the tables are covered with vomit and there is not a spot   
without filth." Isa 28:8. But the kingdom of heaven is so   
holy—that it will not mix with any corruption. It is so pure a   
soil—that **no serpent of sin will breed there**. There, *beauty*   
is not stained with lust, and *honor* is not swelled with pride.   
Holiness is the brightest jewel of the crown of heaven.  
  
"Nothing impure will ever enter it." Rev 21:27  
  
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**What would the damned in hell   
give, for one hour's sleep!**   
  
"Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath!"  
1Th 1:10  
  
In the kingdom of heaven—we shall be freed  
from the torments of hell.  
  
Consider the **multiplicity** of those torments.   
In this life, the body is usually exercised with   
only one pain at one time; but in hell there   
is a **diversity** of torments. There is . . .   
*darkness* to affright,  
*fire* to burn,  
a *lake of sulphur* to choke,  
*chains* to bind, and  
the *worm* to gnaw!  
  
The torments of hell will seize upon *every part of the  
body and soul.* The *eye* shall be tortured with the sight   
of devils; and the *tongue* that has sworn so many oaths,   
shall be tortured. "Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip   
of his finger in water, and cool my tongue." Luk 16:24.   
The *memory* will be tormented to remember the mercies   
that have been abused, and seasons of grace neglected.   
The *conscience* will be tormented with self-accusations.  
  
The pains of hell are **unmitigated**, with no mixture of   
mercy. In this life, God in anger remembers mercy. But   
in hell there is no alleviation or lessening of the pains.   
In hell, there is no *oil of mercy* to assuage the sufferings   
of the damned.  
  
In the pains of hell, there is **no** **intermission**."The   
smoke of their torment rises *forever and ever*, and they   
will have *no rest day or night!"* Rev 14:11. **What would   
the damned in hell give, for one hour's sleep!** They   
are perpetually on the rack. There is **no expiration** in the   
pains of hell; they must always lie scorching in flames of   
wrath!  
  
But in the heavenly kingdom, the elect shall be freed   
from all infernal torments. "Jesus, who rescues us from   
the coming wrath!" A prison is not made for the *King's   
children.* Christ drank that bitter cup of God's wrath—  
that the saints might never drink it!  
  
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**Desiring God**  
  
We may know the kingdom of grace is set up in   
our hearts—by having *true desires after God.* By   
the beating of this pulse—we conclude there is life.   
  
A true desire after God is **sincere**. We desire God for   
Himself, for His intrinsic excellencies. The savor of the   
ointment of *Christ's graces* draws the virgins' desires after   
Him. Canticles 1:3. A true saint desires God not only for   
what He *has*—but for what He *is*; not only for His *rewards*  
—but for His *holiness.* No hypocrite can thus desire God.   
He may desire Him for His *jewels*—but not for His *beauty!*  
  
A true desire after God is **insatiable**. It cannot be satisfied   
without God; let the world heap her honors and riches—they   
will not satisfy. No *flowers* or *music* will content him who is   
*thirsty*. Just so, *nothing will quench the soul's thirst—but the   
blood of Christ!* He faints away, his heart breaks with longing   
for God. Psa 84:2; Psa 119:20.  
  
A true desire after God is **active**. It flourishes into *endeavor*.   
"With my soul have I desired you in the night; yes, with my   
spirit within me will I seek you early." Isa 26:9. A soul that   
desires aright says, "I must have *Christ!* I must have *grace!*   
I must have *heaven*, though I take it by storm!"  
  
A true desire after God is **supreme**. We desire Christ, not   
only more than the *world*—but more than *heaven!* "Whom   
have I in heaven but You?" Psa 73:25. Heaven itself would   
not satisfy—without Christ. Christ is *the diamond in the ring   
of glory!*   
  
A true desire after God is **increasing**. A *little* of God will not   
satisfy—but the pious soul desires still more. A *drop* of water   
is not enough for the thirsty traveler. Though a Christian is  
*thankful* for the least degree of grace—yet he is not *satisfied*   
with the greatest degree of grace. He still thirsts for more of   
Christ, and His Spirit. A saint would have more knowledge,   
more sanctity, more of Christ's presence. A *glimpse* of Christ   
through the lattice of an ordinance is sweet; but the soul will   
never stop longing—until it sees Him face to face! It desires to   
have *grace* perfected in *glory!* It desires to be wholly plunged   
into the sweetness of God. We would be swallowed up in God,   
and be forever bathing ourselves in those perfumed waters of   
pleasure, which run at His right hand!  
  
Surely this sincere desire after God is a blessed sign that the   
kingdom of grace has come into our hearts. The beating of   
this pulse shows life! "Desires *for* God—are *from* God." If iron   
moves upwards contrary to its nature—it is a sign some magnet  
has been drawing it. Just so, if the soul moves towards God in   
sincere desires—it is a sign the *magnet of the Spirit* has been   
drawing it!  
  
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**Satan's workshop!**  
  
"May Your kingdom come." Mat 6:10   
  
When we pray, "May Your kingdom come," we pray   
that *the kingdom of* ***grace*** may come into our hearts.   
"The kingdom of God is within you." Luk 17:21.  
  
**Why is grace called a kingdom?** Because, when   
grace comes, there is a kingly government set up in   
the soul. Grace rules the will and affections, and brings   
the whole man in subjection to Christ. Grace . . .  
*kings it* in the soul,  
sways the scepter,  
subdues mutinous lusts, and  
keeps the soul in a spiritual decorum.  
 *Unless the kingdom of grace is set up in our hearts—*  
our purest offerings are defiled. They may be good   
as to the *matter*—but not as to the *manner*; they   
lack that which would meliorate and sweeten them.   
Until the kingdom of grace is in our hearts, our good   
works do not purify us—but we pollute them! **Even   
the prayer of an ungracious person is sin.** "The   
Lord hates the sacrifice of the wicked." Pro 15:8.  
  
**A sinner's best works** are *'opera mortua'*—**dead   
works!** And those works which are dead, cannot please   
God. A dead flower has no sweetness. Heb 11:6.  
 *Unless the kingdom of grace is set up in our hearts—*  
we are loathsome in God's eyes. "My soul loathed them."   
Zec 11:8. A heart void of grace looks blacker than   
hell. Sin transforms man into a devil. So deformed is a   
graceless person, that when **once he sees his own   
filth and leprosy,** the first thing he does is to loathe   
and abhor himself. "You shall loathe yourself in your   
own sight for all your evils!" Eze 20:43. *Unless the kingdom of grace is set up in our hearts—*  
we are of the bastard brood of the old serpent—and   
so cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven! "You   
are the children of your father the Devil!" Joh 8:44.   
 *Unless the kingdom of grace is set up in our hearts—*  
the kingdom of Satan is set up in them! They are said   
to be under "the power of Satan." Act 26:18. Satan   
commands the will—by his subtle temptations he can   
draw it. He is said to take men captive "at his will."   
2Ti 2:26.   
  
The sinner's heart is *the devil's mansion-house*. "I will   
return into *my house*." Mat 12:44. The sinner's heart   
is **Satan's workshop**, where he *works*. "Satan, the mighty   
prince of the power of the air, who now *works* in the children   
of disobedience." Eph 2:2. The members of the body are the   
tools with which Satan works. He possesses men. In Christ's   
time many had their *bodies* possessed—but it is far worse to   
have the *souls* possessed. One is possessed with an *impure*   
devil, another with a *revengeful* devil, another with a *covetousness* devil, etc.   
  
The ship goes full sail when the wind blows. Just so, men  
go *full sail in sin* when the devil, the prince of the air, blows   
them! Thus, until the kingdom of grace comes—men are   
under the power of Satan, who writes all his laws in blood.  
  
*Unless the kingdom of grace is set up in our hearts—*we  
are exposed to the wrath of God. What will it be—when   
God stirs up all His anger? So *inconceivably torturing* is   
God's wrath, that the wicked call to the rocks and mountains   
to fall on them and hide them from it. Rev 6:16. The hellish   
torments are compared to a fiery lake. Rev 20:15. Other fire   
is but *painted fire*—in comparison with this! This lake of fire   
burns forever. Mar 9:44. God's breath kindles this fire. Isa 30:33.

Where shall we find buckets to quench it? Time will   
not finish it; tears will not quench it. To this fiery lake men   
are doomed—until the kingdom of grace is set up in them.  
*Hell follows death!*~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
**He welcomes them to hell**  
  
*"The prince of this world."* Joh 16:11  
  
The devil has a kingdom. His throne is set up in   
the hearts of men. Satan does not care for their  *purses*—but their *hearts!* **Satan's empire** is very   
large. Most people in the world pay tribute to him.  *His kingdom has two characters:*  
  
[1] **Satan's kingdom** is a kingdom of IMPIETY.   
Nothing but sin goes on in his kingdom. Murder   
and heresy, lust and treachery, oppression and   
division—are the constant trade driven in his   
dominions. He is called "the unclean spirit."   
Nothing else but iniquity is propagated in   
his kingdom.  
  
[2] **Satan's kingdom** is a kingdom of SLAVERY.   
He makes all his subjects—**slaves**. The sinner is   
held captive under the grim tyranny of the devil!   
  
Satan is a **tyrant**—and a worse tyrant than any  
other! Other tyrants do but rule over the *body*:  
but Satan rules over the *soul!* He rides his   
captives—as we ride upon horses.   
  
Other tyrants have some **pity** on their slaves.   
Though they make them work in the galleys;  
yet they give them *food*, and let them have   
their hours for *rest*. But Satan is a **merciless**   
tyrant—who gives his slaves poison instead of   
food, and hurtful lusts to feed on! 1Ti 6:9.   
Nor will he let his slaves have any rest—he   
wearies them out to do his drudgery. "They   
weary themselves to commit iniquity." Jer 9:5.   
When men have served him to their utmost   
strength—**he welcomes them to hell** with fire   
and brimstone! Thus he is the worst of tyrants.  
  
Men are *willing slaves* to Satan! They will fight   
and die for him! Therefore he is not only called   
"the *prince* of this world," but "the *god* of this   
world" (2Co 4:4), to show what power he has   
over men's souls.   
  
O let us pray that "they may come to their senses   
and escape **the Devil's trap**, having been captured   
by him to do his will." 2Ti 2:26  
  
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**Sharp arrows!**  
  
"Our *Father* in heaven." Mat 6:9  
  
If God is our Father, then however He treats His   
children, is done in love. If He frowns; if He dips   
His pen in gall, and writes bitter things; if He   
*disciplines*—it is all done in love! "For the Lord   
disciplines the one He loves, and punishes every   
son whom He receives." Heb 12:6   
  
A father loves his child as well when he chastises and   
disciplines him—as when he settles his inheritance on   
him! "Those whom I love—I rebuke and discipline."   
Rev 3:19. "Afflictions are **sharp arrows**—but they   
are shot from the hand of a loving Father!"   
  
Correction is *God's gymnasium*. Correction is *God's   
school of character*. God afflicts His children—in love!   
He does it to *humble* and *purify*. Gentle correction is   
as necessary as daily bread! There is love in all! *God   
smites*—that He may save! "God disciplines us for our   
good, that we may share in His holiness." Heb 12:10  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**The epitome of misery!**   
  
**Hell is the epitome of misery!**Surely sin must be the greatest evil—which   
separates us from the greatest good.  
  
"Depart from Me, you who are cursed, into   
everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and   
his demons." Mat 25:41  
  
"Depart from Me."  
  
Why, sinners might plead, "Lord, if we must   
depart from You, let us have Your blessing."   
"No! Depart—you who are *cursed*."   
  
"Lord, if we must depart from You, let it be   
into some place of ease and rest."   
"No! Depart into *fire!"*   
  
"Lord, if we must go into fire, let it be for a   
short time—let the fire be quickly put out."   
"No! Go into *everlasting* fire!"   
  
"Lord, if it is so, that we must be there,   
let us be with good company."   
"No! Go with the *devil and his demons!"*~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~**We have no inherent power**  
  
"Deliver us from evil." Mat 6:13  
  
To keep us from falling into sin, let us be much in   
prayer. **We have no inherent power** to keep   
ourselves from sin. Let us pray the prayers of David,   
"Hold me up—and I shall be safe!" Psa 119:117.   
"Hold up my goings in your paths, that my footsteps   
slip not." Psa 17:5. "Keep back Your servant from   
presumptuous sins." Psa 19:13.   
  
The child is safe in the father's arms. Just so, we   
are only safe from falling into sin—while we are held   
up in the arms of Christ and free grace! "I give them   
eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can   
snatch them out of My hand!" Joh 10:28  
  
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**What an odious thing**  
**What an odious thing** sin is! Sin is the *accursed* thing.   
Jos 7:13. It is the *abominable* thing which God hates.   
"Oh do not this abominable thing that I hate." Jer 44:4.   
Sin is called *filthiness*. Jas 1:21. If all the evils in the   
world were put together, and their essence strained out,   
they could not make a thing so filthy as sin is! So odious  
is a sinner, that God loathes the sight of him. "My soul   
loathed them!" Zec 11:8.   
  
He who defiles himself with **avarice**, what   
is he but a serpent licking the dust!   
  
He who defiles himself with **lust**, what   
is he but a swine with a man's head!   
  
He who defiles himself with **pride**, what is he   
but a bubble which the devil has blown up!   
  
He who defiles himself with **drunkenness**,   
what is he but a staggering beast!   
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**Remedies and antidotes against sin**  
  
"Your Word have I hid in my heart—that I  
might not sin against You." Psa 119:11  
  
If you would be kept from the evil of sin—be   
well versed in Scripture. The Word is a two-  
edged sword, to cut asunder men's lusts!   
  
When the fogs and vapors of sin begin to rise,   
let but the light of Scripture shine in the soul,  
and it dispels them.   
  
The Word shows the damnable evil of sin. It also   
furnishes us with precepts, which are so many   
**remedies and antidotes against sin**. When   
Christ had a temptation to sin, he beat back the   
tempter, and wounded him three times with the   
sword of the Spirit! "It is written!"   
  
"Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly."  
Col 3:16  
  
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**He is always fishing for our souls**  
  
"Be careful! *Watch out for attacks from the  
Devil*, your great enemy. He prowls around  
like a roaring lion, looking for some victim  
to devour!" 1Pe 5:8   
  
Satan continually lies in ambush, and watches   
to draw us to sin. The devil stands girded for   
battle. **He is always fishing for our souls**.   
He is either laying snares—or shooting darts.   
Therefore we have need to watch him—that we   
be not decoyed into sin.   
  
Most sin is committed for lack of watchfulness.  
  
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**Watch your eyes!**  
  
If we would be kept from actual sins—let us be   
careful to avoid all the *inlets* and *occasions* of sin.   
  
Do not run into evil company. He who would not   
catch the plague—must not go into an infected house.   
  
Guard your *senses*, which may be the inlets to sin.   
Keep the two portals, the *eye* and the *ear*. Especially   
guard your **eyes**. Much sin comes in by the eye; the   
eye is often an inlet to sin; sin takes fire at the eye.  
The first sin in the world, began at the eye. "When   
the woman *saw* that the fruit of the tree was good for   
food and *pleasing to the eye*—she *took* some and ate   
it." Gen 3:6. Looking begat lusting! Intemperance   
begins at the eye. Looking on the wine when it is red   
and gives its color in the glass, causes excess of   
drinking. Pro 23:31.   
  
Covetousness begins at the eye. "When I *saw* among   
the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and a wedge   
of gold, I *coveted* them and *took* them." Jos 7:21.   
  
The fire of lust begins to kindle at the eye. David walking   
upon the roof of his house saw a woman washing herself,   
and she was, says the text, "beautiful to *look* upon," and   
he sent messengers and took her, and defiled himself with   
her. 2Sa 11:2.   
  
Therefore **watch your eyes!** Job made a covenant with   
his eyes. Job 31:1. If the eye is once inflamed, it will be   
hard to stand out long against sin. If the outworks are   
taken by the enemy, there is great danger of the whole   
castle being taken.  
  
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**There is no fear of God before their eyes!**  
  
"Through the fear of the Lord, a man avoids evil."  
Pro 16:6  
  
If you would be kept from actual sins—get the fear   
of God planted in your hearts. The fear of God is a   
bridle to sin—and a spur to holiness. The fear of God   
puts a holy awe upon the heart and binds it to godly   
behavior. When the Empress Eudoxia threatened to   
banish Chrysostom, "Tell her," said he, "I fear nothing   
but sin!" The fear of God stands as a porter at the door   
of the soul, and keeps sin from entering.   
  
All sin is committed for lack of the fear of God. "Their   
throat is an open grave; they deceive with their tongues.   
Vipers' venom is under their lips. Their mouth is full of   
cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood;   
ruin and wretchedness are in their paths, and the path of   
peace they have not known. **There is no fear of God   
before their eyes!**" Romans 3:13-18. Holy fear stands   
sentinel, and is ever watching against carnal security, pride,   
and wantonness. The fear of God is the Christian's lifeguard   
to defend him against the fiery darts of temptation!  
  
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**God's love tokens**  
"Those whom I *love* I rebuke and discipline."   
Rev 3:19  
  
Afflictions are **God's love tokens**. Afflictions   
are *sharp arrows*—but shot from the hand of   
a loving Father. If a man should throw a bag   
of money at another, and it should bruise him   
a little, he would not be offended—but take it   
as a fruit of love. Just so, when God bruises   
us with affliction, it is to enrich us with the   
golden graces of His Spirit, and all is in love!  
  
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÷**The Lord's Prayer (excerpts) cont'd**

**Draw the deformed face of sin!**  
  
"Deliver us from evil." Mat 6:13  
  
Here we pray to be delivered from the evil of SIN.   
Not that we pray to be delivered from the presence   
and indwelling of sin, for that cannot be in this life;  
we cannot shake off this viper. But we pray that God   
would deliver us more and more from the power and   
practice, from the scandalous acts of sin. Sin is the   
deadly evil which we pray against.   
  
With what pencil shall I be able to **draw the deformed   
face of sin!** I shall endeavor to show you what a vile  
monster sin is. Sin, as the apostle says, is "exceedingly  
sinful." Rom 7:13. Sin is the very distillation of evil;  
it is called the "accursed thing." Jos 7:13.  
  
Sin fetches its pedigree from hell. It is of the devil.   
Joh 8:44. It calls the devil "father". Sin is the poison   
which the old serpent has spit into our virgin nature.  
  
Look upon sin in its NATURE, and it is evil. See what   
the Scripture compares it to. It has got a bad name.   
It is compared to the vomit of dogs (2Pe 2:22);   
to a menstruous cloth (Isa 30:22); and to a   
gangrene (2Ti 2:17). People with these diseases,   
we would be averse to eat and drink with.  
Sin is evil in its nature, because it is transgression   
against God. It is a breach of his royal law. It is   
high treason against heaven. What greater injury   
can be offered to a prince, than to trample upon   
his royal edicts? "They cast Your law behind their   
backs." Neh 9:26. Sin is an *affront* to God, as it is   
walking contrary to Him. Lev 26:40. The Hebrew   
word for sin signifies *rebellion*. It flies in the face   
of God. "He stretches out his hand against God."   
Job 15:25. We ought not to Sin is an act of high

Sin is an act of high INGRATITUDE to God. He feeds   
a sinner, screens off many evils from him; and yet he   
not only *forgets* his mercies—but *abuses* them! "It was   
I who gave her everything she has—the grain, the wine,   
the olive oil. Even the gold and silver she used in   
worshiping the god Baal were gifts from me!" Hos 2:8.   
God may say, I gave you wit, health, riches, which you   
have employed against me. A sinner makes an arrow   
of God's mercies—and shoots at Him! "Is this your   
kindness to your friend?" 2Sa 16:17. Did God   
give you life—to sin? Did He give you wages—to serve   
the devil? Oh, what an ungrateful thing is sin!   
  
Sin is a FOOLISH thing. Is it not foolish to prefer a   
short lust—before an eternal inheritance? A sinner   
prefers the pleasures of sin for a season—before   
those pleasures which are at God's right hand for   
evermore. Is it not folly to gratify an enemy? Sin   
gratifies Satan. Men's sins feast the devil. Is it not   
folly for a man to be guilty of his own destruction,   
to give himself poison? A sinner has a hand in his   
own death. "They lay wait for their own blood."   
Pro 1:18. No creature did ever willingly kill   
itself, but man.  
  
Sin is a POLLUTING thing. It is not only a defection,  
but a pollution; it is as rust to gold, as a stain to beauty.   
It is called "filthiness of flesh and spirit." 2Co 7:1. It   
makes the soul red with guilt—and black with filth! This   
filth of sin is internal. A spot in the face may easily be   
wiped off—but to have the liver and lungs tainted, is   
far worse. Sin has gotten into the conscience. Tit 1:15.   
It defiles all the faculties—the mind, memory, affections,   
as if the whole mass of blood were corrupted.   
  
Sin is a DEBASING thing. It degrades us of our honor.   
Sin blots a man's name. Nothing so turns a man's glory   
into shame, as sin. It makes a man like a beast. Psa 49:20.  
It is worse to be *like* a beast than to be a beast;   
it is no shame to be a beast—but it is a shame for a  *man* to be *like* a beast. Lust makes a man brutish,   
and anger makes him devilish.  
  
Sin is an ENSLAVING thing. A sinner is a slave when he   
sins most freely. Sin makes men the devil's servants.   
Satan bids them sin—and they do it. When a man   
commits sin, he is the devil's lackey, and runs on his   
errand. Those who serve Satan have such a bad master,   
that they will be afraid to receive their wages.  
  
Sin is an OFFENSIVE thing. "They have all together   
become filthy;" in the Hebrew, they have become  *stinking*. Psa 14:3. Sin is very offensive to God.   
He will not come near the *dunghill sinner*, who has   
such a foul stench coming from him.  
  
Sin is a PAINFUL thing. It costs men much labor and   
pains to accomplish their wicked designs. "They weary   
themselves to commit iniquity." Jer 9:5. "Sin is its own   
punishment." How they tire themselves out in sin's   
drudgery! A wicked man sweats at the devil's plough  
—and is at great pains to damn himself!  
  
Thus you see what an evil sin is in the nature of it,   
and what need we have to pray, "Deliver us from evil."  
  
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**Satan takes off his lion's skin**  
  
Satan carries on his evil designs against us, under   
the highest *pretenses of friendship*. He puts *silver*   
upon his bait, and *dips his poisoned pills in sugar*,   
as some courtiers who make the greatest pretenses   
of love, where they have the most deadly hatred.   
  
**Satan takes off his lion's skin**, and comes in   
*sheep's clothing*; he pretends kindness and friendship,   
and pleads what might be for our good. Thus he came   
to *Christ*, "I see that you are hungry, and there is no   
food for you in the wilderness; I, therefore, pitying   
your condition, wish you to get something to eat. Turn   
stones to bread, that your hunger may be satisfied."   
But Christ spied the temptation, and with the sword   
of the Spirit, wounded the old serpent!   
  
Thus Satan came to *Eve*, and tempted her under the   
notion of a *friend*. "Eat of this tree, and it will make   
you omniscient, you shall be as gods." What a kind   
deceitful devil was here! But it was a subtle temptation.   
She greedily swallowed the bait—and ruined herself and   
all her posterity. Let us fear his fallacious flatteries!   
  
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**Satan's drag-net**  
  
Ungodly men *presume* that God will be merciful to   
them. Satan soothes men in their sins; he preaches   
to them, "God is merciful" and deludes them with   
golden dreams. "How many with vain hope—go   
down to hell!" Presumption is **Satan's drag-net**,   
by which he drags millions to hell.  
  
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**Ignorant people**  
  
Satan tempts some people more than others. Some   
are like wet tinder, who will not so soon take the fire  
of temptation as others. Satan tempts most where   
he thinks his policies will most easily prevail.   
  
Satan most broods upon **ignorant people** with his   
temptations. The devil can lead these into any snare.   
You may lead a blind man anywhere. Satan knows it   
is easy to put a temptation in the way of the blind,   
at which they shall stumble into hell. The bird that   
is blind is soon shot by the fowler. Satan, the god   
of this world, blinds men—and then shoots them!  
An ignorant man cannot see the devil's snares!  
  
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**He wraps his poisonous pills in sugar**  
  
"Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It  
is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade  
as servants of righteousness." 2Co 11:14-15   
  
Satan, in tempting, baits his hook with religion.   
He can tempt to sin under pretenses of piety.   
Sometimes he is the *white* devil, and transforms   
himself into an angel of light. Celsus wrote a book   
full of error, and he entitled it, "The Book of Truth."   
So Satan can write the title of "religion" upon his   
worst temptation. Thus **he wraps his poisonous   
pills in sugar**. Who would suspect him when he   
comes as a minister, and quotes Scripture?  
  
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**An old serpent!**  
  
Satan is a very **subtle** tempter. The Greek word   
to *tempt*, signifies to *deceive*. Satan, in tempting,   
uses many subtle plots to deceive. We read . . .  
of the "depths of Satan",  
of his "devices and stratagems",  
of his "snares and darts".   
  
He is called a **lion** for his cruelty—and **an old   
serpent** for his subtlety. He has several sorts   
of subtlety in tempting.  
  
Satan observes the natural temper and constitution   
of men. He does not know the hearts of men—but he   
may feel their pulse, know their temper—and can apply   
himself accordingly. As the *farmer* knows what seed is   
proper to sow in such a soil—so Satan, finding out the   
temper of a man, knows what temptations are proper   
to sow in his heart. He blows the *wind of temptation*  
in the same way the tide of a man's constitution runs.   
Satan tempts . . .  
the ambitious man with a crown,  
the lustful man with beauty,  
the covetous man with a wedge of gold.   
  
He provides savory food—such as the sinner loves!  
  
Satan chooses the *fittest season* to tempt in. As a   
cunning angler casts in his bait when the fish will   
bite best—so the devil knows the *best time* when   
temptation is likeliest to prevail.   
  
*When we have broken out of his prison* in conversion,   
he will pursue us with violent temptations. The devil   
labors to strangle the new-born soul with temptation!   
When the first buddings and blossoms of grace begin   
to appear, the devil would nip the tender buds with   
the sharp blasts of temptation.  
  
The devil tempts, when he finds us **idle**. When the   
fowler sees a bird sit still and perch upon the tree,   
he shoots it. Just so, when Satan observes us sitting   
still, he shoots his fiery darts of temptation at us!  
"While men slept, his enemy sowed tares;" so, while   
men sleep in sloth, Satan sows his tares. When David   
was walking idly on the housetop—the devil set a   
tempting object before him—and it prevailed!  
  
Satan tempts when he sees us **weakest**.   
He breaks over the hedge—where it is lowest.   
  
Satan tempts us—when we are **alone**; as he came to   
Eve when her husband was away, and she the less   
able to resist his temptation. Satan's policy is to give   
his poison privately—when no one is by to reveal the   
treachery. He is like a cunning suitor who woos the   
daughter when the parents are from away home.   
When we are alone—the devil comes wooing with   
a temptation, and hopes to have the match struck!   
  
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**God's will**  
  
"May *Your will* be done" Mat 6:10  
  
(1) God's will is SOVEREIGN. He has a supreme right   
and dominion over His creatures—to dispose of them   
as He pleases. A man may do with his own, as he   
desires. "Is it not lawful for Me to do what I will with   
My own?" Mat 20:15. A man may cut his own   
timber as he will. God may do with us as He sees good.   
He is not accountable to any creature for what He does.   
"He gives no account of any of His matters." Job 33:13.   
Who shall call God to account? Who is higher than the   
highest? Ecc 5:8. What man or angel dare summon   
God to his bar? God will take an account of *our* conduct   
towards Him—but He will give no account of His conduct   
towards us. He has an absolute jurisdiction over us, as   
a sovereign—to do with us whatever He pleases. We   
are not to *dispute* with God—but to *submit* to God.  
  
God's will is WISE. He knows what is conducive to the good   
of His people. "The Lord is a God of judgment," that is, He   
is able to judge what is best for us; therefore rest in His   
wisdom and acquiesce in his will. Isa 30:18. Did we but   
study how wisely He steers all occurrences, and how He often   
brings us to heaven by a *cross* wind—it would much quiet our   
spirits, and make us say, "May Your will be done." God's will   
is guided by wisdom. Should He sometimes let us have our   
will—we would undo ourselves! Did He let us carve for ourselves  
—we would choose the worst piece! Lot chose Sodom because   
it was well watered—but God rained fire upon it!  
  
God's will is JUST. "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?"   
Gen 18:25. God's will is the rule and measure of justice. The wills   
of men are corrupt, therefore unfit to give law; but God's will is   
a holy and unerring will. Psa 97:2. God may *cross* us—but He   
cannot *wrong* us. He may be *severe* with us—but never *unjust*.   
  
(4) God's will is GOOD and GRACIOUS. It promotes our interest.   
If it is His will to afflict us, He shall make us say at last, "it was   
good for us, that we were afflicted." His flail shall only thresh   
off our husks. That which is against our will, shall not be   
against our profit.  
(5) God's will is IRRESISTIBLE. We may oppose it—but we   
cannot hinder it. The rising up of our will against God—cannot   
stop the execution of His will. "Who has resisted His will?"   
Rom 9:19. Who can stop the sun in its movements?   
Who can hinder the progress of God's will? Therefore it   
is in vain to contest with God. His will shall take place!   
There is no way to overcome Him—but by lying at His feet.  
  
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**A voluminous mercy**  
  
"Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven,  
whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose  
sin the Lord does not count against him!" Psa 32:1-2   
  
Forgiveness of sin is a choice blessing, as it lays a   
foundation for other mercies. It is a leading mercy.   
Forgiveness of sin never comes alone—but has other   
spiritual blessings attending it. Those whom God   
pardons—He sanctifies, adopts, and crowns!   
  
Forgiveness of sin is **a voluminous mercy**, it draws   
the *silver link of grace*, and the *golden link of glory*   
after it. God seals the sinner's pardon with a kiss.   
  
God forgives—not because we are worthy—but   
because He is gracious. "The Lord, the Lord God,   
merciful and gracious." Exo 34:6. He forgives   
out of his mercy. Acts of pardon are acts of grace.   
  
What worthiness was there in **Paul** before conversion?   
He was a blasphemer, and so he sinned against the first   
table of the law; he was a persecutor, and so he sinned   
against the second table of the law; but free grace   
sealed his pardon! "I obtained mercy," that is, "I was   
all bestrewed with mercy!" 1Ti 1:13.   
  
What worthiness was in the **woman of Samaria**?   
She was ignorant. Joh 4:22. She was immoral; Joh 4:18.   
She was morose and churlish, she would not give Christ   
so much as a cup of cold water; Joh 4:9. "You are a Jew a  
and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for   
a drink?" What worthiness was here?   
Yet Christ overlooked all, and pardoned her ingratitude;   
and though she denied him water out of the well—yet He  
gave her the water of life.   
  
Free grace does not **find** us worthy—but **makes** us   
worthy!  
  
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**Some have two hells**  
  
Suffering Christian—remember that this is all   
the hell you shall have. **Some have two hells**.   
They suffer now in their body and conscience,   
which is one hell; and they will suffer eternally   
in another hell to come, in unquenchable fire!   
Judas had two hells—but a child of God has but   
one. Lazarus had all his hell here on earth; he   
was full of sores—but had a convoy of angels   
to carry him to heaven when he died. Say,   
then, "Lo! if this is the worst I shall have, if   
this is all my hell—I will patiently acquiesce.   
May Your will be done."  
  
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**The red lines of Christ's blood**  
  
To forgive sin, is for God to blot it out. "I am He   
who blots out your transgressions." Isa 43:25.   
The Hebrew word, to *blot out*, alludes to a creditor   
who, when his debtor has paid him, blots out the   
debt, and gives him an acquittance. Just so, when   
God forgives sin, He blots out the debt, He draws   
**the red lines of Christ's blood** over it, and so   
crosses the debt-book!  
  
To forgive sin, is for God to cast our sins into the   
depths of the sea, which implies burying them out   
of sight, that they shall not rise up in judgment   
against us. "You will cast all their sins into the   
depths of the sea." Mic 7:19. God will throw   
them in, not as cork which rises again—but as   
lead which sinks to the bottom!  
  
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**Five things which are never satisfied**  
  
"Give us this day our *daily bread*." Mat 6:11  
  
Learn to be contented with the allowance which God   
gives. If we have the necessities of life—let us rest   
satisfied. We pray but for *bread*, "Give us our daily   
bread." We must not pray for superfluities—but for   
bread which supports life. Though we have not so   
much as others—so full a crop—so rich an estate;   
yet if we have *daily bread*, let us be content. "If   
we have food and clothing, we will be content with  
that." 1Ti 6:8.   
  
Most people are herein faulty. Though they pray   
that God would give them bread, as much as He   
sees is expedient for them—yet they are not content   
with His allowance—but greedily covet more, and with   
the daughters of the horse-leech, cry, "Give! Give!"   
Pro 30:15. This is a vice naturally engrafted in us.   
  
Many pray Agur's first prayer, "Give me not poverty,"   
but few pray his last prayer, "Give me not riches."   
Pro 30:8. They are not content with "daily bread,"   
but have the cancer of covetousness; they are still   
craving for more.   
  
There are, says Agur, four things which are never   
satisfied: the grave, the barren womb, the thirsty   
desert, the blazing fire. And I may add a fifth   
thing—the heart of a covetous man. Pro 30:15.  
  
Covetousness is called, "The root of all evil." 1Ti 6:10.   
The Greek word for covetousness, signifies an inordinate   
desire of getting. Covetousness is not only in getting   
riches unjustly—but in loving them inordinately!  
  
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**To bite the hand that feeds us!**  
  
"Give us this day our daily bread." Mat 6:11  
  
God gives to His very enemies. Who will send   
provisions to his enemies? Men spread *nets* for   
their enemies, God spreads a *table*. The dew   
drops on the *thistle*, as well as the *rose*; the   
dew of God's bounty drops upon the worst.   
God puts bread in the mouths that are opened   
against Him. Oh, the royal bounty of God!   
"The goodness of God endures continually."   
Psa 52:1. He puts jewels upon swinish   
sinners, and feeds them every day.  
  
If all is a gift, see the odious ingratitude of men   
who sin against their giver! God feeds them, and   
they fight against him; he gives them bread, and   
they give him affronts. How vile is this! Thus do   
sinners deal ungratefully with God! They not only   
forget His mercies—but abuse them. "When I had   
fed them to the full, they then committed adultery."   
Jer 5:7. Oh, how horrid is it to sin against a bountiful   
God—**to bite the hand that feeds us!** How many   
make a dart of God's mercies—and shoot at Him!   
He gives them *wit*, and they serve the devil with it!   
He gives them *strength*, and they waste it among   
harlots! He gives them *bread* to eat, and they lift   
up the heel against Him. "Jeshurun waxed fat and   
kicked." Deu 32:15. They are like Absalom, who,   
as soon as David his father kissed him, plotted   
treason against him. 2Sa 15:10. They are   
like the mule that kicks the mother after she has   
given it milk.   
  
Those who sin against their giver, and abuse God's   
royal favors—the mercies of God will come in as   
witnesses against them. What is smoother than   
oil? But if it is heated, what more scalding? What   
is sweeter than mercy? But if it is abused, what   
more dreadful? It turns to fury!  
  
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**A humbling consideration**  
  
"Give us this day our daily bread." Mat 6:11  
  
See our own poverty and indigence. We all live upon   
God's alms and upon free gifts. All we have is from   
the hand of God's royal bounty. We have nothing but   
what He gives us out of His storehouse. We cannot   
have one bit of bread—but from God.   
  
This is **a humbling consideration**.  
  
Is all a gift? Then we are to seek every mercy from   
God by prayer. "Give us this day." The *tree of mercy*   
will not drop its fruit unless shaken by the hand of   
prayer.  
  
If all is a gift—then take notice of God's goodness.   
There is nothing in us that can deserve or requite   
God's kindness; yet such is the sweetness of His   
nature, that he gives us rich provision, and feeds   
us with the finest of the wheat. God has rained   
down golden mercies upon us.  
  
God is never weary of giving. The honeycomb   
of God's bounty is still dropping. God delights in   
giving. "He delights in mercy." Mic 7:18. As the   
mother delights to give the child the breast, God   
loves that we should have the breast of mercy in   
our mouth.  
  
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**It might have been the burning lake!**  
  
"I will correct you in measure." Jer 30:11  
  
Suffering Christian, there is no condition so bad, but   
it might be worse. When it is *dusk*, it might be *darker*.   
God does not make our cross so heavy as He might—He   
does not stir up *all* His anger. Psa 78:38. He does not   
put so many *nails* in our yoke—so much *wormwood* in   
our cup—as He might.   
  
Does God chastise your *body*? He might torture your  *conscience*. Does he cut you *short*? He might cut you *off*.   
The Lord might make our *chains* heavier. Is it a burning   
fever? **It might have been the burning lake!** Does   
God use the pruning *knife* to lop you? He might bring   
His *axe* to hew you down! Do the waters of affliction   
come up to the ankles? God might make them rise   
higher; nay, he might *drown* you in the waters!   
God uses the *rod* when He might use the *scorpion!*Remember—that your case is not so bad as others,   
who are always upon the rack, and spend their years   
with sighing. Psa 31:10. Have you a gentle illness?   
Others cry out of the severe pain of cancer. Do you   
bear the wrath of *men*? Others bear the wrath of *God*.   
You have but a *single* trial; others have *several* of them   
mingled together. God shoots but *one* arrow at you, He   
shoots a *shower* of arrows at others. We are apt to say,   
"Never has any suffered like we do!" Was it not worse   
with *Lazarus*, who was so full of sores that the dogs   
took pity on him—and licked his sores! Nay, was it not   
worse with *Christ*, who lived poor—and died cursed!   
It is in kindness that God deals not so severely with   
us, as with others.  
  
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**The drop of sorrow**  
  
Sometimes affliction is *preventive*. God, by *His   
afflictive stroke*—would prevent some sin. Paul's   
"thorn in the flesh" was to prevent his being lifted   
up in pride. Affliction is sometimes sent for the  *punishing* of sin, at other times for the *prevention*of sin.   
  
Prosperity exposes to much evil. It is hard to carry   
a full cup without spilling—and a full estate without   
sinning. God's people know not how much they are   
indebted to their afflictions. They might have fallen   
into some scandalous sin—had not God set a hedge   
of thorns in their way to stop them. What kindness   
is this! God lets us fall into *sufferings*—to prevent   
falling into sinful snares!   
  
God by *affliction*, would prevent *damnation!* We   
are *corrected* in the world, "that we should not   
be *condemned* with the world." 1Co 11:32.   
  
A man, by falling into briers, is saved from falling into  
the river. Just so, God lets us fall into the *briers of   
affliction*, that we may not be drowned in perdition!   
It is a great favor when a less punishment is inflicted,  
to prevent a greater punishment. Is it not mercy in the   
judge, when he lays some light penalty on the prisoner,   
and saves his life? So it is, when God lays upon us light   
affliction, and saves us from wrath to come.   
  
As Pilate said, "I will punish him—and let him go."   
Just so, God punishes his children and lets them go,   
frees them from eternal torment. What is **the drop   
of sorrow** which the godly taste—compared to that  *sea of wrath* the wicked shall be drinking to all   
eternity? Oh! what kindness is here!  
  
Say then, "Lord, do as it seems good in your   
sight—may Your will be done."  
  
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**Corrosives to eat out the proud flesh**  
  
"Man is born to trouble as surely as sparks  
fly upward." Job 5:7  
  
Troubles arise like sparks out of a furnace.   
  
The present state of life is subject to afflictions.   
Man comes into the world with a cry—and goes   
out with a groan!   
  
Afflictions are some of the thorns which the earth   
brings forth. We may as well think to stop the sun   
in its swift motion—as put a stop to troubles. The   
consideration of a life exposed to troubles and   
sufferings, should make us say with patience,  
"May Your will be done."   
It is vain to quarrel with *instruments*. Wicked men   
are but a *rod* in God's hand! "O Assyria, the rod of   
My anger." Isa 10:5. Whoever brings an affliction  
—God sends it! The consideration of this should make   
us say, "May Your will be done." What God does, He   
sees a reason for. This believed, would rock the heart   
quiet. Shall we mutiny at that which God does? We   
may as well quarrel with God's works of *creation*—as   
with God's works of *providence*.  
  
Consider that there is a necessity for affliction.   
"If *need* be, you are in heaviness." 1Pe 1:6.   
It is needful that some things are kept in *brine*.   
  
Afflictions are needful to keep us *humble*. Often there   
is no other way to have the heart low—but by being   
brought low. When Manasseh "was in affliction, he   
humbled himself greatly." 2Ch 33:12. Corrections  
are **corrosives to eat out the proud flesh**.   
"Remembering my misery, the wormwood and the gall;  
my soul is humbled in me." Lam 3:19-20.  
Shall not we quietly submit, and say, "Lord, I see   
there is a necessity for it. May Your will be done!"  
  
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**The Trojan horse**  
  
"Whatever a man sows, he will also reap." Gal 6:7  
  
We have brought our troubles upon ourselves;   
we have put a rod into God's hand to chastise us.   
  
Christian, God lays your afflictive cross on you—  
but it is of your own making. If you reap a bitter   
crop of affliction—it is what you yourself have sown.   
The cords which pinch you, are of your own twisting.   
  
If children will eat green fruit—they may blame   
themselves if they are sick. Just so, if we eat the   
forbidden fruit—no wonder that we feel it gripe.   
  
Sin is **the Trojan horse** which lands a multitude   
of afflictions upon us. "Your own conduct and actions   
have brought this upon you. This is your punishment.   
How bitter it is! How it pierces to the heart!" Jer 4:18.  
This should make us patiently submit to God in   
affliction, and say, "May Your will be done." We have   
no cause to complain of God; it is nothing but what   
our sins have merited. "Have not you procured this   
unto yourself?" Jer 2:17. The afflictive cross,   
though it be of God's laying—is of our making. Say,   
then, as Micah (Mic 7:9), "I will bear the indignation   
of the Lord, because I have sinned against Him."  
  
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**It will heat hell the hotter!**  
  
"May Your will be done." Mat 6:10  
  
We pray that we may do God's will actively, subscribe   
to all His commands, and lead holy lives. This is the   
sum of all true religion. The *knowledge* of God's will is   
not enough, without *doing* it. If one had a system of   
divinity in his head; if he had "all knowledge," yet, if   
obedience were lacking, his knowledge were lame, and   
would not carry him to heaven. Knowing God's will may   
make a man *admired*—but it is doing it, which makes  
him *blessed!* Knowing God's will without doing it—will   
not crown us with eternal happiness.  
  
*Knowing without doing* God's will—will make the case   
worse. **It will heat hell the hotter!** "That servant   
who **knows** his master's will and does not **do** what his   
master wants, will be beaten with many blows." Luk 12:47  
Many a man's knowledge is a torch to light him   
to hell. You who have knowledge of God's will, but do   
not obey it, wherein do you excel the devil? It is   
improper to call such Christians, who are knowers of   
God's will—but not doers of it. "May Your will be done."  
  
The Word of God is not only a rule of what we are   
to *believe*—but what we are to *practice*.  
  
To be employed in doing God's will, is the highest   
honor that a mortal creature is capable of. Obedience   
to Christ's precepts do not burden us—but adorn us!  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**They feared hell would be full**  
  
"They weary themselves to commit iniquity."   
Jer 9:5  
  
Sinners hire themselves out in the devil's service.   
What pains some men take to satisfy their unclean   
lusts! They waste their estates, wear the shameful   
marks of their sin about them, and visit the harlot's   
house, though it stands the next door to hell. "Her   
house is the way to hell." Pro 7:27. The devil   
blows the horn and men run speedily to hell—as if   
**they feared hell would be full** before they could   
get there.   
  
Do the ungodly take all these pains for hell—and shall   
not we take pains for the kingdom of heaven? Oh, let   
it never be said, that the ungodly serve the devil better  
—who rewards them only with fire and brimstone; than   
we serve God—who rewards us with a glorious kingdom!  
  
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**No hive for drones!**  
  
"Making the most of your time time."   
Eph 5:16   
  
**Time spent unprofitably** is not time *lived*  
—but time *lost*. Those who have misspent   
their golden hours, they have not only been  *slothful* servants—but *wasteful* servants.   
  
"Warn those who are idle." 1Th 5:14  
  
The devil himself cannot be charged with   
*idleness*. He "walks about." 1Pe 5:8.   
  
An idle person is a cipher in the world; and   
God writes down no ciphers in the book of  
life! Heaven is **no hive for drones!**   
An idle person is an easy target for temptation.   
When the bird sits still upon the bough—it is in   
danger of being shot. Just so, when one sits still   
in sloth—the devil shoots him with a temptation.   
Standing water putrefies.   
  
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**The lottery!**  
  
"I have observed something else in this world of ours.  
The *fastest* runner doesn't always win the race, and  
the *strongest* warrior doesn't always win the battle.  
The *wise* are often poor, and the *skillful* are not  
necessarily wealthy. And those who are *educated*  
don't always lead successful lives." Ecc 9:11  
  
We cannot make sure of **life**. When we breathe *out*—  
we don't know whether we shall ever breathe *in* again!   
How many are taken away suddenly! "Why, you do   
not even know what will happen tomorrow! What is   
your life? You are a mist that appears for a little time   
and then vanishes away!" Jas 4:14  
  
We cannot make sure of **riches**. It is uncertain whether   
we shall ever get them. The world is like a **lottery**—in   
which everyone is not sure to get a prize. If we do *get*   
riches, we are not sure to *keep* them! "Riches make   
themselves wings—they fly away!" Pro 23:5. But   
even if men should *keep* their estates a while—*death   
strips them of all!* **When death's gun goes off**—away   
flies the estate! "We didn't bring anything with us when   
we came into the world, and we certainly cannot carry   
anything with us when we die!" 1Ti 6:7  
  
"Command those who are rich in this present world not  
to be arrogant nor to *put their hope in wealth, which is   
so uncertain*, but to put their hope in God." 1Ti 6:17   
  
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**When others were at their amusements**

The more pains we have taken for heaven—the   
*sweeter heaven will be* when we come there.   
When a farmer has long been working hard—it   
is pleasant to enjoy the fruit of his labors. Just so,   
when in heaven, we shall remember our former   
zeal and earnestness for the kingdom—which   
will *sweeten* heaven.   
  
It will add to the joy of heaven, for a Christian to   
ponder, "Such a day I spent in examining my heart.   
Such a day I was weeping for sin. **When others   
were at their amusements**—I was at prayer.   
And now, have I lost anything by my devotion? No!  
My tears are wiped away, and the wine of paradise   
cheers my heart. I now enjoy Him whom my soul   
loves! I am possessed of a glorious kingdom! My   
labor is over—but my joy remains forever!"  
  
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**A bowl which will soon be broken!**  
  
"What is your life? You are a mist that appears for  
a little time and then vanishes away!" Jas 4:14  
  
Time passes on apace! Our time is very short and uncertain.   
It will not be long, "before the silver cord of life snaps and   
the golden bowl is broken." Ecc 12:6. The skull wherein the   
brains are enclosed, is **a bowl which will soon be broken!**   
  
Our soul is in the body, as the *bird* in the shell, which soon   
breaks—and the bird flies out. The shell of the body is soon   
broken—and *the soul flies into eternity!* We know not whether   
we shall live another day. Before we hear another sermon-bell   
ring, our death-bell may ring. Our life runs as a swift stream  
—*into the ocean of eternity!*  
  
Brethren, if our time is so short and transient; if the *candle   
of life* is so soon consumed, or perhaps blown out by an   
unexpected death—how should we use all our strength,   
that we may obtain the kingdom of glory! If time is so   
short, *why do we waste it on trivial things*—and neglect   
the "one thing needful"? A man who has a great work to   
be done, and but one day for doing it, needs to work hard.   
We have a great work to do, we are striving for a kingdom,   
and alas! we are not certain of one day to work in!  
  
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**Like ants on an anthill**  
  
"Seek first the kingdom of God." Mat 6:33  
  
First in time—before all things; and   
first in affection—above all things.   
  
The great purpose for which God sent us into the   
world, is to prepare for this heavenly kingdom.  
  
Great care is taken for securing worldly things.   
To see people laboring for the earth, **like ants   
on an anthill**, would make one think that this   
was the only purpose they were here for. But,   
alas! what is all this, compared to the kingdom   
of heaven? When we enjoy worldly things, peace   
and plenty, and have our baskets full, we should   
say to ourselves, "this is not the kingdom we are   
to look after, this is not heaven!"   
  
It is wisdom to remember our great purpose in   
life. It will be but sad upon a death-bed, for a   
man to find he has busied himself about trifles,   
played with a feather, and neglected the main   
thing he came into the world for.  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**He is either watching or fighting!**  
  
"Be faithful unto death—and I will give you a crown of life."   
Rev 2:10  
  
"It is the one who has endured to the end, who will be saved."   
Mat 10:22  
  
Is there such a thing as *persevering* until we come to heaven?   
That anyone endures to the kingdom of heaven, is a wonder,   
if you consider:  
  
(1) What a great mass of **sin and corruption** is mingled with   
grace. Grace is apt to be stifled, as the coal to be choked with   
its own ashes. Like a spark in the sea, it is a wonder that grace   
is not quenched.  
  
(2) The implacable malice of **Satan**. He envies that we should   
have the kingdom of heaven, when he himself is cast out. It   
cuts him to the heart, to see *a piece of dust and clay made a   
bright star in glory*—and he himself a demon of darkness! He   
will work with all the powers of hell—to hinder us from the   
kingdom! Satan spits his venom, shoots his fiery darts, raises   
a storm of persecution; yes, and prevails against some.   
  
(3) The blandishments of **riches**. The young man in the   
gospel went very far—but he had rich possessions, and   
these *golden weights* hindered him from the kingdom.   
Luk 18:23. Jonathan pursued the battle until he came   
to the honeycomb, and then he stood still. 1Sa 14:27.   
Many are forward for heaven, until they taste the sweetness   
of the world; but when they come to the honeycomb, they   
stand still, and go no further. "The gain of money is the   
ruin of the soul!" Those who have escaped the rocks of   
gross sins—have been wrecked upon the golden sands!   
  
(4) It is a wonder that any hold out in grace, and do not   
tire in their march to heaven, if you consider the **difficulty**   
of the Christian's work. He has no time to waste. **He is   
either watching or fighting!** While he does one duty,   
he seems to cross another. He must come with holy   
boldness to God in prayer—yet must serve him with   
fear. He must mourn for sin—yet rejoice. He must be   
contented—yet covet the greater gifts. 1Co 12:31.   
He must condemn men's impieties—and yet reverence   
their authority. What difficult work is this!   
  
(5) To this I might add, the **evil examples** all around   
us, which are so attractive, that we may say that the   
devils have come among us in the likeness of men!  
  
What a wonder is it that any soul perseveres until he   
comes to the kingdom of heaven! But great as the   
wonder is, there is such a thing as perseverance.  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**The sugared bait men bite at**  
  
"They sing with tambourine and harp. They make  
merry to the sound of the flute." Job 21:12   
  
If you would not miss the heavenly kingdom, take heed   
of the *delights and pleasures of the flesh*. *Soft pleasures*   
harden the heart. Many people cannot endure a serious   
thought—but are for comedies and romances; they play   
away their salvation. "Men are caught by pleasure, as   
fish by the hook." *Pleasure* is **the sugared bait men   
bite at**—but there is a hook under it!   
  
The pleasures of the world, keep many from the pleasures   
of paradise! Many while hunting after the sweet pleasures   
of the world, lose the kingdom of heaven. "It is one of the   
worst sights—to see a sinner go laughing to hell."  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**How dreadful is that!**   
  
"The wicked shall be turned into hell!"   
Psa 9:17  
  
He who leaps short of the bank—falls into   
the river; such as come short of heaven—  
fall into the river of fire and brimstone!   
  
"Who knows the power of Your anger?"   
Psa 90:11   
  
What will it be to have mountains of God's  
wrath thrown upon the soul? When the bitter   
vials of God's wrath are poured out, damnation   
follows. Dives cries out, "I am tormented in this   
flame." Luk 16:24. In hell there is not a drop of   
mercy. In hell there is no oil of mercy to assuage   
the sufferings of the damned, nor anything to   
appease God's wrath. **How dreadful is that!**~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **Today you will be with Me in paradise!**  
  
"I desire to depart—and be with Christ." Php 1:23  
  
There is a speedy passage from death to glory; no   
sooner is the soul of a believer divorced from the   
body—but it immediately goes to Christ! The saints   
shall enter upon the kingdom of glory, immediately   
after death. Before their bodies are buried—their   
souls shall be crowned. "Absent from the body—  
present with the Lord." Quick as a wink—and they   
shall see God. It will not only be a **blessed** change   
to a believer—from a desert to a paradise, from a   
bloody battle to a victorious crown—but a **sudden**   
change. No sooner did Lazarus die—but he had a   
convoy of angels to conduct his soul to the kingdom   
of glory. You who now are full of bodily diseases, with   
scarcely a pain-free day, saying, "My life is spent with   
grief!" (Psa 31:10); be of good comfort, you may be   
eternally happy before you are aware! Before another   
week or month is over—you may be in the kingdom of   
glory, and then all tears shall be wiped away! "I assure   
you: **Today you will be with Me in paradise!**"  
Luk 23:43   
  
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**Eternal pleasures!**  
  
"Enter into the **joy** of your Lord." Mat 25:23  
  
This kingdom of heaven exceeds all earthly kingdoms in   
joy and pleasure, and is therefore called *paradise*. For   
delight, there are all things to cause pleasure; there is   
the *water of life* clear as crystal; there is the *honeycomb   
of God's love* dropping.   
  
Separation from sin shall be complete—and then joy   
follows. There can be no more sorrow in heaven—than   
there is joy in hell.  
  
God gives the saints a taste of joy here; but the *fullness   
of joy* is kept until they come to heaven. Not only the   
physical parts, the outward senses, the eye, ear, taste;  
but the heart of a glorified saint shall be filled with joy.   
The understanding, will, and affections—are such a   
triangle as none can fill, but the Trinity. There must   
needs be infinite joy—  
where nothing is *seen* but beauty;   
where nothing is *tasted* but love!  
  
"You will fill me with joy in Your presence, with  **eternal pleasures** at Your right hand!" Psa 16:11   
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**Satan cannot put his cloven foot in there**  
  
The kingdom of heaven excels in unity. All the   
inhabitants agree together in love. Love will be **the perfume and music of heaven**. As love   
to *God* will be intense—so to the *saints*. As perfect   
love casts out *fear*—so it casts out *envy* and *discord*.   
Those Christians who could not live quietly together   
on earth (which was the blemish of their profession)   
in heaven shall be all love! The fire of strife shall   
cease! There shall be no vilifying, or censuring one   
another, or raking into one another's sores—but all   
shall be tied together with the heart-strings of love.   
**Satan cannot put his cloven foot in there**, to   
make divisions. There shall be perfect harmony and   
concord, and not one jarring string in the saints' music.   
It were worth dying—to be in that kingdom!  
  
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**Too much pleasure is a pain!**  
  
The glories of heaven are constantly exhilarating  
and refreshing. There is fullness—but no excess.  
  
Worldly comforts, though sweet—yet grow stale   
in time. A down-bed pleases a while—but soon we   
are weary and must rise. **Too much pleasure is   
a pain!** But the glory of heaven never surfeits or   
nauseates; because, as there are all imaginable   
rarities, so every moment fresh delights spring   
from God into the glorified soul.  
  
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**There is no bitter ingredient**  
  
"He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There   
will be no more death or mourning or crying or   
pain, for the old order of things has passed away."   
Rev 21:4  
  
The glories of heaven are pure and unmixed.  
The streams of paradise are not muddied. All   
are clear—all are delightful. Heaven's gold has   
no alloy. **There is no bitter ingredient** in that   
glory—all are as pure as the honey which drops   
from the comb. There, the rose of Sharon  
grows without thorns. There is—  
ease without pain,  
honor without disgrace,  
life without death.  
  
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**If we go to the creature for happiness**  
  
The glory of heaven, is that it is satisfying.   
"With You is the *fountain* of life." Psa 36:9.   
How can they not be satisfied—who are at the   
fountainhead? "When I awake, I shall be satisfied   
with Your likeness," that is, when I awake in the   
morning of the resurrection, having some of the   
beams of Your glory shining in me—I shall be   
satisfied. Psa 17:15.   
  
The creature says, concerning satisfaction, "It is   
not in me." Job 28:14. **If we go to the creature   
for happiness**, we go to the wrong place.   
  
Heaven's glory alone, is commensurate to the vast   
desires of an immortal soul. A Christian bathing in   
these rivers of pleasures, cries out in divine ecstasy,   
"I have enough!" The soul is never satisfied until it   
has God for its portion, and heaven for its haven.   
Dissatisfaction arises from some defect. But God is   
an infinite good, and there can be no defect in that   
which is infinite.  
  
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**Most delicious**  
  
The kingdom of heaven implies a glorious fruition of all   
good. Had I as many tongues as hairs on my head, I   
could not fully describe this. It is a place where there   
is no lack of anything. It is called "the excellent glory."   
2Pe 1:17. I might as well measure the skies, or drain  
the ocean—as set forth the glory of this kingdom. The   
kingdom of heaven is above all hyperbole. Were the   
sun ten thousand times brighter than it is, it could not   
parallel the luster of this kingdom. I can but give you   
the *shadowings* of it. Do not expect to see it in all its   
orient colors—until you are mounted above the stars!   
  
We shall have an immediate communion with God Himself,   
who is the inexhaustible sea of all happiness. This, divines   
call "the beatific vision." The psalmist triumphed in the   
enjoyment he had of God in this life. "Whom have I in   
heaven but You?" Psa 73:25. If God, enjoyed by faith,   
gives so much comfort to the soul—how much more when   
He is enjoyed by immediate vision! Here we see God darkly;   
but in the kingdom of heaven we shall see Him "face to face."   
1Co 13:12.   
  
To see and enjoy God will be **most delicious**; in him are   
beams of majesty, and affections of mercy. God has all   
excellencies centered in Him—the good in which are all   
good things. If one flower should have the sweetness of   
all flowers—how sweet would that flower be!   
  
All the beauty and sweetness which lies scattered in the   
creature—is infinitely to be found in God. To see and enjoy   
Him, therefore, will ravish the soul with delight! We shall   
have this sweet communion with Him—He shall be "all in   
all;" light to the eye, manna to the taste, and music to   
the ear. 1Co 15:28.  
  
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**We were troubled on every side**  
  
"**We were troubled on every side**." 2Co 7:5  
  
In this life we are subject to troubles and fluctuations.   
We are like a ship on the sea having the waves beating   
on both sides; but in the kingdom of heaven there is rest.   
Heb 4:9. How welcome is rest to a weary traveler! When   
death cuts asunder the string of the body—the soul, as a   
dove, flies away, and is at rest! This rest is when the saints   
shall lie on Christ's bosom—that hive of sweetness, that bed   
of perfume.  
  
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**The world is like a painted landscape**  
  
In the kingdom of heaven—we shall be freed from the  
vanity and dissatisfaction of the creature. Take things   
most pleasing and from which we promise ourselves   
most contentment, still, of the spirit and essence of   
them all—we shall say, "Behold, all was vanity!"   
Ecc 2:11.  
  
**God never did, nor ever will—put a satisfying   
virtue into any creature.** In the sweetest music   
the world makes, either some string is lacking, or   
out of tune. But in the kingdom of heaven, we shall   
be freed from these dissatisfactions.   
 **The world is like a painted landscape**, in which   
you may see gardens with fruit trees, beautifully   
drawn—but you cannot enter them. But into the joys   
of heaven, you may enter. "Enter into the joy of your   
Lord." The soul shall be satisfied while it bathes in   
those rivers of pleasure at God's right hand. "I will   
be fully satisfied, for I will see You face to face!"   
Psa 17:15  
  
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**Christ's lily is among thorns**  
In the kingdom of heaven—we shall be freed from   
all society with the wicked. Here we are sometimes   
forced to be in their company. "Woe is me, that I   
sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar."   
Psa 120:5. Kedar was Ishmael's son, whose children   
dwelt in Arabia; they were a profane, barbarous people.   
  
Here the wicked are still raising persecutions against the   
godly, and crucifying their ears with their oaths and curses.   
**Christ's lily is among thorns**; but in the heavenly   
kingdom there shall be no more any pricking brier. "The   
Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will weed   
out of His kingdom everything that causes sin and all who   
do evil." Mat 13:41.   
  
As Moses said, "Stand still, and see the salvation of the   
Lord! For the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you   
shall never see them again forever!" So will God say,   
"Stand still, and see the salvation of God; these your   
enemies, that vex and molest you, you shall never see   
them again forever!" Exo 14:13. At that day, God will   
separate the precious from the vile; Christ will thoroughly   
purge his threshing floor; he will gather the wheat into   
the garner; and the wicked, which are the chaff—shall   
be blown into hell!  
  
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**When the kingdom of grace is set up**  
  
We may know that the kingdom of grace is set up in   
our hearts, by having a metamorphosis or change   
wrought in the soul—which is called the "new creation."   
The faculties are not new—but there is a new nature.   
**When the kingdom of grace is set up**, there is . . .  
light in the *mind*,  
order in the *affections*,  
pliableness in the *will*,  
tenderness in the *conscience*.   
  
Those who can find no such change of heart, and are   
the same as they were—as vain, as earthly, as unclean   
as ever—have no evidence of God's kingdom of grace in them.  
  
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**Remainders of corruption**  
  
The best of saints have **remainders of corruption**.   
In the regenerate, though the dominion of sin is taken   
away—yet the life of sin is prolonged for a season. What   
pride was there in Christ's own disciples, when they strove   
who should be greatest! The life of sin will not be quite  
stopped, until death.   
  
The Lord is pleased to let the in-dwelling of sin continue—to   
humble His people, and make them prize Christ more. Because   
you find corruptions stirring, do not therefore presently unsaint   
yourselves, and deny the kingdom of grace to be come into   
your souls. That you *feel sin—*is an evidence of spiritual life;   
that you mourn for sin—is a fruit of love to God; that you have   
a combat with sin—argues antipathy against it. Those sins which   
you once wore as a crown on your head, are now as fetters on   
the leg. Is not all this from the Spirit of grace in you? Sin is in   
you, as poison in the body, which you are sick of, and use all   
Scripture antidotes to expel.   
  
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**They pluck the crown from His head**  
  
It is a sign that the kingdom of grace has come into   
the heart, when it reigns there by universal obedience.   
Hypocrites would have Christ to be their Savior—but **they pluck the crown from His head**—and will not   
have Him rule. But he who has the kingdom of God   
within him, submits cheerfully to every command of God.   
He will *do* what God will have him do. He will *be* what   
God will have him be. He puts a blank paper into God's   
hand, and says, "Lord, write what you will—I will obey."  
  
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**I hate every false way!**  
  
"**I hate every false way!**" Psa 119:104  
Hatred is implacable. *Anger* may be reconciled—*hatred*   
cannot. A true Christian has antipathy and opposition   
against every known sin. A gracious soul not only *forsakes*   
sin—but *hates* sin. He not only hates sin *for* hell—but he   
hates it *as* hell, as being contrary to God's holiness and   
happiness.  
  
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**Hypocrites are like the snake**  
  
Many have begun some reformation, therefore now   
they surely think that the kingdom of grace has come   
into their hearts! But a man may leave his oaths and   
drunkenness—and still be in love with sin. He may   
leave his sin—out of fear of hell, or because it brings   
shame and poverty—but still his heart goes after it,   
"They set their heart on their iniquity" (Hos 4:8); as   
Lot's wife left Sodom—but still her heart was in Sodom.   
  
**Hypocrites are like the snake** which casts off her   
skin, but keeps her poison. They keep the *love* of sin,   
as one who has long been an unsuccessful suitor to   
another, yet still he has a hankering love to her.   
  
It may be a *partial* reformation. He may leave off one   
sin and live in another. He may refrain from drunkenness,  
and live in covetousness. He may refrain from swearing,  
and live in the sin of slandering. One devil may be cast   
out—and another as bad may come in its place!   
  
A man may forsake *gross* sins—but have no reluctance   
against *heart* sins—such as proud, lustful thoughts.   
Though he dams up the *stream,* he lets the *fountain* alone!  
  
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**You know not where you are going!**  
  
"For He has rescued us from the *dominion of darkness*,  
and brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves,  
in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."  
Col 1:13-14   
Every natural man, is in the kingdom of darkness.  
  
(1) He is under the darkness of **ignorance**. "Having the   
understanding darkened." Eph 4:18. Ignorance is a black   
veil drawn over the mind. Men by nature may have a deep   
understanding in the things of the world—and yet be  
ignorant of the things of God. Nahash the Ammonite   
would make a covenant with Israel to thrust out their   
right eyes. 1Sa 11:2. Since the fall, only our *left eye*   
remains—that is—a deep insight into worldly matters.  
But our *right eye* is thrust out—we have no saving   
knowledge of God. Some things we know by nature;  
but nothing as we ought to know. 1Co 8:2. Ignorance   
draws the curtains round about the soul. 1Co 2:14.  
  
2. Natural man is under the darkness of **pollution**. Hence  
sinful actions are called "works of darkness." Rom 13:12.   
Pride and lust darken the glory of the soul. A sinner's heart   
is a dark conclave—which looks blacker than hell.  
  
(3) A natural man is under the darkness of **misery**; he   
is exposed to divine vengeance; and the sadness of this   
darkness is, that men are not sensible of it. They are   
blind—yet **they think they see!** The darkness of Egypt   
was such thick darkness as "might be felt." Exo 10:21.  
Men by nature are in thick darkness. But here is the   
misery—the darkness cannot be felt! They will not believe   
they are in the dark—until they are past recovery!  
  
See what the state of nature is—a "kingdom of darkness,"  
and it is a *bewitching* darkness. "Men *loved* darkness rather   
than light." Joh 3:19. *Darkness of sin* leads to "eternal   
chains in darkness*.*" Jud 1:6. What comfort can such take   
in earthly things? The Egyptians might have food, gold,  
silver; but they could take but little comfort in them,   
while they were in such darkness as might be felt. Just   
so, the natural man may have riches and friends to delight   
in—yet he is in the kingdom of darkness, and how dead   
are all these comforts!   
  
You who are in the kingdom of darkness, do not know   
where you are going. As the ox is driven to the shambles  
—but knows not where he is going; so the devil is driving   
you before him to hell—but **you know not where you   
are going**! Should you die in your natural state, while   
you are in the kingdom of darkness—*blackness of darkness*is reserved for you! "To whom is reserved the blackness  
of darkness forever!" Jud 1:13.  
  
Be sensible of your dark, damned estate—that you have  
not one spark of fire to give you light! Go to Christ to   
enlighten you! "Christ shall give you light;" He will not   
only bring your light to you—but open your eyes to see   
it. Eph 5:14.   
  
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**May Your kingdom come**  
  
"**May Your kingdom come**." Mat 6:10  
  
A twofold kingdom is meant.   
  
(1) The kingdom of **grace**, which God exercises in the   
consciences of His people. This is God's *lesser* kingdom.   
When we pray, "May Your kingdom come," we pray that   
the kingdom of grace may be set up and increased in   
our hearts.   
  
(2) We pray also, that the kingdom of **glory** may hasten,   
and that we may, in God's good time, be translated into it.   
  
These two kingdoms of **grace** and **glory**, differ not in   
*nature*—but in *degree* only.   
  
The kingdom of *grace* is nothing but the   
beginning of the kingdom of *glory*.   
  
The kingdom of *grace*—is glory in the seed;   
the kingdom of *glory*—is grace in the flower.   
  
The kingdom of *grace*—is glory in the daybreak,   
and the kingdom of *glory*—is grace in the full meridian.   
  
The kingdom of *grace*—is glory militant, and   
the kingdom of *glory*—is grace triumphant.   
There is such an inseparable connection between   
these two kingdoms, grace and glory, that there   
is no passing into the one but by the other.   
  
At Athens there were two temples, a temple of **virtue**   
and a temple of **honor**; and there was no going into   
the temple of honor—but through the temple of virtue.   
  
Just so, the kingdoms of grace and glory are so closely  
joined together, that we cannot go into the kingdom of   
*glory*—but through the kingdom of *grace*. Many people   
aspire after the kingdom of *glory*—but never look after   
*grace*; but these two, which God has joined together,   
may not be put asunder.   
  
The kingdom of *grace* leads to the kingdom of *glory!*  
  
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**He has bent His bow**  
  
"Hallowed be Your name." Mat 6:9  
  
Men in this age sin at that rate, as if either they   
did not believe there were a hell, or as if they   
feared hell would be full before they could get   
there! "We live in the dregs of time," wherein   
the common sewer of wickedness runs. Physicians   
call it *cachexia*, when there is no part of the body   
free from distemper. England has such a disease.   
"The whole head is sick, the whole heart is faint."  
Isa 1:5. As black vapors rising out of the earth   
cloud and darken the sun, so the sins of people in   
our age, like hellish vapors—cast a cloud upon God's   
glorious name. O that our eyes were rivers of water   
of holy tears, to see how God's name, instead of   
being hallowed, is polluted and profaned! May we   
not justly fear some heavy judgments on this   
account?   
  
Can God put up with our affronts any longer? Can   
He endure to have His name reproached? Will a king   
allow his crown-jewels to be trampled in the dust?   
Do we not see the symptoms of God's anger? Do we   
not see His judgments hovering over us? Surely   
God is whetting His sword, **He has bent His bow**,   
and is preparing his arrows to shoot!   
  
To show how base the wicked are in God's esteem,   
He compares them to things most vile—to chaff   
(Psa 1:4); to dross (Psa 119:119); to the filth   
that foams out of the sea (Isa 57:20). As God vilely   
esteems such as do not hallow His name, so He sends   
them to a vile place at last! Vagrants are sent to the   
house of correction; and hell is the house of correction   
to which the wicked are sent when they die!  
  
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**Death is but going to your Father!**  
  
"Our *Father* in heaven." Mat 6:9  
  
**Death is but going to your Father!** Well might   
Paul say, "death is yours!" 1Co 3:22. Death is your   
friend—which will carry you home to your Father!   
How glad are children when they are going home!   
It was Christ's comfort at death that he was going   
to His Father. "I am leaving the world—and am going   
to the Father." Joh 16:28. "I ascend unto My Father."   
Joh 20:17. If God is our Father, we may with comfort,   
at the day of death, resign our souls into His hand.   
Thus did Christ. "Father, into Your hands I commend   
My spirit." Luk 23:46. If a child has any jewel, he   
will in time of danger put it into his father's hands,   
where he thinks it will be kept most safe; so the soul,   
which is our richest jewel, we may resign at death   
into God's hands, where it will be safer than in our   
own keeping. "Father, into Your hands I commend   
my spirit." What a comfort it is, that death carries   
a believer to his Father's house, where are delights   
unspeakable and full of glory! Death is a triumphant   
chariot, to carry every child of God to his Father's   
mansion-house!  
  
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**I have everything I need**  
  
"Those who seek the Lord shall not lack  
any good thing." Psa 34:10.   
  
God is sometimes pleased to keep His children   
on hard fare—but it is good for them. As sheep   
thrive best on short pasture—so God sees that   
*too much* may not be good for His people; plenty   
might breed surfeit. God sees it good sometimes,  
to diet His children, and keep them light—that   
they may run the heavenly race the better.   
  
God's children sometimes see the world's emptiness,   
that they may acquaint themselves more with Christ's   
fullness. If God sees it to be good for them to have   
more of the world—*they shall have it!* He will not let   
them lack any really good thing.  
  
"The Lord is my shepherd; **I have everything  
I need**." Psa 23:1  
  
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**The cup of affliction**  
  
"I will correct you, in measure." Jer 30:11  
  
This He will do two ways. It shall be in measure—for   
the **kind**. He will not lay upon us more than we are   
able to bear. 1Co 10:13. He knows our frame. Psa 103:14.  
He knows we are not steel or marble, therefore   
will deal gently—He will not over-afflict. As the wise   
physician, who knows the temper of the body, will   
not give too strong a medicine for the body, nor give   
one grain too much; so God, who is not only the great   
Physician—but has the affections of a loving father,   
will not lay too heavy burdens on His children.   
  
God will correct in measure—for **duration**; He will not   
let the affliction lie too long. "I will not contend forever."   
Isa 57:16. Our heavenly Father will *love* forever—but He   
will not *contend* forever. The torments of the damned are   
forever. "The smoke of their torment ascends up forever   
and ever." Rev 14:11. The wicked shall *drink a sea of   
wrath*; but God's children onlytaste of **the cup of   
affliction**.  
  
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**He puts a finger upon the scar!**  
  
"Our *Father* in heaven." Mat 6:9  
  
Since God is our Father—He will take notice of the   
least good He sees in His children. If there is but a  *sigh* for sin—He hears it. "My groaning is not hidden   
from You." Psa 38:9. If there is but a penitential   
*tear* which comes out of the eye—He sees it. "I have   
seen your tears." Isa 38:5. If there is but a good   
*intention*, He takes notice of it. "Since it was your   
*desire* to build a temple for My name, you have   
done well to have this desire." 1Ki 8:18.  
  
God takes notice of the *least spark of grace* in His   
children. "Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord."   
1Pe 3:6. The Holy Spirit does not mention Sara's   
unbelief, or laughing at the promise. **He puts a finger   
upon the scar**—and only takes notice of the good that   
was in her.   
  
More—that good which the saints scarcely take notice   
of in themselves, God in a special manner observes. "I   
was hungry and you gave Me something to eat; I was   
thirsty and you gave Me something to drink. Then the   
righteous will answer Him—Lord, when did we see You   
hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You something   
to drink?" Mat 25:35, Mat 25:37. They as it were, overlooked   
and disclaimed their own works of charity! But Christ takes   
notice of them, "I was hungry and you gave Me something   
to eat."   
  
What comfort is this! God spies the least good in His   
children! He can see a grain of corn, hidden under much   
chaff. **He can see a little grace, hidden under much   
corruption!**Those duties which we ourselves censure—He will crown.   
When a child of God looks over his best duties, he sees   
so much sin cleaving to them—that he is confounded.   
"Lord," he says, "there is more *sulphur* than *incense*, in   
my prayers." But for your comfort, if God is your Father,   
He will crown those duties which you yourselves censure.   
He sees there is sincerity in the hearts of His children.   
Though there may be many defects in the services of   
His children, He will not cast away their offering.   
  
An earthly father kindly receives a letter from his young   
child—though there are blots and bad spelling in it. **What   
blottings are there in our holy things!** Yet our Father   
in heaven accepts them. "It is my child!" God says, "I will   
look upon him, through Christ—with a merciful eye!"  
  
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**What a miracle of mercy is this!**  
  
"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!" 1Jn 3:1  
  
See the amazing goodness of God, that He is   
pleased to enter into the sweet relation of a  *Father* to us. He had no need not to adopt us.   
He did not need a son; but we needed a Father!   
  
He showed His *power* in being our Maker;  
He showed His *mercy* in being our Father!  
  
When we were enemies, and our hearts stood out as   
garrisons against God—He conquered our stubbornness,  
and made us His children! He wrote His name, and put   
His image upon us—and bestowed a kingdom of glory   
on us! **What a miracle of mercy is this!**See *the deplorable case of the wicked!* They cannot say,   
"Our Father in heaven." They may say, "Our *Judge*," but   
not "Our *Father*." They fetch their pedigree from hell—  
"You are of your father—the devil." Joh 8:44. Such as   
are unclean and worldly—are the vile brood of *the old   
serpent—*and it would be blasphemy for them to call   
God their Father! God is not their Father! He disclaims   
all kindred with them. The wicked, dying in their sins,   
can expect no mercy from God! "I never knew you!   
Depart from Me—you who work iniquity." Mat 7:23.  
  
But will God be a Father to **me**—who has been   
such a great sinner?  
  
If you will now at last seek God by prayer, and break   
off your sins—He has the affections of a Father for you,   
and will never cast you out! When the *prodigal* arose   
and went to his father, "his father had compassion, and  
ran and fell on his neck, and kissed him!" Though you   
have been a prodigal, and *spent all upon your lusts—*yet if you will give a bill of divorce to your sins, and flee   
to God by repentance, know that He has the affections   
of a Father! He will embrace you in the arms of His   
mercy, and seal your pardon with a kiss!  
  
What though your sins have been heinous? Your wound   
is not so broad—as the plaster of Christ's blood! The sea   
covers great rocks. Just so, *the sea of God's compassion*   
can drown your great sins! Therefore be not discouraged!  
Go to God—resolve to cast yourself upon his Fatherly   
compassion! "No matter how deep the stain of your sins,   
I can remove it. I can make you as clean as freshly fallen   
snow. Even if you are stained as red as crimson, I can   
make you as white as wool!" Isa 1:18  
  
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**Our father, who is in hell**  
  
"Our Father, who is in heaven" Mat 6:9  
  
All cannot say, "Our Father." The Jews boasted   
that God was their Father. "We have one Father,   
even God." Joh 8:41. Christ tells them their true   
pedigree, "You are of your father—the devil!" They  
should have said, "**Our father, who is in hell**."  
  
How may we know, that God is our Father?  
  
We know God is our Father, by having *the leading   
of the Spirit.* "As many as are *led by the Spirit of   
God*—they are the sons of God." Rom 8:14.   
  
God's Spirit does not only *quicken* us in regeneration;  
but *leads* us on until we come to the end of our faith.   
As the Israelites had the cloud and pillar of fire to go   
before them, and be a guide to them—so God's Spirit   
is a guide to go before us—and lead us into all truth  
—and counsel us in all our doubts—and influence us   
in all our actions. None can call God their Father, but   
such as have the leading of the Spirit. Such as are led   
by a spirit of envy, lust, and avarice—are not led by the   
Spirit of God! It would be blasphemy for them to call   
God their Father! They are led by the spirit of Satan,   
and may say, "**Our father, who is in hell!**~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

÷**Resembling Him**  
  
"Our Father, who is in heaven" Mat 6:9  
  
How may we know, that God is our Father?  
  
By having a childlike disposition, which is seen in   
**resembling Him**. The child is his father's picture.   
Herein God's adopted children and man's adopted   
children differ. A man adopts one for his son and heir,   
who does not at all resemble him; but whoever God   
adopts for His child—is like Him; he not only bears his   
heavenly Father's name—but His image! He who has   
God for his Father—resembles Him in holiness, which   
is the glory of the Godhead. Exo 15:11. The holiness   
of God is the intrinsic purity of His essence. He who has   
God for his Father, partakes of the divine *nature*; though   
not of the divine *essence*—yet of the divine *likeness*. As   
the seal sets its print and likeness upon the wax, so he   
who has God for his Father, has the print and image of   
His holiness stamped upon him.  
  
Wicked men desire to be like God hereafter in glory—but  
do not want to be like Him here in grace. They say that   
God is their Father—yet have nothing of God to be seen   
in them. They are not only without His image, but hate it.  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**A gracious thaw in the heart**  
  
"Our Father, who is in heaven" Mat 6:9  
  
How may we know, that God is our Father?  
  
By having a childlike disposition, which is seen   
in melting in tears for SIN, as a child weeps for   
offending his father.   
  
It is a sign that God is our Father—when the   
*heart of stone* is taken away—and there is**a   
gracious thaw in the heart**; and it melts   
into tears for sin. He who has a childlike heart,   
mourns for sin in a spiritual manner—as it is   
sin he grieves for, as it is an act of pollution.   
  
Sin deflowers the virgin soul.  
  
Sin defaces God's image.  
  
Sin turns beauty into deformity.  
  
Sin is *the plague of the heart.* 1Ki 8:38.   
  
A child of God mourns for the defilement of sin;   
sin has to him a blacker aspect than hell.  
  
He who has a childlike heart, grieves for sin, as it   
is an act of enmity towards God. Sin is diametrically   
opposed to God. It is called walking contrary to God.  
Sin does all it can to spite God; if God is of one mind  
—sin will be of another. Sin would not only unthrone   
God—but strike at His very being! If sin could help it  
—God would no longer be God!   
  
A childlike heart grieves for this; "Oh! that I should   
have so much enmity in me, that my will should be   
no more subdued to the will of my heavenly Father!"   
This springs a leak of godly sorrow.  
  
A childlike heart weeps for sin, as it is an act of   
ingratitude. It is an abuse of God's love; it is taking   
the jewels of His mercies—and making use of them   
to sin. To sin against kindness, makes sin crimson.   
Nothing so melts a childlike heart in tears, as sins   
of unkindness. "Oh, that I should sin against the   
blood of a Savior—and the affections of a Father!"   
This opens a vein of godly sorrow—and makes the   
heart bleed afresh.   
  
Certainly it evidences God to be our Father, when   
He has given us a childlike frame of heart—to weep  
for sin as it is sin, an act of pollution, enmity and   
ingratitude. A wicked man may mourn for *the bitter   
fruit of sin*—but only a child of God can grieve for   
*the odious nature of sin!*~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~**Two loadstones**  
  
If you would be preserved from sin—get your   
hearts fired with love to God. Love has great   
force in it; it is "as strong as death;" it breaks   
the league between the heart and sin.   
  
Meditate on the astonishing love of God to you.  
What a wonder of love was it—for God to give   
His Son out of His bosom—and lay such a jewel   
to pawn for our redemption! The glories of God's   
beauty, and the magnitude of His love, like **two   
loadstones**, draw our love to God! If we love   
Him, we shall not sin against Him. He who loves   
his friend, will not by any means displease him.   
  
I have read of four men meeting together,   
who asked one another what it was that kept   
them from sinning.  
The first one said, "the fear of hell."   
The second said, "the joys of heaven."   
The third said, "the odiousness of sin."   
The fourth said, "that which keeps me from   
sin, is love to God. Shall I sin against so   
loving a God? Shall I abuse His love?"  
Love to God is the best curbing-bit to keep from sin.  
  
"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."  
Joh 14:15   
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**Pandora's box**  
  
Sin is worse than affliction. There is more evil   
in *a drop of sin*—than in *a sea of affliction!*  
  
Sin brings all harmful things—it has death and hell   
in its womb.   
  
Sin rots the name, consumes the estate, and wastes   
the body. The poets feigned that when **Pandora's   
box** was opened, it filled the world full of diseases.  
When Adam broke the box of original righteousness,   
it caused all the evils in the world! Sin is the evil   
which sets the world on fire. Sin turned the angels   
out of heaven—and Adam out of paradise! The sword   
of God's justice lies quietly in the scabbard—until sin   
draws it out and sharpens it!  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**Galloping to hell!**  
  
Some go at a slower pace to hell—but   
such as run themselves into temptation,  
go **galloping to hell!** We have too many   
of these in this debauched age, who, as   
if they thought they could not sin fast   
enough—tempt the devil to tempt them!  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**The picture of him who would murder you**  
  
"Be careful! Watch out for attacks from the Devil,  
your great enemy. He *prowls around* like a roaring  
lion, looking for some victim to devour!" 1Pe 5:8  
There is a story of a Jew who would have poisoned  
Luther—but a friend sent to Luther the picture of the   
Jew, warning him to take heed of such a man when   
he saw him; by which means Luther recognized the   
murderer, and escaped his hands. I have taught  
you the subtle devices of Satan in tempting; I have   
shown you **the picture of him who would murder   
you**. Being forewarned, I beseech you to take heed   
of the murderer!  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
 **Death surprised them!**  
  
Satan persuades men to *delay* repenting and   
turning to God. This temptation is the devil's   
draw-net by which he draws millions to hell;   
it is a dangerous temptation.   
  
"Sin is a sweet poison." The longer poison lies in   
the body—the more deadly it is. Just so, by delay   
of repentance, sin strengthens, and the heart   
hardens. The longer ice freezes, the harder it is   
to be broken. Just so, the longer a man freezes   
in impenitency, the more difficult it will be to   
have his heart broken. When sin has *settled* in   
the heart—it is not easily driven away.   
  
Besides, the danger of delaying repentance appears   
in this—that life is hazardous, and may suddenly   
expire. What security have you, that you shall live   
another day? Life is made up of a few flying minutes.  
Life is a candle, which is soon blown out. "What is   
your life? It is even a vapor." Jas 4:14. How   
dangerous therefore is it to procrastinate and put   
off turning to God by repentance! Many now in hell   
purposed to repent—but **death surprised them!**~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **He can stand your small shot**  
  
Satan labors to keep us from serious meditation.   
He will let men profess, or pray and hear in a formal   
manner—which does him no hurt and them no good.   
**He can stand your small shot**, if you do not put in   
this bullet of meditation. He does not care how much   
you hear preaching or read Scripture—but how much   
you meditate. Meditation is chewing the cud—it makes   
the Word digest and turn to nourishment; it is the   
bellows of the affections. The devil is an enemy to this.   
  
Satan will thrust in worldly business—something or   
other to keep men off from holy meditation.  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**This hellish serpent!**  
  
"The devil has come down unto you, having  
great wrath." Rev 12:12  
  
Satan is a malicious revengeful spirit! **This hellish   
serpent** is swelled with the poison of malice!  
  
Satan envies man's happiness. To see a *clod of dust*so near to God; and himself, once a glorious angel,   
cast out of the heavenly paradise—makes him pursue   
mankind with inveterate hatred. If there is anything   
this infernal spirit can delight in—it is to ruin souls, and   
to bring them into the same damnation as himself! He   
is enraged, and lays his snares and shoots his darts   
against us!  
  
This malice of Satan in tempting, must needs be   
great, if we consider that Satan, though full of   
torment, should tempt others. One would think   
that he would scarcely have a thought but of his   
own misery; and yet such is his rage and malice   
that, while God is punishing him—he is tempting   
others!  
  
His malice is great, because though knowing his   
tempting men to sin will increase his own torment   
in hell—he will not leave it off! Every temptation   
makes his chain heavier and his fire hotter—and   
yet he will tempt!

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**Wonder and astonishment!**  
  
How shall we know that our sins are pardoned?  
  
Christ's blood quenches the flames of hell. The   
pardoned sinner is a great weeper. The sense of  
God's love melts his heart. "That free grace should   
ever look upon *me*—that such crimson sins as mine   
should be washed away in Christ's blood—makes my   
heart melt and my eyes drop with tears!"   
  
Never did any man read his pardon with dry eyes.   
"She stood at his feet weeping." Luk 7:38. Mary's   
tears were more precious to Christ than her ointment;   
her eyes, which before sparkled with lust, now became   
a fountain, and washed Christ's feet with her tears! She   
was a true penitent, and had her pardon. "Therefore, I   
say, her sins, which are many, are forgiven;" ver 47.   
Pardon of sin, will make the hardest heart soften, and   
cause the stony heart to bleed. Is it thus with us?   
Have we been dissolved into tears for sin? God seals   
His pardons upon *melting* hearts.  
  
When God shows a man how near he was falling into hell,  
how that gulf is passed, and all his sins are pardoned, he   
is amazed, and cries out, "Who is a God like You,   
who pardons my iniquity! That God should pardon me   
and pass by others—that I should be taken and others   
left—fills my soul with **wonder and astonishment!**"  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**When God seems most unkind**  
  
It should make us cheerfully submit to God's will, to   
consider that in every *afflictive path of providence*, we   
may see *His footstep of kindness*. There is kindness in   
affliction, **when God seems most unkind**.  
  
There is kindness in affliction—in that God deals with   
us as His children. "If you endure chastening, God   
deals with you as with sons." Heb 12:7. God has one   
Son without sin—but no son without stripes! Affliction   
is a badge of adoption. Shall not we then say, "Lord,   
there is kindness in the cross, you treat us as your   
children. The rod of discipline is to fit us for the   
inheritance. May Your will be done."  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**Holy complaint**  
  
"May Your will be done." Mat 6:10  
  
We pray that we may have grace to submit   
to God's will patiently, in whatever He inflicts.   
  
A Christian may be *deeply sensible* of affliction,   
and yet patiently submit to God's will. We ought   
not to be Stoics, insensible and unconcerned with   
God's dealings; as if we were begotten of a stone.   
Christ was sensible when He sweat great drops of   
blood—but there was submission to God's will.   
"Nevertheless, not as I will—but as you will." We   
are bid to humble ourselves under God's hand,   
which we cannot do unless we are sensible of it.   
  
A Christian may *weep* under an affliction, and yet  
patiently submit to God's will. God allows tears.   
Grace makes the heart tender; weeping gives   
vent to sorrow; grief is poured out in tears.  
  
A Christian may *complain* in his affliction, and yet be   
submissive to God's will. "I cry out to the Lord; I plead   
for the Lord's mercy. I pour out my **complaints** before   
Him and tell Him all my troubles." Psa 142:1-2. We   
may, when under affliction, tell God how it is with us.  
Shall not the child complain to his father when he is   
afflicted? **Holy complaint** may agree with patient   
submission to God's will; but though we may complain   
*to* God, we must not complain *of* God.   
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**Do it as the angels do it**  
"May Your will be done on earth, as it is  
in heaven." Mat 6:10   
  
We do God's will as it is done in heaven,   
when we **do it as the angels do it**.  
  
We do God's will as it is done in heaven by the   
angels—when we do it **regularly**, without   
wavering.  
  
We do God's will as it is done in heaven by the   
angels—when we do it **entirely**—when we do   
all God's will.  
  
We do God's will as it is done in heaven by the   
angels—when we do it **sincerely**, and without   
pretense.  
  
We do God's will as it is done in heaven by the   
angels—when we do it **willingly**, and without   
complaint. Though we cannot serve God perfectly,   
we serve Him willingly.  
  
We do God's will as it is done in heaven by the   
angels—when we do it **fervently**, and without   
slackness.  
  
We do God's will as it is done in heaven by the   
angels—when we give God the **best** in every   
service.  
  
We do God's will as it is done in heaven by the   
angels—when we do it **readily** and swiftly.  
  
We do God's will as it is done in heaven by the   
angels—when we do it **constantly**.

"May Your will be done on earth, as it is  
in heaven." Mat 6:10   
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**He is weary of his weariness**  
A hypocrite may be able to do some right things—yet   
he has no delight in duty; he does it rather out of fear   
of hell than love to God. When he does God's will it is   
against his own will. Cain brought his sacrifice—but   
grudgingly; his worship was rather a task than an   
offering, rather penance than a sacrifice; he did   
God's will—but against his own will.   
  
We must be carried upon the wings of delight in every  
duty. We must read and hear the Word with delight.   
"Your Words were found, and I ate them, and Your   
Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart."   
Jer 15:16. A pious soul goes to the Word as to a feast,   
or as one would go with delight to hear music.   
  
Not that a truly regenerate person is always in the same   
cheerful temper of obedience; he may sometimes find an   
indisposition and weariness of soul—but his weariness is   
his burden; **he is weary of his weariness**; he prays,   
weeps, uses all means to regain the alacrity and freedom   
in God's service that he was accustomed to have.   
  
To do God's will acceptably, is to do it willingly. Delight   
in duty is better than duty itself. The musician is not   
commended for playing *long*—but *well*; it is not how   
much we *do*—but how much we *love*. "O, how I love  
Your law!" Psa 119:97. Love perfumes obedience,   
and makes it go up to heaven as a sweet incense.  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**Rivers of pleasure!**  
  
"May Your kingdom come." Mat 6:10  
  
We are compassed with a body of sin—should we   
not long to shake off this viper? We are in a valley   
of tears—is it not better to be in a glorious kingdom?   
Here we are combating with Satan—should we not   
desire to be called out of the bloody field, where the   
bullets of temptation fly so fast, that we may receive   
a victorious crown? O, breathe after the heavenly   
kingdom! We should anxiously desire to be always   
sunning ourselves in the light of God's countenance.   
  
Think what it will be—to be forever with the Lord!   
Are there any sweeter smiles or embraces than His!   
Is there any bed so soft as Christ's bosom! Is there   
any such joy as to have the golden banner of Christ's   
love displayed over us! Is there any such honor as to  
sit upon the throne with Christ! O, then, long for the   
celestial kingdom!   
  
God will be a deep sea of blessedness, and the   
glorified saints shall forever bathe themselves in   
this ocean! "And they will reign forever and ever!"   
Rev 22:5. Heaven will make amends for all.  
  
O let this be our support under all the calamities   
and sufferings in this life. What a vast difference is   
there between a believer's sufferings, and his reward!   
"The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to   
be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in   
us." Rom 8:18. For a few tears—we shall receive   
**rivers of pleasure!**   
  
"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good   
pleasure to give you the kingdom!" Luk 12:32  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**A jewel which few Christians wear**  
  
If you hope to shortly enter the glorious kingdom   
of heaven—be *content* though you have but a little   
of the world!   
  
*Contentment* is a rare thing, it is **a jewel which   
few Christians wear**.   
  
Were you to take an estimate of a man's estate,   
how would you value it? By what he has in his   
house, or by his land? Perhaps he has little money   
or jewels in his house—but he owns vast lands—  
there lies his worth.   
  
A believer has but a little oil in the cruse, and meal   
in the barrel—but he has a title to the glorious   
kingdom of heaven—and may not this satisfy him?   
  
If a man who lived here in England, had a great   
estate beyond the seas, and perhaps had no more   
money at present but just to pay for his voyage,   
he is content; he knows when he comes to his   
estate he shall have money enough. Just so, you   
who are a believer have a kingdom befallen you;   
though you have but little in your purse—yet if   
you have enough for your voyage to heaven, it   
is sufficient. God has given you grace, which is   
the fore-crop, and will give you glory, which is   
the after-crop; and may not this make you content?  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**Drops the holy oil into the ear**  
  
"If they won't listen to Moses and the prophets, they won't   
listen even if someone rises from the dead!" Luk 16:31   
  
If the Word preached does not work upon men, nothing will;   
not judgment, nor miracles; no, not though one should rise  
from the dead!   
  
If you would get to heaven—attend to the Word preached.   
It was by the ear—by our first parents listening to the serpent,   
that we lost paradise. And it is by the ear—by hearing of the   
Word, that we get to heaven. "Hear, and your soul shall live."   
God sometimes in the preaching of the Word—**drops the holy   
oil into the *ear****,* which softens and sanctifies the *heart!* The   
Word preached is called the "ministry of the Spirit," because   
the Spirit of God makes use of the engine to convert souls.  
  
If you intend to get to heaven, be swift to hear: for "faith   
comes by hearing." Peter let down the net of his ministry,   
and at one draught caught three thousand souls! If you   
would have heaven's door opened to you—wait at the posts   
of wisdom's door.  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**The tongue**  
Every member of the body is infected with sin,   
as every branch of wormwood is bitter; but "**the   
tongue** is full of deadly poison." Jas 3:8. Some   
care not what they say in their anger; they will   
censure, slander, and wish evil to others. *How can   
Christ be in the heart—when the devil has taken   
possession of the tongue?* Anger disturbs reason,   
it is a temporary insanity. Water, when hot, soon   
boils over. Just so, when the heart is heated with   
anger, it soon boils over in fiery passionate speeches.   
Let those whose tongues are set on fire, take heed   
that they do not one day in hell desire a drop of   
water to cool them! Oh, if you would not miss the   
heavenly kingdom, beware of giving way to unbridled   
passions. Some say, "words are but wind;" but they   
are such a wind as may blow them to hell!

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**We would be overwhelmed!**   
  
"You will fill me with joy in Your presence, with   
eternal pleasures at Your right hand." Psa 16:11  
  
Nothing is lacking in heaven, which may complete the   
saints' happiness; for, wherein does happiness consist?   
  
Is it in *knowledge?* We "shall know as we are known."   
  
Is it in *royal* *fare?* We shall be at the "marriage supper of the Lamb."   
  
Is it in *rich apparel?* We shall be "clothed in long white robes."   
  
Is it in *exquisite music?* We shall hear the choir of angels singing.   
  
Is it in *dominion?* We shall reign as kings, and judge angels.   
  
Is it in *pleasure?* We shall enter into the joy of our Lord!   
  
Would God give us a vision of heaven for a moment, as he   
did Stephen, who saw "the heavens opened" (Act 7:56),   
**we would be overwhelmed!**~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**Christ's blood is the key which opens the   
gates of heaven!**

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**He still loves sin**  
  
"They set their heart on their iniquity." Hos 4:8  
  
A man may forsake his open sins—and yet come short   
of heaven. He may forsake *gross* sins, and yet have no   
reluctance to *heart* sins—such as pride, unbelief, malice   
and lust. Though he dams up the stream—he lets alone   
the fountain! Though he lops and prunes the branches  
—he does not strike at the root of it!  
  
Though he leaves sin for fear of hell, or because it brings   
shame or poverty—yet **he still loves sin**; as if a snake   
would cast off her skin—and yet retain her poison!   
  
It is but a **partial** forsaking of sin; though he leaves one   
sin—he lives in some other. Herod reformed very much.   
"He did many things;" but he lived in incest. Mar 6:20.   
Some leave drunkenness, and live in covetousness. Some  
forbear swearing—and live in slandering. It is but a partial   
reformation, and so they miss of the kingdom of glory.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**The earth swallowed them up!**  
  
"Their mind is on earthly things." Php 3:19  
  
The world is *the great Diana* which the ungodly cry up;   
as if they would fetch happiness out of the earth which   
God has cursed; they labor for honor and riches. Like   
Korah's household, "**The earth swallowed them up!**"   
Num 16:32. It swallows up their time and thoughts.   
Like the serpent, they lick the dust!   
  
Oh, what is there in the world that we should so idolize it;  
and Christ and heaven are to be disregarded as worthless?   
What has Christ done for you? Died for your sins! What will   
the world do for you? Can it pacify an angry conscience? Can   
it procure God's favor? Can it purchase for you a place in the   
kingdom of heaven? Oh, how are men bewitched with worldly   
profits and honors—that for these things they will forfeit  
paradise! It was a good prayer of Bernard, "Let us so   
possess temporal things, that we do not lose eternal things."  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**These fools will lose heaven!**  
  
See the folly of those who, for vain pleasures and   
profits, will lose such a glorious kingdom!   
  
Lysimachus, for a draught of water, lost his empire; just   
so, for a draught of sinful pleasure, **these fools will lose   
heaven!** We too much resemble our grandfather, Adam,   
who for an *apple* lost *paradise!* Many for trifles—will   
venture the loss of heaven. It will be an aggravation   
of the sinner's torment, to think how foolishly he was   
undone; that for a flash of impure joy—he lost an eternal   
weight of glory! Would it not vex a king, to think he would   
lose his kingdom—for a feather! Such are those who let   
heaven go—for a song. This will make the devil insult at   
the last day, to think how he has befooled men, and   
made them lose their souls and their happiness for   
"lying vanities." If Satan could make good his brag,   
in giving all the glory and kingdoms of the world, it   
could not countervail the loss of the celestial kingdom.   
All the tears in hell are not sufficient to lament the loss   
of heaven!

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **A worm which is ever feeding   
at the root of our gourd!**  
  
"Neither can they die any more." Luk 20:36  
  
This kingdom of heaven excels all others in healthfulness.   
Death is **a worm which is ever feeding at the root of   
our gourd!** Earthly kingdoms are often hospitals of sick   
people; but the kingdom of heaven is a most healthful   
climate. There are no physicians there—for there is no   
sickness there. In the heavenly climate, there are no ill   
vapors to breed diseases; but a sweet, aromatic healing   
fragrance coming from Christ; all His garments smell of   
myrrh, aloes, and cassia.  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**Confined to a small cottage**  
  
The kingdom of heaven excels all other kingdoms in   
magnitude; it is of vast dimensions! Though the gate   
of the kingdom is narrow, and we must pass into it   
through the narrow gate of mortification—yet, when   
once we are in it, it is very large. Though there are an   
innumerable company of saints and angels—yet there   
is room enough for them all.  
  
You who are now **confined to a small cottage**,   
when you come into the celestial kingdom, shall not   
be straitened for room. As every star has a vast orb   
to move in, so it shall be with the saints, when they   
shall shine as stars in the kingdom of heaven.  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
  
**Living by faith**  
  
"I live by faith in the Son of God." Gal 2:20.  
  
The kingdom of grace flourishes in the heart,  
when a Christian has learned to live by faith.   
For a Christian to live on the promises, as a   
bee on the flower, and suck out the sweetness   
of them; to trust in God's *heart*—where we   
cannot trace His *hand*; to believe His love   
through a frown; to persuade ourselves,   
when He has the face of an enemy—that   
He has the heart of a Father; when we are   
arrived at this, the kingdom of grace is   
flourishing in our souls.  
  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
 **If there is either justice   
in heaven, or fire in hell**  
  
"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for   
whatever a man sows, this he will also reap!"  
Gal 6:7  
  
**If there is either justice in heaven,   
or fire in hell**—the ungodly shall not   
be unpunished!  
  
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**Children's bread!**   
  
"Heirs of the promise." Heb 6:17.   
  
A wicked man can lay claim to nothing in the   
Bible, but the curses! The promises are**children's   
bread!** They are the breasts of the gospel, milking   
out consolations! And who are to suck these breasts  
—but God's children? The promise of pardon is for   
them. "I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby   
they have sinned against Me." Jer 33:8. The promise   
of healing is for them. Isa 57:19. The promise of   
salvation is for them. Jer 23:6. The promises are   
the supports of faith; they are a Christian's cordial.   
Oh, the heavenly comforts which are distilled from  
the promises! Chrysostom compares the Scripture  
to a garden: the *promises* are the *fruit trees* which   
grow in this garden. A child of God may go to any   
promise in the Bible, and pluck comfort from it!   
He is an heir of all the promises!  
  
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**Until God teaches us**  
  
"Our *Father* in heaven." Mat 6:9  
  
Wherein lies the happiness, of having God for our Father?  
  
"I am the Lord your God, who teaches you to profit."  
Isa 48:17  
  
If God is our Father—He will teach us. What father   
will refuse to counsel his son? Does God command  *parents* to instruct their children—and will not *He*   
instruct His children? "O God, you have taught me   
from my youth." Psa 71:17. If God is our Father,   
He will give us the teachings of His Spirit.   
  
"The natural man receives not the things of God,  
neither can he know them." 1Co 2:14. The natural   
man may have excellent notions in theology—but God   
must teach us to know the mysteries of the gospel   
after a spiritual manner. A man may see the figures   
upon a dial, but he cannot tell the time of day, unless   
the sun shines. Just so, we may read many truths in   
the Bible—but we cannot know them savingly—until   
God by his Spirit shines upon our soul. God teaches   
not only our *ear*—but our *heart!* He not only informs   
our *mind*—but inclines our *will.* We never learn   
anything—**until God teaches us!**~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **It files off the ruggedness**  
  
"Our Father, who is in heaven" Mat 6:9  
  
How may we know, that God is our Father?   
  
"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall  
be called the children of God." Mat 5:9  
  
If God is our Father, we are of peaceable spirits.  
Grace infuses a sweet, amicable disposition. **It   
files off the ruggedness** of men's spirits; it  
turns the lion-like fierceness into a lamb-like   
gentleness. Those who have God to be their   
Father, follow peace as well as holiness.   
God the Father is the God of peace, Heb 13:20:   
God the Son, is the Prince of peace, Isa 9:6:   
God the Spirit, is the Spirit of peace; Eph 4:3.   
  
The more peaceable, the more like God. God   
is not the Father of those who are fierce and   
cruel—as if they had sucked the milk of a wolf!   
"The way of peace have they not known."   
These furies may not call God their Father,  
though they may call the devil their father!   
  
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**The key of heaven**  
  
**Prayer** is **the key of heaven**, and  **faith** is the hand which turns it.

÷**The Ten Commandments (choice excerpts)**

by Thomas Watson

CHOICE EXCERPTS

**The afflictions of the godly**  
  
How do the afflictions of the *godly*, differ from   
the afflictions of the *wicked*?  
  
(1) The afflictions of the godly are but *corrections*;  
but those on the wicked are *punishments*. The one   
come from a *Father;* the other from a *Judge*.  
  
(2) The afflictions of the godly are fruits of covenant  
*mercy*. Afflictions on the wicked are effects of God's   
*wrath*. Afflictions on the wicked are the pledge of   
hell; they are like the shackling of a malefactor,   
which presages his execution.  
  
(3) The afflictions of the godly make them *better*;   
but afflictions on the wicked make them *worse*. The   
godly *pray* more; "Out of the depths I cry to You,   
O Lord." Psa 130:1. The wicked *blaspheme* more.   
"Men were scorched with great heat—and blasphemed   
the name of God." Rev 16:9.   
  
Affliction on the godly is like bruising **spices**—which   
makes them give off a most sweet and fragrant aroma.   
Affliction on the wicked is like pounding **weeds** with   
a pestle—which makes them give off a foul stench.  
  
It is a sign the affliction is sanctified, when the heart   
is brought to a sweet submissive frame.

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**Mercy swims to us through Christ's blood!**  
  
Every link in the *golden chain of salvation,*   
is wrought and interwoven with free grace!  
  
God's **love** is free. "I will love them freely." Hos 14:4   
  
**Election** is free. "He has chosen us in Him according  
to the good pleasure of His will." Eph 1:5   
  
**Justification** is free. "Being justified freely by His  
grace." Rom 3:24   
  
God's saving MERCYis **free** and spontaneous. To   
set up *merit*—is to destroy *mercy*. We do not *deserve*   
mercy, because of our enmity. We may force God to  *punish* us—but not to *love* us! If God would show   
mercy only to such as *deserve* it—He would show   
mercy to none!  
  
Mercy is an innate propensity in God to do good   
to distressed sinners. Mercy proceeds primarily,   
and originally from God. He is called the "Father   
of mercies." 2Co 1:3  
  
God's saving mercy is **powerful**. How powerful is that   
mercy—which softens a heart of stone! Mercy changed   
Mary Magdalene's heart, out of whom seven devils were   
cast. She who was an *inflexible adamant—*was made a   
*weeping penitent!*   
  
God's mercy works *sweetly*—yet *irresistibly*. **It allures  
—yet conquers!** The *law* may terrify—but *mercy* mollifies.   
Of what sovereign power and efficacy is that mercy, which   
subdues the pride and enmity of the heart, and beats off  
those chains of sin, in which the soul is held!  
  
God's mercy is **superabundant**. The Lord has *treasures* of   
mercy in store, and therefore is said to be "*plenteous* in mercy"   
(Psa 86:5), and "*rich* in mercy" (Eph 2:4). The vial of God's   
wrath, only *drops*—but the fountain of His mercy, *runs*. The   
sun is not so full of light—as God is of mercy. His mercy is  
over-flowing and ever-flowing. His mercy is infinite—without   
bounds, and without end. "His mercy endures forever." Psalm   
136. Every time we *draw our breath*—*we suck in mercy!*   
  
We are all **living monuments of God's mercy!** He shows   
mercy to us in daily supplying us. He supplies us with *health*.   
Health is the *sauce which makes life sweeter.* How those who   
are chained to a sick-bed, would prize this mercy! God supplies   
us with *provisions*. "God who *fed* me all my life long." Gen 48:15.   
Mercy spreads our tables, and carves for us every bit of bread   
we eat! We never drink, but in *the golden cup of mercy!*  
God shows mercy in **restraining us from sin**. *Lusts* within—  
are worse than *lions* without! *The greatest sign of God's anger*,   
is to give men up to their sins. "So I gave them up to their own   
hearts' lust." Psa 81:12. While the ungodly *sin themselves to   
hell*, God has laid the *bridle of restraining grace* upon us! As God  
said to Abimelech, "I withheld you from sinning against Me."   
Gen 20:6 Just so, *God has withheld us from those sins* which might   
have made us a prey to Satan, and a terror to ourselves!  
  
God shows mercy in **guiding** and directing us. He guides our   
affairs for us; and chalks out the way He would have us to walk.   
"You shall guide me with Your counsel." Psa 73:24. God leads   
us with the oracles of His Word, and the guidance of His Spirit.   
He guides our *heads* to keep us from error; and He guides our  
*feet* to keep us from scandal. Oh, what mercy it is—to have God  
to be our guide and pilot!   
  
God shows mercy in **correcting** us. He is angry—in love.   
He smites—that He may save. His rod is not a rod of iron   
to *break* us—but a fatherly rod to *humble* us. "God disciplines   
us for our good—that we may share in His holiness." Heb 12:10  
In our afflictions—God will *mortify some corruption*, or  *exercise some grace.*  
God shows mercy in **saving** us. "According to His mercy,   
He *saved* us." Tit 3:5. This is the top-stone of mercy!   
Here mercy displays itself in all its orient colors. Mercy is  
mercy indeed, when God perfectly refines us from all the   
lees and dregs of corruption; when our bodies are made   
like Christ's glorious body, and our souls like the angels.   
Saving mercy is crowning mercy. It is not merely to be   
*freed from hell*—but *enthroned in a kingdom!* What rich   
mercy will it be—to fully possess God, to see His smiling   
face, and to lay in His bosom forever! This will fill us   
with "a glorious, inexpressible joy!" 1Pe 1:8. God's  
saving mercy, is the diamond in the ring!  
  
Mercy more overflows in God—than sin in us. His mercy   
can drown great sins—as the sea covers great rocks!   
Christ's blood is "a fountain to cleanse them from all   
their sins and defilement." Zec 13:1. Some of the Jews   
who had their hands imbrued in Christ's blood—were   
saved by that blood! God loves to magnify His mercy,   
and display the trophies of free grace!  
  
How may I know that *my sins* are pardoned? Whenever   
God removes the *guilt* of sin—He breaks the *power* of sin.   
"He will have compassion; He will *subdue* our iniquities."   
Mic 7:19. With *pardoning love*—God gives *subduing grace*.  
  
If we would have saving mercy, it must be through Christ.   
Outside of Christ, there is no saving mercy. We read in the   
old law, that none might come into the holy of holies, where   
the *mercy-seat* stood—but the *high-priest*. This signifies that   
we have nothing to do with mercy—but through Christ our   
High-priest. That the high-priest might not come near the   
mercy-seat without *blood*, is to show that we have no right   
to mercy—but through the expiatory sacrifice of Christ's   
blood, Lev 16:14. If we would have mercy, we must be *in   
Christ*. **Mercy swims to us through Christ's blood!**

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**The queen of graces**  
  
"You must **love** the Lord your God with all your heart,  
all your soul, and all your mind. This is the first and  
greatest commandment." Mat 22:37-38   
  
*Love to God* is a holy expansion or enlargement of   
soul, by which it is carried with delight after God, as   
the chief good—*"a delight in God, as our treasure."*   
  
Love is the soul of religion; it is a momentous grace.   
If love is lacking, there can be no true religion in the   
heart. All else is but *pageantry*—merely a *devout   
compliment* to God.  
  
Love ameliorates and sweetens all the duties of   
religion; it makes them savory food, which God   
delights in.   
  
As to the excellence of this grace—love is the first and   
great commandment. Love is **the queen of graces**; it   
outshines all others, as the sun outshines the planets.   
  
Love is the most durable grace. Faith and hope will shortly   
cease—but love will remain. Thus love carries away the   
garland from all other graces, as it is the most long-lived   
grace. Love is a bud of eternity!  
  
Love to God must be **pure** and **genuine**. He must be loved   
chiefly for Himself. We must love God, not only for His benefits  
—but for those intrinsic excellencies with which He is crowned.   
We must love God—not only for the good which flows *from* Him  
—but for the good which is *in* Him. True love is not mercenary;   
he who is deeply in love with God, needs not be hired with   
rewards, he cannot but love God for the beauty of His holiness.  
Though it is not unlawful to look for benefits, we must not love   
God for His benefits alone—for then it is not love of God, but   
self-love.  
  
Love to God must be with **all the heart**. We must   
not love God a little—give Him a *drop* or two of our   
love; but the *main* *stream* must flow to Him.   
  
The *mind* must think of God,   
the *will* must choose Him,   
the *affections* must pant after Him.   
  
God will not have the heart divided. We must love Him   
with our whole heart. Though we may love *the creature*  
—yet it must be a *subordinate* love. Love to God must   
be highest, as oil swims above the water.  
  
Love to God must be **flaming**. To love coldly, is the   
same as not to love. The spouse is said to be, "love-sick."   
Canticles 2:5. The seraphim are so called, because of their   
burning love. Love turns saints into seraphim; it makes   
them burn in holy love to God. Many waters cannot   
quench this love.

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**How may we know whether we love God?**  
  
He who loves God desires His presence. Lovers cannot be   
long asunder, they soon have their *fainting fits*, for lack   
of a sight of the object of their love. A soul deeply in love   
with God desires the enjoyment of Him. David was ready   
to faint away, when he had not a sight of God. "My soul   
faints for God." Psa 84:2  
  
He who loves God, does not love sin. "You who love the  
Lord—hate evil." Psa 97:10. The love of God—and the   
love of sin, can no more mix together than iron and clay.  
Every sin loved, strikes at the being of God. He who loves   
God, has an antipathy against sin. He who would part *two   
lovers* is a hateful person. God and the believing soul are   
two lovers; sin parts between them, therefore the soul is   
implacably set against sin. By this try your love to God.   
How can he say he loves God, who loves sin—which is   
God's enemy?  
  
He who loves God is not much in love with anything else.   
His love is very cool to worldly things. The love of the world   
eats out the heart of piety; it chokes holy affections, as earth   
puts out the fire. He who loves God—*uses* the world but  *chooses* God. The world *engages* him—but God delights   
and satisfies him. He says as David, "God, my exceeding   
joy!" Psa 43:4. "God is the cream of my joy!"  
  
He who loves God cannot live without Him. Things we love,  
we cannot be without. A man can do without music or flowers,  
but not food. Just so, a soul deeply in love with God looks upon   
himself as undone without Him. "Hide not Your face from me,   
lest I be like those who go down into the pit." Psa 143:7.  
If God is our chief good—we cannot live without Him! Alas!   
how do they show they have no love to God—who can do   
well enough without Him! Let them have but food and drink,   
and you shall never hear them complain of the lack of God.  
  
He who loves God will be at any pains to get Him. What   
pains the merchant takes, what hazards he runs—to have   
a rich return. Jacob loved Rachel, and he could endure the   
heat by day, and the frost by night—that he might enjoy her.   
A soul that loves God will take any pains for the fruition of   
Him. "My soul follows hard after You." Psa 63:8. The soul   
is much in prayer; it strives as in agony, that he may obtain   
Him whom his soul loves. "I will seek Him whom my soul   
loves." Canticles 3:2.  
  
He who loves God, prefers Him before estate. "For Whom   
I have suffered the loss of all things." Php 3:8. Who that   
loves a *rich jewel*—would not part with a *flower* for it?

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**For a drop of pleasure**  
  
"You shall not murder." Exo 20:13   
  
Many murder their own souls! They willfully damn   
themselves, and throw themselves into hell!  
  
Who are those who murder their own souls?  
  
They willfully murder their souls—who have no sense   
of God, or the world to come, and are past feeling. Tell   
them of God's holiness and justice—and they are not   
affected at all. "They made their hearts as an adamant   
stone." Zec 7:12. Sinners have adamantine hearts—  
nothing will work upon them, neither ordinances nor   
judgments. They do not believe in God; they laugh   
at hell. Thus they murder their own souls, and throw   
themselves into hell as fast as they can!  
  
They willfully murder their own souls—*who resign   
themselves to their lusts,* let what will, come of it.   
"Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves   
over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of   
impurity, with a continual lust for more." Eph 4:19.   
Let *ministers* speak to them about their sins, let  *conscience* speak, let *afflictions* speak—they *will*   
have their lusts, even though they go to hell for   
them! Do not these murder their own souls? Many   
say in their hearts, "let our sins damn us—just   
so that they but please us!" Herod *will* have his   
incestuous lusts—though it costs him his soul. **For   
a drop of pleasure**—men will drink a sea of wrath!   
These massacre and damn their own souls!  
  
"A wicked man’s iniquities entrap him; he is entangled  
in the ropes of his own sin. He will be lost because of  
his great stupidity." Pro 5:22-23  
  
Oh! take heed of murdering your own souls!

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**She is a common sewer!**

*"You shall not commit adultery."* Exo 20:14

This commandment is set up as a hedge to keep out impurity; and those who break this hedge—a serpent shall bite them! The *fountain* of this sin is lust. God is a pure, holy being, and has an infinite antipathy against all impurity. We must take heed of running on the *rock of impurity*, and so *making shipwreck of our chastity*. The meaning of the commandment is not only that we should not stain our *bodies* with immorality—but that we should keep our *souls* pure. To have a chaste body—but an unclean soul, is like a beautiful face with a cancerous heart. "Be holy, for I am holy." 1Pe 1:16.  
  
There is a *mental* adultery. "Whoever *looks* on a woman to lust after her, has committed adultery with her already in his *heart*." Mat 5:28. As a man may die of an inward bleeding—so he may be damned for the inward boilings of lust, if it is not mortified. That I may deter you from the sin of adultery, let me show you *the great evil* of it.  
  
**(1) Adultery is a thievish sin.** It is the highest sort of theft. The adulterer steals from his neighbor, that which is more than his goods and estate; he steals away his wife from him!

**(2) Adultery debases a person.** It makes him resemble the beasts; therefore the adulterer is described like a horse *neighing*. "Everyone *neighed* after his neighbor's wife." Jer 5:8. It is worse than brutish; for some creatures which are void of reason—yet by the instinct of nature, observe some decorum and chastity. The *turtle-dove* is a chaste creature, and keeps to its mate. And the *stork*, wherever he flies, comes into no nest but his own. Naturalists write that if a stork, leaving his own mate, joins with any other, all the rest of the storks fall upon it, and pull its feathers from it. Adultery is *worse than brutish*, it degrades a person of his honor.  
  
**(3) Adultery pollutes.** The devil is called an *unclean* spirit. Luk 11:24. The ***adulterer*** is the devil's first-born; he is unclean; he is a moving quagmire. He is all over ulcerated with sin; his *eyes* sparkle with lust; his *mouth* foams out filth; his *heart* burns like mount Etna, in unclean desires. *He is so filthy,* that if he dies in this sin, all the flames of hell will never purge away his immorality! And, as for the ***adulteress*,** who can paint her black enough? The Scripture calls her a *deep ditch.* Pro 23:27. **She is a common sewer!** The *body* of a harlot is a walking dung-hill, and her *soul* a lesser hell!  
 **(4) Adultery is destructive to the body.** "Afterward you will groan in anguish when disease consumes your body." Pro 5:11. Immorality turns the body into a hospital, it brings foul diseases, and eats the beauty of the face. As the flame wastes the candle, so the *fire of lust* consumes the body. The adulterer hastens his own death. "So she seduced him with her pretty speech. With her flattery she enticed him. He followed her at once, like an ox going to the slaughter or like a trapped stag, awaiting the arrow that would pierce its heart. He was like a bird flying into a snare, little knowing it would cost him his life!" Pro 7:21-23.   
 **(5.) Adultery is a drain upon the purse; it wastes not the body only—but the estate.** "Keeping you from the immoral woman, from the smooth tongue of the wayward wife. Do not lust in your heart after her beauty or let her captivate you with her eyes, for the prostitute *reduces you to a loaf of bread*, and the adulteress preys upon your very life!" Pro 6:24-26. Whores are the devil's horse-leeches, sponges that suck in money. The prodigal son spent his inheritance, when he fell among harlots. Luk 15:30. The concubine of King Edward III, when he was dying, got all she could from him, and even plucked the rings off his fingers.  
 **(6) Adultery destroys reputation.** "But the man who commits adultery is an utter fool, for he destroys his own soul. Wounds and constant *disgrace* are his lot. His *shame* will never be erased!" Pro 6:32-33. *Wounds of reputation—*no physician can heal. When the adulterer dies, his shame lives. When his body rots underground, his name rots above ground. His *bastard children* are living monuments of his shame.  
 **(7) Adultery impairs the mind.** It steals away the understanding; it stupefies the heart. "Whoredom and wine take away the heart." Hos 4:11. It eats all purity out of the heart. Solomon besotted himself with women, and they enticed him to idolatry.  
 **(8) Adultery incurs temporal judgments.** The Mosaic law made the penalty for adultery, to be *death*. "The adulterer and adulteress shall surely be put to death;" and the usual death was *stoning*. Lev 20:10; Deu 22:24. The *Salons* commanded people guilty of this sin, to be burnt. The *Romans* caused their heads to be stricken off. Like a scorpion—this sin carries a sting in its tail. "For jealousy arouses a husband's fury, and he will show no mercy when he takes revenge!" Pro 6:34. The adulterer is often killed in the act of his sin. "Lust's practice is to make a joyful *entrance*—but she *leaves* in misery." I have read of two in London, who, having defiled themselves with adultery, were immediately struck dead with lightening from heaven. If all who are now guilty of this sin were to be punished in this manner, it would *rain fire* again, as on Sodom.  
 **(9) Adultery, without repentance, damns the soul.** "Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor homosexual offenders . . . will inherit the kingdom of God!" 1Co 6:9-10. **The fire of lust, brings to the fire of hell.** "God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral!" Heb 13:4. Though *men* may neglect to judge them—yet *God* will judge them! He will judge them assuredly; they shall not escape the hand of justice; and He will punish them severely. The *harlot's breasts* keeps from *Abraham's bosom!* "The *delight* lasts a moment—the *torment* an eternity!" Who for a cup of pleasure—would drink a sea of wrath! "Her guests are in the depths of hell." Pro 9:18. The harlot is perfumed with powders, and lovely to look on—but poisonous and damnable to the soul! "She has cast down many wounded, yes, many strong men have been slain by her." Pro 7:26.  
 **(10) The adulterer does all he can, to destroy the soul of another—and so kills two at once!** He is worse than the thief; for, suppose a thief robs a man, yes, and also takes away his life— the man's *soul* may be happy; he may go to heaven as well as if he had died in his bed. But he who commits adultery, endangers the soul of another, and does all he can, to deprive her of salvation. What a fearful thing it is—to be an instrument to draw another to hell!  
 **(11) The adulterer is abhorred of God.** "The mouth of an adulteress is a deep pit; he who is *abhorred* by the Lord, will fall into it." Pro 22:14. What can be worse than to be *abhorred* by God? God may be *angry* with His own children; but for God to *abhor* a man—is the highest degree of hatred! The immoral person stands upon the threshold of hell; and when *death* gives him a push—*he tumbles in!*  
  
All this should sound a **warning** in our ears, and call us off from the pursuit of so damnable a sin as immorality. Hear what the Scriptures say: "Her house is the way to hell." Pro 7:27.

I shall give some directions, by way of **antidote**, to keep from the infection of this sin.

(1) Do not come into the **company** of a whorish woman; avoid her house, as a seaman does a rock. "Run from her! Don't go near the door of her house!" Pro 5:8. He who would not have the plague, must not come near infected houses; every whore-house has the plague in it. Not to avoid the *occasion* of sin, and yet pray, "Lead us not into temptation," is, as if one should put his finger into the candle, and yet pray that it may not be burnt!

(2) Look to your **eyes**. Much sin comes in by the eye. "Having eyes full of adultery." 2Pe 2:14. The *eye* tempts the *imagination*, and the imagination works upon the *heart*. A lustful amorous eye, may usher in sin. Eve first *saw* the tree of knowledge—and then she *took*. Gen 3:6. First she *looked—*and then she *loved*. The *eye* often sets the *heart* on fire; therefore Job laid a law upon his eyes. "I made a covenant with my eyes—not to look with lust upon a young woman." Job 31:1.

(3) Look to your **lips**. Take heed of any unclean word which may enkindle unclean thoughts in yourselves or others. "Evil communications corrupt good manners." 1Co 15:33. Impure discourse, is the bellows to blow up the fire of lust. Much evil is conveyed to the *heart* by the *tongue*. "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth!" Psa 141:3.

(4) Look in a special manner to your **heart**. "Guard your *heart* with all diligence." Pro 4:23. Every person has a tempter in his own bosom! "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, adultery, all other sexual immorality." Mat 15:19. *Thinking* of sin, makes way for the *act* of sin. Suppress the first risings of sin in your heart. As the serpent, when danger is near—guards his *head*, so keep your *heart*, which is the spring from whence all lustful motions proceed.

(5) Look to your **attire**. We read of the attire of a harlot. Pro 7:10. A wanton dress is a provocation to lust. A painted face, and half-naked breasts, are allurements to immorality. Where the *sign* is hung out—people will go in and *taste* the liquor. Jerome says, "those who by their lascivious attire endeavor to draw others to lust, though no evil follows—are tempters—and shall be punished, because they offered the *poison* to others, even though they would not drink."

(6) Take heed of evil **company**. Sin is a very *contagious* disease; one person tempts another to sin, and hardens him in it. There are three cords which draw men to immorality:   
the inclination of the heart,   
the persuasion of evil company, and   
the embraces of the harlot. This *threefold cord* is not easily broken. "A fire was kindled in their company." Psa 106:18. The fire of lust is kindled in bad company.

(7) Beware of going to **theaters** and **plays**. A playhouse is often a preface to a whorehouse. "Plays furnish the seeds of wickedness." We are bid to avoid all *appearance* of evil; and are not plays the appearance of evil? Such sights are there, which are not fit to be beheld with chaste eyes. A learned divine observes, that many have on their death-beds confessed, with tears, that the pollution of their bodies has been occasioned by going to plays.

(8) Take heed of mixed **dancing**. "Dances are instruments of lust and wantonness." From *dancing*, people come to *dalliance* with another, and from dalliance to *immorality*. "There is," says Calvin, "for the most part, some unchaste behavior in dancing." Dances draw the heart to immorality—by wanton gestures, by unchaste touches, and by lustful looks. Chrysostom inveighed against mixed dancing in his time. "We read," he says, "of a marriage feast—but of *dancing* there—we read not." Mat 25:7. Many have been ensnared by dancing. "Dancing is not the conduct of a chaste woman—but of the adulteress," says Ambrose. Chrysostom says, "Where *dancing* is, there the *devil* is!"

(9) Take heed of lascivious **books** and **pictures**,which provoke to lust. As the reading of the Scripture stirs up love to God, so reading vile books stirs up the mind to wickedness. To lascivious books I may add lascivious pictures, which bewitch the eye, and are *incendiaries to lust!* They secretly convey *poison* to the heart.

(10) Take heed of **excess** in diet. When gluttony and drunkenness lead the van, immorality and wantonness bring up the rear. "Wine inflames lust." "Sodom's sins were pride, laziness, and *gluttony*." Eze 16:49. The *foulest* weeds grow out of the *fattest* soil. Immorality proceeds from excess. "When I had *fed* them to the full, everyone neighed after his neighbor's wife." Jer 5:8. Get the "golden bridle of temperance." God allows the *refreshment of nature*, and what may fit us the better for his service; but beware of surfeit. Excess in temporal things—clouds the mind, chokes good affections, and provokes lust. "I discipline my body and bring it under strict control." 1Co 9:27. The *flesh pampered*—is liable to immorality.

(11) Take heed of **idleness**. When a man is idle, he is ready to receive any temptation. The devil sows most of his *seeds of temptation* in *fallow* ground. Idleness is the cause of sodomy and immorality. "Sodom's sins were pride, *laziness*, and gluttony." Eze 16:49. When David was idle on the top of his house, he espied Bathsheba, and committed adultery with her. 2Sa 11:4. Jerome gave his friend counsel to be always well employed in God's vineyard, that when the devil came, he might have no leisure to listen to temptation.

(12) To avoid fornication and adultery, let every man have a chaste, entire **love to his own wife**. Ezekiel's wife was the desire of his eyes. Eze 24:16. When Solomon had dissuaded from immoral women, he prescribed a remedy against it. "*Rejoice* with the wife of your youth." Pro 5:18. It is not *having* a wife—but *loving* a wife— which makes a man live chastely. He who loves his wife, whom Solomon calls his *fountain*, will not go abroad to drink of *muddy, poisoned waters*. Pure marital love is a gift of God, and comes from heaven; but, like the vestal fire, it must be nourished, so that it does not go out. He who does not love his wife, is the likeliest person to embrace the bosom of a harlot.

(13) Labor to get the **fear of God** into your hearts. "By the fear of the Lord, men depart from evil." Pro 16:6. As the embankment keeps out the water, so the fear of the Lord keeps out immorality. Such as lack the fear of God, lack the *bridle* which should check them from sin! How did Joseph keep from his mistress' temptation? The fear of God pulled him back! "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against *God!"* Gen 39:9. Bernard calls *holy fear*, "the door-keeper of the soul." As a nobleman's porter stands at the door, and keeps out vagrants, so the fear of God stands and keeps out all sinful temptations from entering.

(14) Take delight in the **Word of God**. "How sweet are Your words unto my taste." Psa 119:103. Chrysostom compares God's Word to a garden. If we walk in this garden, and suck sweetness from the *flowers of the promises*, we shall never care to pluck the "forbidden fruit." "Let the Scriptures be my pure pleasure," says Augustine. The reason why people seek after unchaste, sinful pleasures—is because they have nothing better. Caesar riding through a city, and seeing the women play with *dogs* and *parrots*, said, "Surely, they have no *children*." So those who sport with harlots, have no better pleasures. He who has once tasted *Christ in a promise*, is ravished with delight; and he would scorn a *temptation* to sin! Job said, that the Word was his "appointed food." Job 23:12. No wonder then, that he made a "covenant with his eyes."

(15) If you would abstain from adultery, use serious **consideration**.

[1] Consider that God sees you in the act of sin! He sees all your *curtain* wickedness. He is *totus oculus—*"all eye." The *clouds* are no canopy, the *night* is no curtain—to hide you from God's eye! Whenever you sin—your Judge looks on! "I have seen your detestable acts—your adulteries and your neighings." Jer 13:27. "They have committed adultery with their neighbors' wives. I know it and am a witness to it! declares the Lord." Jer 29:23.

[2] Consider that few who are entangled in the sin of adultery, ever recover from the snare. "None that go to her return again." Pro 2:19. This made some of the ancients conclude that adultery was an unpardonable sin; but it is not so. David repented. Mary Magdalene was a weeping penitent; upon her amorous eyes which sparkled with lust, she sought to be revenged, by washing Christ's feet with her tears! *Some*, therefore have recovered from this snare. "*None* that go to her return," that is, "very few." It is rare to hear of any who are enchanted and bewitched with the sin of immorality, who recover from it. "I find more bitter than death the woman who is a *snare*, whose heart is a *trap* and whose hands are *chains*. The man who pleases God will escape her, but the sinner she will ensnare." Ecc 7:26. Her "heart is a trap," that is, she is subtle to deceive those who come to her; and "her hands are chains," that is her embraces are powerful to hold and entangle her lovers. This consideration should make all fearful of this sin. *Soft pleasures*, harden the heart.

[3] Consider what Scripture says, which may lay a barricade in the way to this sin. "I will be a swift witness against the adulterers." Mal 3:5. It is good when God is a witness "*for* us", when He witnesses to our sincerity, as He did to Job's; but it is sad to have God as a "witness *against* us." "I," says God, "will be a swift witness against the adulterer." And who shall disprove God's witness? He is both *witness* and *judge!* "God will surely judge people who are immoral and those who commit adultery." Heb 13:4.

[4] Consider the sad farewell, which the sin of adultery leaves. It leaves a hell in the conscience. "The lips of an immoral woman are as sweet as honey, and her mouth is smoother than oil. But the result is as bitter as poison, sharp as a double-edged sword. Her feet go down to death; her steps lead straight to hell." Pro 5:3-5. The *goddess Diana* was so artfully drawn, that she seemed to smile upon those who *came* *into* her temple—but frown on those who *went out*. So the harlot *smiles* on her lovers as they *come* to her—but at last, they come to the *frown* and the sting! "Until an arrow pierces his liver." Pro 7:23. "Her end is bitter."

When a man has been virtuous, the *labor* is gone—but the *comfort* remains; but when he has been wicked and immoral, the *pleasure* is gone—but the *sting* remains. "He gains momentary pleasure—but after that, eternal torment," says Jerome. When the *senses* have been feasted with unchaste pleasures, the *soul* is left to pay the reckoning. Stolen waters are sweet; but, as poison, though sweet in the mouth, it torments the conscience. **Sin always ends in tragedy!** Sad is that which Fincelius reports of a priest in Flanders, who enticed a young girl to immorality. When she objected how vile a sin it was, he told her that by authority from the Pope, he could commit any sin; so at last he drew her to his wicked purpose. But when they had been together a while, in came the devil, and took away the harlot from the priest's side, and, notwithstanding all her crying out, carried her away! If the devil should come and carry away all who are guilty of immorality in this nation—I fear more would be carried away, than would be left behind!

(16) **Pray** against this sin. Luther gave a lady this advice, that when any lust began to rise in her heart, she should go to prayer. Prayer is the best armor against sin; it quenches the *wild fire of lust.* If prayer will "cast out the devil," it will certainly cast out those lusts which come from the devil.

O let us labor for soul purity! *To keep the soul pure*—have recourse to the blood of Christ, which is the "fountain open, to cleanse from sin and impurity." Zec 13:1. A soul *steeped* in the briny tears of repentance, and *bathed* in the blood of Christ—is made pure! Say, "Lord, my soul is defiled! I pollute all I touch! O purge me with hyssop—let Christ's blood sprinkle me, let the Holy Spirit anoint me. O make me pure, that I may be taken to heaven—where I shall be as *holy* as You would have me to be—and as *happy* as I can desire to be!"

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**You may smite another—and never touch him!**  
  
The tongue which at first was made to be an organ   
of God's praise—has now become an instrument of   
unrighteousness. God has set two natural *fences* to   
keep in the tongue—the *teeth* and *lips*.  
  
"Not slanderers." 1Ti 3:11  
  
In the Greek it is, "not devils." The same word signifies   
both a *slanderer* and a *devil*. Some think it is no great   
matter, to misrepresent and slander others; but it is to   
act the part of a devil. This is a *great* sin; and I wish   
I could say it is not *common*.  
  
The heathen, by the light of nature, abhorred the sin   
of slandering. Diogenes used to say, "Of all wild beasts,   
a slanderer is the worst." Antonius made a law, that if   
a person could not prove the crime he reported another   
to be guilty of, he should be put to death.  
  
The Scripture calls slandering, *smiting with the tongue.*"Come, and let us smite him with the tongue." Jer 18:18 **You may smite another—and never touch him!**  
  
The scorpion carries his poison in his tail;  *the slanderer* carries his poison in his tongue!   
  
Job calls slander "the scourge of the tongue." As a   
rod scourges the *back*, so the slanderer's tongue   
scourges the *name*.   
 *Eminence* is commonly blasted by slander.   
  
*Holiness* itself is no shield from slander. The *lamb's*innocence will not preserve it from the wolf. *Christ*,   
the most innocent upon earth, was reported to be   
"a glutton and a drunkard." Mat 11:19  
  
"The tongue inflicts greater wounds than the sword."   
  
No physician can heal the wounds of the tongue!   
  
To pretend friendship to a man, and slander him,   
is most odious.   
  
We must not only not raise a false report—but refuse   
to *hear* it. He who *raises* a slander—carries the devil   
in his tongue! He who *receives* a slander—carries the   
devil in his ear!   
  
You may kill a man in his name as well as in his person.   
Some are reluctant to take away their neighbor's goods;   
but better take their wares out of their shop—than take   
away their good name! This is a sin for which no reparation   
can be made; a blot in a man's name, being like a blot on   
white paper, which can never be gotten out.   
  
Surely God will punish this sin. If *idle words* shall be   
accounted for, shall not *unjust slanders?* Oh therefore,  
take heed of this sin!

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**It pulls down the plumes of his pride!**  
  
The true Christian cannot keep God's law perfectly.   
"There is certainly no righteous man on the earth   
who does good and never sins." Ecc 7:20. There   
is in the best actions of a godly man—that which is   
damnable—if God should weigh him in the balance   
of justice. Alas! He cannot pray without wandering,   
nor believe without doubting. "For the *desire* to do   
what is good is with me, but there is *no ability* to   
do it." Rom 7:18. Paul, though a saint of the first   
magnitude, was better at *desiring* than at *performing*.   
  
The regenerate have a *desire* to obey God perfectly;  
but they lack *strength*; their obedience is weak and   
sickly. The mark they are to shoot at, is perfection of   
holiness. But though they take *a right aim*, and do   
what they can—they come short of the mark!  
  
A Christian, while serving God, is like *the rower* who   
plies the oar, and rows hard—but is hindered, for a   
gust of wind carries him back again! So says Paul,   
"For I do not do the good that I want to do, but I   
practice the evil that I do not want to do." Rom 7:19  
"I am driven back by temptation!"   
  
God permits this inability in His people—*to humble   
us.* Man is a self-exalting creature; and if he has but   
anything of worth, he is ready to be puffed up! But  
when he comes to see his *deficiencies* and *failings*,   
and how far short he comes of that holiness and   
perfection which God requires—**it pulls down the   
plumes of his pride**, and lays them in the dust!   
He weeps over his inability!   
He blushes over his leprous spots!   
He says with Job, "I abhor myself in dust and ashes!"   
  
God allows this inability be upon us—*that we may have   
recourse to Christ*—to obtain pardon for our defects, and   
to sprinkle our best duties with His blood. When a man   
sees that he owes perfect obedience to the law—but has   
*nothing to pay*, it makes him flee to Christ, to answer for   
him all the demands of the law, and set him free in the   
court of Divine justice.

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**Jesus Christ went into the  
furnace of His Father's wrath**  
*"Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked.  
A man reaps what he sows."* Gal 6:7  
  
God's wrath is just. **The wicked shall drink a   
sea of wrath—but not one drop of injustice!**   
  
God is justified in condemning sinners at the last day.   
They *deserve* wrath, and it is no injustice to give them   
that which they deserve. If a malefactor deserves death,   
the judge does him no wrong in condemning him.  
  
See what a great evil **sin** is—which exposes a person to   
God's wrath forever! You may know what an evil sin is,  
by the wrath and curse it brings! When you see a man  
brought to the gallows, you conclude he is guilty of some   
heinous crime, which brings such a punishment. So when   
a man lies under the fierce anger of God's wrath, and   
roars out in flames—you must say, "How horrid an evil   
sin is!" Those who now see no evil in sin—will see how  
vile it is—in the looking-glass of hell-torments!  
  
See here, that which may check a sinner's mirth. He is   
now brisk and frolicsome; he "sings idle songs to the   
sound of the harp." Amo 6:5. "But know that for all   
these things, God will bring you to judgment!" Ecc 11:9.   
Let him remember that the wrath and curse of God hang   
*over* him, which will shortly, if he does not repent—be   
executed *upon* him!   
  
The *sword of God's justice* hangs over a sinner, and   
when the *slender thread of life* is cut asunder—it falls   
upon him! For a drop of pleasure—he must drink a   
sea of wrath! His momentary pleasure cannot be so   
sweet—as God's eternal wrath is bitter! **Better lack   
the devil's honey—than be stung with the   
eternal wrath of God!**   
  
"None considers in his heart." See the *stupidity of   
sinners!* Though the fierce wrath of God is ready to   
fall upon them—they have no concern! Though a   
*beast* has no shame, it has *fear*—it is afraid of fire.   
But sinners are *worse than brutish*—for they do not   
fear the "fire of hell"—until they are in it! When they   
shall *feel* the vials of God's wrath dropping, they will   
cry out as Dives, "Oh! I am tormented in this flame!"   
Luk 16:24.  
  
"Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come." 1Th 1:10  
Christ is the only screen to stand between us and   
the wrath of God; He felt God's wrath—that those who   
believe in Him should never feel it.   
  
Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace was a type of God's wrath,   
and that furnace did not singe the garments of the three   
Hebrew children, nor did they have "the *smell of fire* upon   
them." Dan 3:27. **Jesus Christ went into the furnace   
of His Father's wrath**—and the *smell of the fire of hell*   
shall never pass upon those who believe in Him!  
  
To you who have a well-grounded hope that you shall not   
feel this wrath, which you have *deserved*—let me exhort   
you to be very thankful to God, who has given His Son to   
save you from this tremendous wrath. **The Lamb of God   
was scorched in the fire of God's wrath for you!** Christ  
felt the wrath which He did not deserve—that you might   
escape the wrath which you have deserved!   
  
Pliny observes, that there is nothing better to quench fire,   
than blood. Christ's blood has quenched the fire of God's   
wrath for you! "Upon me be your curse," said Rebekah to   
Jacob. Just so, Christ said to God's justice, "Upon Me be   
the *curse*—that My elect may inherit the *blessing!"*   
  
Be patient under all the **afflictions** which you endure.   
Affliction is sharp—but it is not wrath, it is not hell. Who   
would not willingly drink the *cup of affliction*—who knows   
he shall never drink in the c*up of damnation!* Who would   
not be willing to bear the wrath of *man*—who knows he   
shall never feel the wrath of *God!*  
  
Christian, though you may feel *God's rod*—you shall never   
feel *God's bloody axe!* Augustine once said, "Strike, Lord,  
where You will—so long as my sin pardoned." You should  
say, "Afflict me, Lord, as You will in this life—seeing I   
shall escape the wrath to come!"

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**The knife which killed her husband!**  
  
*The Lord's Supper* is the looking-glass in which we see   
Him whom our souls love; it is the chariot by which we   
are carried up to Christ. God has appointed *the Lord's   
Supper* to cheer and revive our sad hearts. When we   
look on our sins—we have cause to mourn; but when   
we see Christ's blood shed for our sins—we rejoice!   
  
In *the Lord's Supper* our spiritual needs are supplied,   
our strength is renewed; there we meet with Christ  
—and He says to us, "All I have is yours! My love is   
yours, to pity you! My mercy is yours, to save you!"   
Christ's blood is the key which opens heaven—else   
we had all been shut out!  
  
The end of *the Lord's Supper,* is to work in us an   
endeared love to Christ. When Christ bleeds for us,   
well may we say, "Behold how He loved us!" That   
is a heart of stone—which Christ's love will not melt!  
  
Another end of *the Lord's Supper* is the mortifying of   
corruption. To see Christ crucified for us—is a means   
to crucify sin in us. How can a wife endure to see **the   
knife which killed her husband!** How can we endure  
those sins—which made Christ veil His glory and shed   
His blood! Sin has rent the white robe of Christ's flesh,   
and dyed it of a crimson color. The thoughts of this   
should make us seek to be avenged on our sins!

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**Lord, dig the earth out of my heart!**  
  
"You shall not **covet**." Exo 20:17

Observe the holiness and perfection of God's law, which forbids the first motions and risings of sin in the heart. The laws of *men* take hold of actions; but the law of *God* goes further—it forbids not only sinful *actions*—but sinful *desires*. These lusts and desires after the forbidden fruit are sinful.   
  
The world is an idol. It is lawful to use the world, yes, and to desire so much of it as may keep us from the temptation of poverty; and as may enable us to honor God with works of mercy. But the danger is—*when the world gets into the heart!* Water is useful for the sailing of the ship; the danger is—when the water gets into the ship.   
  
**What is it to covet?** It is an insatiable desire of getting the world; or an inordinate love of the world.  
  
(1) A man may be said to be given to covetousness, when his thoughts are wholly taken up with the world. A godly man's thoughts are in heaven; he is thinking of Christ's love and eternal recompense. "When I awake I am still with You," that is, in divine contemplation. Psa 139:18. A covetous man's thoughts are in the world; his mind is wholly taken up with it; he can think of nothing but his shop or farm. The imagination is a mint-house, and most of the thoughts in a covetous man's mint are worldly. He is always plotting and projecting about worldly things. "Their mind is on earthly things." Php 3:19   
  
(2) A man may be said to be given to covetousness, when he takes more pains for getting earth than for getting heaven. He will take many a weary step for the world; but will take no pains for Christ or heaven. A covetous man, having had a relish of the world, pursues after it, and never ceases until he has got it; but he neglects the things of eternity. He *hunts* for the world—but he only *wishes* for heaven.  
  
(3) A man may be said to be given to covetousness, when all his discourse is about the world. "He who is of the earth, speaks of the earth." Joh 3:31. It is a sign of godliness to be speaking of heaven, to have the tongue tuned to the language of Canaan. "The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious;" he speaks as if he had been already in heaven. So it is a sign of a man given to covetousness to speak always of secular things, of his wares and business. A covetous man's breath, like a dying man's, smells strong of the earth. As it was said to Peter, "Your speech betrays you;" so a covetous man's speech betrays him. He is like the fish in the gospel, which had a piece of money in its mouth. Mat 17:27. "The words are the looking-glass of the heart," they show what is within. "The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks." Luk 6:45.   
  
(4) A man is given to covetousness when he so sets his heart upon worldly things, that for the love of them, he will part with heaven. For the "wedge of gold," he will part with the "pearl of great price." When Christ said to the young man in the gospel, "Sell all, and come and follow Me", "He went away sorrowful." Mat 19:22. He would rather part with Christ than with his earthly possessions. Cardinal Bourbon said, he would forego his part in paradise, if he might keep his cardinalship in Paris. When they will rather part with Christ and a good conscience than with their estate, it is a clear case that they are *possessed with the demon of covetousness!* "Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world." 2Ti 4:10   
  
(5) A man is given to covetousness, when he overloads himself with worldly business. When a man does not have time for his soul, he is under the power of covetousness.  
  
(6) He is given to covetousness whose heart is so set upon the world, that, to get it, he cares not what unlawful means he uses. He will have the world by fair means or foul; he will wrong and defraud, and raise his estate upon the ruins of another. Pope Sylvester II sold his soul to the devil for a popedom.  
  
**The DANGER of covetousness.** "Take heed and beware of covetousness!" Luk 12:15. It is a direct breach of the tenth commandment. It is a moral vice, it infects and pollutes the whole soul.  
  
(1) Covetousness is a SUBTLE sin. It is a sin that many cannot so well discern in themselves. This sin can dress itself in *the attire of virtue*. It is called the "cloak of covetousness." 1Th 2:5. It is a sin which wears a cloak, it cloaks itself under the name of *frugality* and *good taste*. It has many pleas and excuses for itself; more than any other sin—such as providing for one's family.   
  
(2) Covetousness is a DANGEROUS sin. It checks all that is good. It is an enemy to grace; it damps holy affections, as the earth puts out the fire. The hedgehog, in the fable, came to the cony-burrows, in stormy weather, and desired harbor; but when once he had got admission, he set up his prickles, and never ceased until he had thrust the poor conies out of their burrows! Just so, covetousness, by fair pretenses, winds itself into the heart; but as soon as you have let it in, it will never leave until it has choked all good beginnings, and thrust all piety out of your hearts. "Covetousness hinders the efficacy of the Word preached."   
  
In the parable of the sower, the thorns, which Christ expounded to be the cares of this life—choked the good seed. Mat 13:22. Many sermons lie dead and buried in earthly hearts. We preach to men to get their hearts in heaven; but where covetousness is predominant, it chains them to earth, and makes them like the woman which Satan had bent down for eighteen years, so that she was unable to stand up straight. Luk 13:11. You may as well bid an elephant fly in the air—as a covetous man live by faith. We preach to men to give freely to Christ's poor; but covetousness makes them like the man in the gospel, who had "a withered hand." Mar 3:1. They have a withered hand, and cannot stretch it out to the poor. It is impossible to be earthly-minded and charitably-minded. Covetousness obstructs the efficacy of the Word, and makes it prove abortive. Those whose hearts are rooted in the earth, will be so far from profiting by the Word, that they will be ready rather to deride it. The Pharisees, who were covetous, "derided Him." Luk 16:14.  
  
(3) Covetousness is a MOTHER sin. It is a radical vice. "The love of money is the root of all evil." 1Ti 6:10. "O accursed lust for gold! what crimes do you not urge upon the human heart!" Virgil. He who has an earthly itch, a greedy desire of getting the world, has in him the root of all sin. Covetousness is a mother sin. Covetousness breaks the first commandment; "You shall have no other gods but one." The covetous man has more gods than one; Mammon is his God. He has a god of gold, therefore he is called an idolater. Col 3:5. **The mammonist** covets his neighbor's house and goods, and endeavors to get them into his own hands. Thus you see how vile a sin covetousness is!   
  
(4) Covetousness is a DISHONORABLE sin to religion. For men to say their hopes are above—while their hearts are below; to profess to be above the stars—while they "lick the dust" of the serpent; to be born of God—while they are buried in the earth; how dishonorable is this to religion! *The lapwing*, which wears a little coronet on its head, and yet feeds on dung, is an emblem of such as profess to be crowned kings and priests unto God, and yet feed immoderately on earthly dunghill comforts. The higher grace is, the less earthly should Christians be; as the higher the sun is, the shorter is the shadow.  
  
(5) Covetousness is a DAMNING sin. It exposes us to God's abhorrence. "The covetous, whom the Lord abhors." Psa 10:3. A king abhors to see his statue abused, so God abhors to see man, made in His image, having the heart of a beast. Who would live in such a sin—as makes him abhorred of God? Whom God abhors He curses, and His curse blasts wherever it comes!  
  
Covetousness brings men to eternal ruin, and shuts them out of heaven. "This you know, that no covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." Eph 5:5. **What could a covetous man do in heaven?** God can no more converse with him—than a king can converse with a swine! "Those who will be rich fall into a snare, and many hurtful lusts, which drown men in perdition." 1Ti 6:9. A covetous man is like a bee that gets into a barrel of honey, and there drowns itself. As a ferry-man, to increase his fare, takes in too many passengers, that he sinks his boat; so a covetous man takes in so much gold to increase his estate, that he drowns himself in perdition! I have read of some inhabitants near Athens, who, living in a very dry and barren island, took much pains to draw a river to the island to water it and make it fruitful; but when they had opened the passages, and brought the river to it, the water broke in with such force, that it drowned the land, and all the people in it. This is an emblem of a covetous man, who labors to draw riches to him, and at last they come in such abundance, that they drown him in perdition! How many, to build up an estate, pull down their souls! Oh, then, flee from covetousness!   
  
**The CURE for covetousness.**  
  
(1) Faith. "This is the victory that overcomes the world—even our faith." 1Jn 5:4. The root of covetousness is distrust of God's providence. Faith believes that God will provide; that He who feeds the *birds* will feed His *children*; that He who clothes the *lilies* will clothe His *lambs*; and thus faith overcomes the world. Faith is the cure of care. It not only *purifies* the heart—but *satisfies* it; it makes God our portion, and in Him we have enough. Faith, by a divine chemistry, extracts comfort out of God. A little, with God—is sweet. Thus faith is a remedy against covetousness; it overcomes, not only the *fear* of the world—but the *love* of the world.  
  
(2) The second remedy is, judicious considerations. Ah, what poor things, are these earthly things—that we should covet them! We covet that which will not **satisfy** us. "He who loves silver, shall not be satisfied with silver." Ecc 5:10. Solomon had put all the creatures in a scale, and distilled out their essence, and behold—"All was vanity!" Ecc 2:11. A man with dropsy—"the more water he drinks, the more he craves." Just so, the more a covetous man has of the world, the more he thirsts. Worldly things cannot remove trouble of mind. When King Saul was perplexed in conscience, his crown jewels could not comfort him. 1Sa 28:15.   
  
The things of the world can no more ease a troubled spirit—than a gold cap can cure the headache! The things of the world cannot **continue** with you. The *creature* has a little honey in its mouth—but it has wings to fly away. Earthly things either leave us—or we leave them! What poor things are they to covet!  
  
(3) The third remedy for covetousness is to covet spiritual things more. Covet grace, for it is the best blessing, it is the seed of God. Covet heaven, which is the region of perfect happiness—the most pleasant climate. **If we covet heaven more—we shall covet earth less!** To those who stand on the top of the Alps, the great cities of Campania seem but as small villages; so if our hearts were more fixed upon the Jerusalem above, all worldly things would disappear, would diminish, and be as nothing in our eyes. We read of an angel coming down from heaven, and setting his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the earth. Rev 10:2. Had we been in heaven, and viewed its superlative glory, how would we, with holy scorn, trample with one foot upon the earth and with the other foot upon the sea! O covet after heavenly things! There is the tree of life, the mountains of spices, the rivers of pleasure, the honeycomb of God's love dropping, the delights of angels, and the flower of joy, fully ripe and blown. There is the pure air to breathe in; no fogs or vapors of sin arise to infect that air—but the Sun of Righteousness enlightens the whole horizon continually with His glorious beams. O let your thoughts and delights be always taken up with the city of pearls, the paradise of God! Were our hearts raised by the power of the Holy Spirit up to heaven, we would not be much absorbed with earthly things.  
  
(4) The best remedy for covetousness is contentment. Be content! "In any and all circumstances I have learned *the secret of being content*—whether well-fed or hungry, whether in abundance or in need." Php 4:12. The best way to be **contented**, is to believe that condition to be best, which God by His providence carves out to you. If He had seen fit for us to have more—we would have had it. Perhaps we could not manage a great estate. It is hard to carry a *full cup* without spilling—and a *full estate* without sinning! Great estates may be snares! There is no better antidote against coveting that which is another's—than being content with that which is our own.  
  
(5) Pray for a heavenly mind. "Lord, let the loadstone of Your Spirit draw my heart upward. **Lord, dig the earth out of my heart!** Teach me how to possess the world, and not love it; how to hold it in my *hand*, and not let it get into my *heart!"*

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**How did those swine run!**  
  
"Then they may come to their senses and escape  
*the Devil's trap*, having been captured by him to  
do his will." 2Ti 2:26.   
  
Men naturally are *enslaved to Satan*. Satan is called   
*the prince of this world,* Joh 14:30; and *the god   
of this world,* 2Co 4:4; because he has power to   
command and enslave his dupes. Though he shall   
one day be a fellow prisoner in chains—yet now he   
insults and tyrannizes over the souls of men. Sinners   
are under his rule, he exercises a jurisdiction over   
them. He fills men's **heads** with error—and their  **hearts** with malice. "Why has Satan filled your   
heart?" Act 5:3. **A sinner's heart is the devil's   
mansion house**. "I will return into *my* house."   
Mat 12:44  
  
Satan is a *comprehensive* tyrant.   
  
He rules men's **minds**, he blinds them with ignorance.   
"The God of this world has blinded the minds of those   
who believe not." 2Co 4:4.   
  
He rules their **memories**. They remember that which   
is evil, and forget that which is good. Their memories   
are like a strainer, which lets go all the *pure*—and   
retains only the *dregs*.   
  
He rules their **wills**. Though he cannot *force* the will,   
he *draws* it. "You are of *your father the devil*, and the  
lusts of your father—you *will* do." Joh 8:44. He has   
control over their **hearts**, and they willingly obey him.   
His strong temptations draw men to evil—more than   
all the promises of God can draw them to good.   
  
This is the state of every man by nature—**the devil   
has him in his power!** *A sinner grinds in the devil's   
mill!* He is at the command of Satan—as the donkey is   
at the command of the driver.  
  
**How did those swine run**—when the devil entered   
into them! "They entered the swine. And suddenly the   
whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea   
and perished in the water!" Mat 8:32   
  
It is a dreadful and dismal case, to be **under the   
power and tyranny of Satan!** He wholly possesses   
them. If people should see their *pets* bewitched and   
possessed by the devil, they would be much troubled;   
and yet, though their *souls* are possessed by Satan,   
they are not sensible of it! What can be worse, than   
for men to be in bondage to the devil, and him hurry   
them on in their lusts—to perdition! Yet they are   
willingly enslaved to Satan! *They love their gawler!*   
  
**What an infinite mercy it is**—when God brings poor   
souls out of this house of bondage, when He gives them   
a deliverance from the prince of darkness.  
  
As David rescued a *lamb* out of the *lion's* mouth—so *Christ   
rescues souls out of the mouth of the roaring lion!* Oh, what   
a mercy it is—to be turned "from the power of Satan, unto   
God," Act 26:18, to be brought out of the house of bondage,   
from being Satan's captives—to be made subjects of the   
Prince of Peace!

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**Why must there be a hell?**  
  
"The wicked shall be turned into hell." Psa 9:17   
  
"How can you escape the damnation of hell?" Mat 23:33  
  
God has built hell built on purpose, for the damned to lie in.  
  
See the dreadfulness of that place! **Hell is the epitome of   
misery!** Besides "the punishment of *loss*," which is the exclusion   
of the soul from the gloried sight of God, which some think is   
the worst part of hell—there will be "the punishment of *sense*."   
  
In hell there will be a **plurality of torments**:  
There will be the "chains of darkness." 2Pe 2:4.   
There will be the "never-dying worm." Mar 9:48.   
This is the worm of *conscience*.   
There will be the "lake of fire." Rev 20:15.   
Other fire is but 'painted fire'—compared to this.  
  
This house of hell is haunted with devils! Mat 25:41.   
Anselm says, "I had rather endure all torments, than   
see the devil with bodily eyes." Such as go to hell, must   
not only be forced to behold the devil—but must be shut   
up with this lion in his den! They must keep the devil   
company! This *red dragon* is full of spite—and will spit   
fire in men's faces!  
  
The torments of hell abide **forever!** "The smoke of their   
torment ascends up forever and ever." Rev 14:2. Time   
cannot finish hell. Tears cannot quench hell. Mar 9:44.   
The wicked will always live in the fire of hell—but never   
be consumed. After they have lain millions of years in hell,   
their punishment is as far from ending, as it was at the   
beginning! If all the earth and sea were sand, and every   
thousandth year a bird should come, and take away one   
grain—it would be a long time before that vast heap would   
be removed! Yet, if after all that time the damned might   
come out of hell—there would be some hope; but this   
word *FOREVER* breaks the heart!  
  
If anyone should ask, **where is hell?** I wish he may never   
know experimentally. "Let us not so much," says Chrysostom,   
"labor to know *where* hell is—as how to escape it."   
  
**Why must there be a hell?** Because there must be a place   
for the execution of divine justice. Earthly monarchs have their   
prison for criminals—and shall not God have His? Sinners are   
criminals, they have offended God. It would not be consistent   
with His holiness and justice—to have His laws infringed, and   
not inflict penalties.  
  
How does it seem to comport with God's justice—to punish  *a sin committed in a moment*—with *eternal torment?*  
  
1. Because there is an eternity of sin in man's nature. They   
will continue to sin in hell. "Men gnawed their tongues in   
agony and *cursed the God of heaven* because of their pains   
and their sores, but *they refused to repent* of what they   
had done." Rev 16:10-11   
  
2. Because sin is "committed against an infinite majesty,"   
and therefore the sin itself is infinite, and proportionally   
the punishment must be infinite.   
  
3. Because a *finite creature* cannot satisfy *infinite wrath*,   
he must be eternally paying what he can never pay.   
  
"Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath!" 1Th 1:10  
What infinite cause have they to bless God—who are delivered   
from hell! Jesus Christ suffered the torments of hell in His soul  
—that believers should not suffer them. Oh, how should we   
bless God to be preserved from the wrath to come!   
  
It may cause more thankfulness in us, to realize that **most   
people go to hell** when they die. To be of the number of   
those *few* who are delivered from hell—is matter of infinite   
thankfulness. "*Wide* is the gate and *broad* is the road that   
leads to destruction, and *many* enter through it. But small   
is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only   
a few find it." Mat 7:13-14  
  
"Divide the world," says one, "into thirty-one parts, **nineteen**   
parts of it are Jews and Turks, and **seven** parts are heathen;  
so that there are but **five** parts of professing Christians—and   
among these, so many *deceived Papists* on the one hand, and   
so many *formal Protestants* on the other—that we may   
conclude that **the major part of the world goes to hell.**   
  
Scripture compares the wicked to "the***mire*** *in the streets*."   
Isa 10:6. Few **precious jewels** are in the street—but you   
cannot go a step without meeting with mire! The wicked are   
as common as the dirt in the street! The devil has most of   
the harvest—and God has only a few gleanings. Oh, then,   
such as are delivered from hell, have infinite cause to admire   
and bless God. How should the *vessels of mercy* run over with   
thankfulness! When most others are carried as prisoners to   
hell—they are delivered from the wrath to come!  
  
**How shall I know if I am delivered from hell?**  
  
(1) Those whom Christ saves from hell—He saves from sin.   
"He shall save His people from their sins." Mat 1:21.   
Has God delivered you from the power of corruption, from   
pride, malice, and lust? If He has delivered you from the   
hell of **sin**, He has delivered you from the hell of **torment**.  
  
(2) If you prize, trust and love Christ—you are delivered   
from hell and damnation. "There is no condemnation to   
those who are *in Christ Jesus*." Rom 8:1. If you are in   
Christ, He has put the garment of His righteousness over   
you—and hell-fire can never singe it!  
  
  
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**A bundle of ridiculous ceremonies!**  
  
"Flee from idolatry!" 1Co 10:14  
  
It is **idolatry**, not only to worship a false god—but   
*to worship the true God in a false manner.*  
  
See the goodness of God to our nation, in delivering us   
from popery, which is Romish idolatry—and causing the   
light of His truth to break forth gloriously among us. In   
former times, England was overspread with idolatry.   
We had . . .   
purgatory,  
indulgences,  
the idolatrous mass,  
prayers to saints and angels,  
and image-worship.   
  
What is the popish religion, but **a bundle of ridiculous  
ceremonies!** Their candles, beads, crucifixes; what are   
these but Satan's policy, to dress up a *carnal worship,   
fitted to carnal minds!* Oh! what cause have we to bless   
God for delivering us from popery! It was a mercy to be   
delivered from the Spanish invasion; but it is a far greater   
mercy to be delivered from the popish religion!  
  
"What have I to do any more with idols?" Hos 14:8

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÷**The Ten Commandments (choice excerpts) cont'd**

**The sweetest friend—but   
the most dreadful enemy!**  
  
*What does every sin deserve?*  
  
God's wrath and curse, both in this life, and   
in that which is to come.  
  
"Depart from Me, you who are cursed, into the   
eternal fire prepared for the Devil and his angels!"   
Mat 25:41.  
  
God's wrath is **irresistible**. "Who knows the power   
of Your anger?" Psa 90:2. Sinners may oppose   
God's *ways*—but not His *wrath*. Shall the *briers*   
contend with the *fire*? Shall *finite* contend with  *infinite*? "Have you an arm like God?" Job 40:9.  
  
God's wrath is **dreadful**. We are apt to have slight   
thoughts of God's wrath; but it is very tremendous   
and dismal, as if scalding lead should be dropped   
into one's eyes. The Hebrew word for *wrath* signifies   
*heat*. To show that the wrath of God is hot, therefore   
it is compared to *fire* in the text. Fire, when in its   
rage, is dreadful. So the wrath of God is like fire,   
it is most dreadful. Other fire is but painted fire,   
compared to this. What will it be, when God shall   
"stir up all His wrath!" Psa 78:38.   
  
Solomon says, "The *king's* wrath is as the roaring   
of a lion." Pro 19:12. What then is *God's* wrath?   
When God musters up all His forces, and sets Himself   
in battalia against a sinner—how can his heart endure?   
"Will your courage endure or your hands be strong in   
the day **I** deal with you?" Eze 22:14. Who is able   
to lie under mountains of wrath? God is **the sweetest   
friend—but the most dreadful enemy!**  
The wrath of God shall seize upon **every part** of a sinner.  
The wrath of God shall seize upon the BODY of a reprobate.   
The body, which was so tender that it could not bear heat   
or cold, shall be tormented in the wine press of God's wrath!   
Those *eyes* which before could behold amorous objects, shall   
be tormented with the sight of devils! Those *ears*, which   
before were delighted with music, shall be tormented with   
the hideous shrieks of the damned!   
  
The wrath of God shall seize upon the SOUL of a reprobate.   
Ordinary fire cannot touch the soul. God's wrath burns the   
soul. The *memory* will be tormented to remember what   
means of grace have been abused. The *conscience* will be   
tormented with self-accusations. The sinner will accuse   
himself for presumptuous sins, for misspending his   
precious hours, and for resisting the Holy Spirit.  
  
The wrath of God is **without intermission**. Hell is   
an *abiding* place—but no *resting* place; there is not a   
minute's rest. Our earthly pains have some abatement;   
but the torments of the damned have no intermission;   
he who feels God's wrath never says, "I am at ease."  
  
The wrath of God is **eternal**. So says the text. "Eternal fire!"   
No tears can quench the flame of God's anger; no, though we   
could shed rivers of tears. In all pains of this life, men hope for   
cessation; but the wrath of God is always feeding upon the sinner.   
The terror of natural fire is, that it *consumes* what it burns; but   
what makes the fire of God's wrath dreadful is, that it does *not   
consume* what it burns. The sinner will forever be in the furnace!   
After innumerable millions of years, the wrath of God is as far   
from ending—as it was at the beginning. If all the earth and   
sea were sand, and every thousand years a little bird should   
come, and take away a grain of sand, it would be a long while   
before that vast heap of sand were emptied; but if, after all   
that time, the damned might come out of hell—there would   
be some hope; but this word "FOREVER" breaks the heart!

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**He is worse than dead!**  
  
"You were *dead* in your transgressions and sins."   
Eph 2:1  
  
An unregenerate man cannot perfectly obey all God's   
commands. He may as well touch the stars, or walk   
across the ocean—as yield exact obedience to the law.   
  
He is spiritually DEAD. How can he, being dead, keep   
the commandments of God perfectly? A dead man is   
not fit for action. A sinner has the symptoms of death   
upon him. He has no **sense**; he has no sense of the   
evil of sin, of God's holiness and veracity; therefore   
he is said to be without feeling. Eph 4:19. He has no  **strength**. Rom 5:6. What strength has a dead man?   
A natural man has no strength to deny himself, or to   
resist temptation. He is dead!  
  
He is not only dead—but **he is worse than dead!**   
A dead man does no hurt. A natural man not only   
cannot keep the law through *weakness*—but he   
breaks it through *willfulness!* He is BORN in sin,   
and LIVES in sin. Psa 51:5. "He drinks iniquity   
like water." Job 15:16. All the imaginations of his   
thoughts are evil—and only evil. Gen 6:5.

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**Ministers are murderers!**  
  
"You shall not murder." Exo 20:13   
  
*Soul-murder* is the greatest murder of all. The soul  
is said to be murdered, when it is deprived of its   
eternal happiness, and is forever in torment. How   
many are soul-murderers!  
  
Soul-murderers are those who corrupt others by   
bad example.  
  
Soul-murderers are those who entice others to sin.  
  
**Ministers are murderers**—who either *starve*, or   
*poison*, or *infect* souls. They may poison people   
with error. The basilisk poisons herbs and flowers   
by breathing on them; so the breath of heretical   
ministers poisons souls. **Error is as damnable   
as vice!**   
  
"When I say to a wicked man, 'You will surely die,'   
and you do not warn him or speak out to dissuade   
him from his evil ways in order to save his life, that   
wicked man will die for his sin, and I will hold you   
accountable for his blood." Eze 3:18.  
  
There are many ministers who *infect their people   
with their bad life;* they preach one thing—and live   
another. They are murderers, and the blood of   
souls will cry against them at the last day! How   
sad will it be for those who have not only their   
own sins—but the blood of others to answer for!

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**Sinful nature *refined* and *cultivated***  
  
"You shall have no *other gods* before Me." Exo 20:3   
  
What is it to have *other gods* besides the true God?   
I fear upon search, we have more idolaters among   
us than we are aware of.  
  
If we trust in our MORALITY, we make it a god. Many   
trust to this. None can charge them with gross sin.   
Morality is but **sinful nature *refined* and *cultivated***.   
A man may be outwardly washed—and not inwardly   
changed. His life may be moral—and yet there may be   
some reigning sin in his heart! The Pharisee could say,   
"I am no adulterer" (Luk 18:11); but he could not say,   
"I am not proud." To trust to one's morality, is to trust   
to a spider's web.  
  
"All of us have become like one who is unclean, and *all  
our righteous acts* are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up  
like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away!"  
Isa 64:6

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**A lackey to every base lust!**  
  
"I am the Lord your God, who has brought you  
out of the land of Egypt—**out of the house of  
bondage**." Exo 20:2   
  
Sin is the true bondage—it enslaves the soul. Sin is the   
enslaver; it is called a *law*—because it has a binding   
power over a man (Rom 7:23). It is said to *reign*—  
because it exercises a tyrannical power (Rom 6:12).   
And men are said to be the *servants of sin*, because   
they are so enslaved by it. Rom 6:17.   
  
Israel was not so enslaved in the iron furnace—as the   
sinner is by sin. They are worse slaves and vassals—  
who are under the power of sin, than those are who   
are under the power of earthly tyrants.  
  
Other slaves have only tyrants ruling over their *bodies*;   
but the sinner has his *soul* tyrannized over. That princely   
part, the soul, which sways the scepter of reason, and   
was once crowned with perfect knowledge and holiness;  
is now enslaved, and made **a lackey to every base lust!**  
  
Other slaves have *some pity* shown them: the tyrant gives   
them food, and lets them have hours for their rest. But sin   
is a merciless tyrant, it will let men have no rest. How does   
a man wear himself out in the service of sin—waste his body,   
break his sleep, distract his mind! A wicked man does *sin's   
drudgery-work* every day!  
  
Other slaves are forced against their will. Israel *groaned* under   
slavery (Exo 2:23); but sinners are *willing* to be slaves of sin!  **They love their chains!** They will not take their freedom; they   
"glory in their shame." Php 3:19. They wear their sins, not as   
their fetters—but their ornaments! They *rejoice* in iniquity. Jer 11:15.  
  
Sin's slaves are brought to damnation. Other slaves lie in the   
*iron* furnace: sin's slaves lie in the *fiery* furnace! What freedom   
of will has a sinner—when he can do nothing but what sin   
commands him? He is enslaved.   
  
But God takes *His elect* out of the house of bondage! He beats   
off the chains and fetters of sin; He rescues them from their   
slavery; He makes them free, by bringing them into "the glorious   
liberty of the children of God." Rom 8:21. The law of *love* now   
rules, not the law of *sin*. Though the *life* of sin is prolonged;  
yet not the *dominion* of sin! The saints are made spiritual kings,   
to rule and conquer their corruptions. It is matter of the highest   
praise and thanksgiving, to be taken out of the house of bondage,   
to be freed from enslaving lusts, and made kings to reign in glory   
forever!  
  
"I am the Lord your God, who has brought you  
out of the land of Egypt—**out of the house of  
bondage**." Exo 20:2

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**God's flail**  
  
God's children may sometimes be under *sore afflictions*.  
They have no charter of exemption from trouble, in this   
life. While the wicked are kept in *sugar*, the godly are   
often kept in *brine*.   
  
And, indeed, how could God's power be seen in bringing   
them out of trouble—if He did not sometimes bring them   
into it? How could God wipe away the tears from their   
eyes in heaven—if on earth they shed none?   
  
Doubtless, God sees there is *need* that His children should   
be sometimes in the house of bondage. "*If need be*, you   
are in heaviness." 1Pe 1:6. The body sometimes needs  
a *bitter* portion—more than a *sweet* one.  
  
"You *refined* us like silver. You brought us into prison  
and laid burdens on our backs." Psa 66:10-11  
  
Why does God bring His people into an afflicted state?  
  
God gives *affliction*—to purge our *corruption*. The eye, though   
a tender part—yet when infected, we put sharp medicines into   
it, to purge out the disease. Just so, though the people of God   
are dear to Him as the apple of His eye—yet, when corruption   
begins to grow in them, He will apply *the sharp medicine of   
affliction*—to purge out the disease.   
  
Affliction is **God's flail** to thresh off our *husks*.   
  
Affliction is a means God uses to purge out   
sloth, luxury, pride, and love of the world.   
  
*God's furnace* is not to consume—but to refine.   
  
God gives us more affliction—that we may have less sin!  
  
God also gives affliction to increase our graces. *Grace   
thrives most in the iron furnace.* Grace in the saints is   
often as fire hidden in the embers; affliction is the   
*bellows* to blow it up into a flame!   
  
The more the diamond is *cut—*the more it sparkles.   
The more God *afflicts* us—the more our graces cast   
a sparkling luster!  
  
The stones which are cut out for a building, are first   
*hewn* and *squared*. The godly are called "living stones."   
1Pe 2:5. God *hews* and *polishes* them by affliction,   
that they may be fit for the heavenly building.

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**Let us examine our ways**  
  
"**Let us examine our ways** and test them, and let  
us return to the Lord." Lam 3:40  
  
By self-examination, a man may see how matters   
stand between God and his soul. It is a spiritual   
inquisition—a heart-anatomy.  
  
Self-examination is difficult, because it is an inward work   
—it lies with the heart. **External acts of devotion are   
easy.** To lift up the eye, to bow the knee, to read over   
a few prayers—is as easy as for the Papists to count over   
a few rosary beads! But to examine a man's self, to take   
the heart in pieces, to make a Scripture-trial of our hearts,  
is not easy. It is easy to spy the faults of *others*—but it   
is hard to find out *our own* faults! Self-examination is   
difficult, with regard to self-love. As ignorance blinds,   
so self-love flatters! To a man looking upon himself *in  
the flattering looking-glass of self-love*—his **virtues**   
appear greater than they are—and his **sins** less!  
  
Self-examination is needful, because without it we may   
easily have a cheat put upon us. "The heart is deceitful   
above all things." Jer 17:9. "The heart is a great   
impostor."   
  
Self-examination is needful, because of the secret corruption   
in the heart—which will not be found out, without searching.   
There are in the heart, "hidden pollutions." It is with a   
Christian, as with Joseph's brethren, who, when the steward   
accused them of having the cup, were ready to swear they   
had it not; but upon search it was found in one of their sacks.   
Little does a Christian think what pride, atheism, immorality   
is in his heart—until he searches it! If there is therefore, such  
hidden wickedness, like a spring running under ground, we   
had need examine ourselves, that finding out our secret sin,   
we may be humbled and repent.   
  
Hidden sins, if not searched out, defile the soul. If corn   
lies long in the chaff, the chaff defiles the corn. Just so,   
sins long hidden defile our duties.

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**If a damned spirit should come from hell**  
  
"I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father's house,  
for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they   
will not also come to this place of torment!" Abraham   
replied, "They have Moses and the Prophets; let them   
listen to them." "No, father Abraham," he said, "but *if   
someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent*."   
He said to him, "If they do not listen to Moses and the   
Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone   
rises from the dead!" Luk 16:27-31   
  
**If an angel should come to you out of heaven**, and   
preach of the excellency of the glorified state, and the   
joys of heaven, and that in the most moving manner—if   
the Word preached does not persuade, neither would you   
be wrought upon, by such an oration from heaven! **If a damned spirit should come from hell**, and preach   
to you in flames, and tell you what a place hell is, and roar   
out the torments of the damned—it might make you tremble  
—but it would not convert you—if the preaching of the Word   
will not do it!  
  
If the Word preached is not effectual to men's conversion—  
it will be effectual to their condemnation. The Word will be   
effectual one way or other; if it does not make your hearts   
better, it will make your chains heavier! Dreadful is their   
case—who go loaded with sermons to hell!

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**A panacea**

The Scripture is a golden epistle, written by   
the Holy Spirit—and sent to us from heaven!  
  
The Scripture is a spiritual looking-glass, to dress   
our souls by. It shows us heart-sins, vain thoughts,   
unbelief, etc. It not only *shows* us our spots—but  *washes* them away!   
  
The Scripture is an **armory**, out of which we may   
fetch spiritual artillery to fight against Satan. When   
our Savior was tempted by the devil, he fetched   
armor and weapons from Scripture; "it is written!"   
  
The Scripture is **a panacea**, or universal medicine   
for the soul; it gives a recipe to cure deadness of   
heart, Psa 119:50; pride, 1Pe 5:5; and infidelity,   
Joh 3:36. It is a garden of remedies, where we may   
gather an herb or antidote, to expel the poison of sin.   
  
The Scripture is "the only standard of conduct"—the   
rule and platform by which we are to square our lives.   
It contains in it all things needful to salvation; what   
duties we are to do, and what sins we are to avoid.   
  
"When Your words came, I ate them; they were my   
joy and my heart's delight." Jer 15:16. All true solid   
comfort is fetched out of the Word. The Word is a   
spiritual garden, and the promises are the fragrant   
flowers or spices in this garden. How should we   
delight to walk among these beds of spices!   
  
The Scripture is a **sovereign elixir**, or comfort,  
in an hour of distress. "Your promise revives me;   
it comforts me in all my troubles." Psa 119:50.   
  
If we would have the Scripture effectual, let us   
labor not only to have the light of it in our *heads*;  
but its power in our *hearts!*   
  
"I have hidden Your Word in my heart, that I might   
not sin against You." Psa 119:11. The Word, locked   
up in the heart—is a preservative against sin. As one   
would carry an antidote with him when he comes near   
an infected place—so David carried the Word in his   
heart as a **sacred antidote** to preserve him from   
the infection of sin.   
  
When we read the holy Scriptures—let us look up to   
God for a blessing. Let us pray that God would not   
only give us His Word as a *rule* of holiness—but His   
grace as a *principle* of holiness! It is said, that the   
alchemist can draw oil out of iron. God's Spirit can   
produce grace in the most obdurate heart!

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**The devil for its father**  
  
Consider what evil there is in sin. It is the "accursed   
thing." Jos 7:11. It is compared to a plague-sore.   
1Ki 8:38. Without repentance sin tends to final   
damnation. "The *moment* of sin passes, the *guilt*   
remains." Sin unrepented of, ends in tragedy.   
  
Sin has . . .  
**the devil for its father**,  
shame for its companion, and  
death and damnation for its wages!

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**Repenting tears**  
  
True repentance works a change in the life. Though   
repentance begins at the heart, it does not end there—  
but goes into the life. It begins at the heart. If the   
spring is corrupt—no pure stream can run from it.   
  
What a change did it make in Mary Magdalene! She   
who before kissed her lovers with wanton embraces  
—now kisses Christ's feet! She who used to braid her  **hair**, and dress it with costly jewels, now makes it a   
towel to wipe Christ's feet! She whose **eyes** used to   
sparkle with lust, and with impure glances to entice   
her lovers—now become fountains of tears to wash   
her Savior's feet! She whose **tongue** that used to   
speak vainly and loosely—now is an instrument set   
in tune to praise God. When her head was a fountain   
to weep for sin—Christ's side was a fountain to wash   
away sin!  
  
There is much sweetness in **repenting tears**. "Your   
*sorrow* shall be turned into *joy*." Joh 16:20. Christ   
turns the water of tears—into wine!   
  
The true penitent breaks off from all sin. One disease   
may kill—as well as more. One sin lived in—may damn   
as well as more. The real penitent breaks off secret,   
gainful, habitual sins; he takes *the sacrificing knife   
of mortification*—and runs it through the heart of   
his dearest lusts!   
  
If you break off your sins—God will become a   
friend to you! All that is in God shall be yours!   
His *power* shall be yours—to help you!   
His *wisdom* shall be yours—to counsel you!   
His *Spirit* shall be yours—to sanctify you!   
His *promises* shall be yours—to comfort you!   
His *mercy* shall be yours—to save you!  
  
Though repentance seems at first to be thorny and   
bitter—yet from this *thorn,* a Christian gathers grapes!   
These considerations may open a vein of godly sorrow   
in our souls—that we may both weep for sin, and turn   
from it.

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**You shall do no hurt to yourself**  
"You shall not murder." Exo 20:13   
  
**You shall do no hurt to yourself**. One may be   
indirectly guilty of self-murder, by intemperance   
or excess in diet.   
  
Glutting shortens life.   
  
More perish by *drink*—than by the *sword*.   
  
Many dig their grave with their teeth.   
  
Too much oil chokes the lamp.   
  
The *cup* kills more than the *cannon*.   
  
Excessive drinking causes untimely death.

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**God writes down no *ciphers* in the book of life!**  
  
"Six days you shall labor." Exo 20:9  
  
God would not have any live without working. True religion gives no warrant for idleness. "For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: 'If a man will not work, he shall not eat.' We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies. Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat." 2Th 3:10-12. A Christian must not only mind heaven—but his vocation. While the pilot has his eye to the star, he has his hand to the helm. Without labor, the pillars of a commonwealth will dissolve, and the earth, like the sluggard's field, will be overrun with briers. Pro 24:31. Adam in innocence, though monarch of the world, must not be idle—but must dress and till the ground. Gen 2:15. Piety does not exclude industry. Standing water putrefies.   
  
*Inanimate* creatures are in motion. The sun goes its circuit, the fountain runs, and the fire sparkles.   
  
*Animate* creatures work. Solomon sends us to the *ant* to learn labor. Pro 6:6; Pro 30:25. The *bee* is the emblem of industry; some of the bees trim the honey, others work the wax, others frame the honeycomb, others lie sentinel at the door of the hive to keep out the drone. And shall not man much more labor?   
  
That law in *paradise* was never repealed. "In the sweat of your face shall you eat bread." Gen 3:19. Such professors are to be excluded, who talk of living by faith—but live without working; they are like the lilies which "toil not, neither do they spin." Mat 6:28. It is a speech of holy and learned Mr. Perkins, "Let a man be endowed with excellent gifts, and hear the Word with reverence, and receive the sacrament—yet if he does not work—all is but hypocrisy." What is an idle person good for? What benefit is a *ship* which lies always on the shore? What benefit is *armor* which hangs up and rusts?   
  
To live without working, exposes a person to temptation. Melanchthon calls idleness "the Devil's bath," because he bathes himself with delight in an idle soul. Satan sows most of his seed of temptation, in idle people. **Idleness is the nurse of vice!** An idle person stands for a *cipher* in the world; **God writes down no ciphers in the book of life!**   
  
An idle person can give no good account of his time. Time is a talent to trade with. The slothful person "hides his talent in the earth;" he does no good; his time is not *lived*—but *lost!* An idle person lives unprofitably, he cumbers the ground. God calls the slothful servant "wicked." "You wicked and slothful servant." Mat 25:26.   
  
Draco, whose laws were written in blood, deprived those of their life, who would not work for their living. In Hetruria, they caused such idle people to be banished. Idle people live in the breach of the commandment, "Six days shall you labor." Let them take heed they are not banished from heaven! A man may as well go to hell for not working—as for not believing!

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**Creation and Redemption**  
  
Great was the work of **creation**—but greater was the   
work of **redemption**. The *glory* of the redemption was   
greater than the glory of the creation. Great *wisdom*   
was seen in making us—but more miraculous wisdom   
in saving us. Great *power* was seen in bringing us out   
of nothing—but greater power in helping us when we   
were worse than nothing. It *cost* more to redeem than   
to create us. In creation it was but speaking a word; in   
redeeming there was shedding of blood! Creation was   
the work of God's fingers, Psa 8:3, redemption was   
the work of His arm. Luk 1:51. In creation, God gave   
us ourselves; in the redemption, He gave us Himself.   
By creation, we have life in Adam; by redemption, we   
have life in Christ. By creation, we had a right to earth;  
by redemption, we have a title to a heavenly kingdom.

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**The devil has two false mirrors**  
  
**The devil has two false mirrors**, which he sets before   
men's eyes. The one is a **little mirror**, in which the sin   
appears so small that it can hardly be seen; which the   
devil sets before men's eyes when they are going to   
commit sin. You who say that your sin is small—when   
God shall open the eye of your conscience, you will   
see it to be great, and worthy of damnation!   
  
The other is a **large magnifying glass,** wherein sin   
appears so big that it cannot be forgiven; which the   
devil sets before men's eyes *after* they have sinned.

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**We take God's name in vain**  
  
"You shall not take the name of the Lord your God  
in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless, who  
takes His name in vain." Exo 20:7  
  
The thing here insisted on is, that great care must   
be had, that the holy and reverend name of God is   
not profaned by us, or taken in vain. When we speak   
slightly of God or His works, He interprets it as a   
contempt, and taking His name in vain.  
  
**We take God's name in vain**, when we use God's   
name in idle discourse. God is not to be spoken of,  
but with a holy awe upon our hearts. How many are   
guilty here! Though they have God in their mouths  
—they have the devil in their hearts. It is a wonder   
that fire does not come out from the Lord to consume   
them, as it did Nadab and Abihu!

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**The incense which perfumes our holy things**  
  
"You shall not take the name of the Lord your God  
in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless, who  
takes His name in vain." Exo 20:7  
  
We take God's name in vain, when we worship Him with   
our *lips*—but not with our *hearts*. God calls for the heart,   
"My son, give Me your heart." Pro 23:26. *The heart is   
the chief thing in religion;* it draws the will and affections   
after it. The heart is **the incense which perfumes our   
holy things**. The heart is the altar which sanctifies the   
offering. When we seem to worship God—but withdraw   
our heart from Him, we take His name in vain. "These   
people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far   
from Me. They worship Me in vain." Mat 15:8-9   
  
Hypocrites take God's name in vain—their religion is a lie;   
they seem to honor God—but they do not love Him; their   
hearts go after their lusts. "They set their heart on their   
iniquity." Hos 4:8. Their eyes are lifted up to *heaven*—  
but *their hearts are rooted in the earth!*

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**Why so?**  
  
"You shall have no *other gods* before Me." Exo 20:3   
  
What is it to have *other gods* besides the true God?   
I fear upon search, we have more idolaters among   
us than we are aware of.  
  
To LOVE anything more than God, is to make it a god.   
  
If we love our estate more than God, we make it a god.   
The young man in the gospel loved his gold better than   
his Savior; the world lay nearer his heart than Christ.   
Mat 19:22. "This gold with its glitter blinds the eyes."  
The covetous man is called an idolater. Eph 5:5. **Why   
so?** Because he loves his estate more than God, and   
so makes it his god. Though he does not bow down to   
an idol, if he worships the engraved image in his coins,   
he is an idolater.   
  
That which has most of the heart, we make a god of.

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**Man makes a god of the dust of the earth!**  
  
"You shall have no *other gods* before Me." Exo 20:3   
  
What is it to have *other gods* besides the true God?   
I fear upon search, we have more idolaters among   
us than we are aware of.  
  
If we trust in our RICHES, we make riches our God. We   
may take *comfort* in riches—but not put *confidence* in them.  
It is a *foolish* thing to trust in them. They are **deceitful**riches,   
and it is foolish to trust to that which will deceive us. They   
have no solid consistency, they are like *golden dreams*, which   
leave the soul empty when it awakens, or comes to itself.   
  
*They are not what they promise!* They promise to *satisfy*   
our desires—and they increase them! They promise to stay   
with us—and they take wings.   
  
They are **hurtful**. "I have seen a grievous evil under the sun:   
wealth hoarded to the harm of its owner." Ecc 5:13. It is foolish   
to trust to that which will hurt oneself. Who would take hold of   
the edge of a razor?   
  
Riches are often fuel for pride and lust. Eze 28:5; Jer 5:7.   
  
It is folly to trust in our riches; but how many do, and make   
money their god! God made man of the dust of the earth,   
and **man makes a god of the dust of the earth!** Money   
is his creator, redeemer, comforter. Money is his *creator*, for   
if he has money—he thinks he is made*.* Money is his *redeemer*,   
for if he is in danger, he trusts to his money to redeem him.   
Money is his *comforter*, for if he is sad, money is the golden   
harp to drive away the evil spirit. Thus by trusting to money,   
we make it a god.

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**He deifies himself!**  
  
"You shall have no *other gods* before Me." Exo 20:3   
  
What is it to have *other gods* besides the true God?   
I fear upon search, we have more idolaters among   
us than we are aware of.  
  
If we trust in our WISDOM, we make it a god. "Let not   
the wise man boast of his wisdom." Jer 9:23. Boasting   
is the height of confidence. Many a man makes an idol   
of his wit and abilities—**he deifies himself!** But how   
often does God take the wise in their own craftiness!   
"He catches those who think they are wise in their   
own cleverness, so that their cunning schemes are   
thwarted." Job 5:13

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Our lives should be **walking Bibles!**

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**A thousand prayers and praises**  
  
"Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices  
as much as in obeying the voice of the Lord? To obey  
is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the  
fat of rams." 1Sa 15:22  
  
**A thousand prayers and praises** do not   
honor God so much—as the mortifying of one lust!

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**God must have the cream!**  
  
"You must **love** the Lord your God with all your heart,  
all your soul, and all your strength." Deu 6:5  
  
The nature of love consists in delighting in an object.  
Love to God, is a holy fire kindled in the affections,   
whereby a Christian is carried out strongly after God   
as the supreme good.  
  
The summary of our duty to God, is love. Love is the   
soul of religion, and that which constitutes a genuine  
Christian. Love is the queen of graces; it shines and   
sparkles in God's eye!  
  
Scripture knowledge always precedes love. The Spirit   
shines upon the understanding, and reveals the beauties   
of wisdom, holiness, and mercy in God. These are the  
magnet to entice and draw out love to God. Those who   
do no know God, cannot love Him.   
  
If it is a sincere love, we love God "with all our heart."   
God will have the whole heart. We must not divide our   
love between Him, and sin. The true mother would not   
have the child divided, nor will God have the heart   
divided; it must be the whole heart.  
  
We must love God for Himself, for His own intrinsic   
excellencies. We must love Him for His loveliness.   
"It is a harlot's love to love the *portion*, more than   
the *person*." Hypocrites love God because He gives   
them corn and wine. The sincere Christian loves   
God for Himself; for those shining perfections   
which are in Him.   
  
We must love God "with all our strength", in the   
Hebrew text, "with all our vehemency." We must   
love God—as much as we are able. Christians should   
be like seraphim, burning in holy love. We can never   
love God as much as He deserves. Even the angels   
in heaven cannot love God as much as He deserves.  
  
Love to God must be *active* in its sphere. Love is an   
industrious affection! It sets—the head studying for   
God, the hands working, the feet running in the ways   
of His commandments. It is called "the *labor* of love."   
1Th 1:3. Mary Magdalene loved Christ—and poured   
her ointments on Him. We think we never do enough,   
for the person whom we love.  
  
Love to God must be superlative. God is the essence   
of beauty—a whole paradise of delight. He must have   
a priority in our love. Our love to God must be above   
all other things—as the oil swims above the water. We   
must love God above estate and relations. We may   
give the creature the *milk* of our love—but **God   
must have the cream!** The spouse keeps the   
juice of her pomegranates, for Christ. Canticles 8:2.  
  
Our love to God must be constant. Love must be like  
the motion of the pulse, which beats as long as there  
is life. "Many waters cannot quench love." Son 8:7.

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**Satan's masterpiece, his dragnet**  
  
Why is it, that men do not obey God?   
  
The not obeying God, is for lack of faith. "Who has   
believed our report?" Isa 53:1 : Did men believe  
—that sin were so bitter, and that hell followed at   
its heels—would they go on in sin? Did they believe   
there was such a reward for the righteous, and that   
godliness was great gain—would they not pursue it?   
But they are atheists, and do not fully believe these  
things; hence it is that they do not obey God.   
  
**Satan's masterpiece, his dragnet** by which he   
drags millions to hell, is to keep them in unbelief!   
He knows, if he can but keep them from *believing*   
the truth—he is sure to keep them from *obeying* it.  
  
The not obeying God, is also for lack of self-denial.   
God commands one thing, and men's lusts command   
another; and they will rather die, than deny their lusts.   
If lust cannot be denied—God cannot be obeyed.

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**As the bee sucks sweetness from the flower**—  
so faith sucks all its strength and comfort from Christ.

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**The golden key which opens heaven!**

Prayer is **the golden key which opens   
heaven!**   
  
The *tree of promise* will not drop its fruit,   
unless shaken by the hand of prayer.  
  
All the benefits of Christ's redemption,   
are handed over to us by prayer.

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**If they had it in their power**  
  
To malign holiness is diabolical. It is a sin to *lack* grace,   
it is worse to *hate* it! Some have an antipathy against   
God because of His purity. "Rid us of the Holy One of   
Israel!" Isa 30:11. Sinners, if it lay in their power,   
would not only unthrone God—but annihilate Him! **If   
they had it in their power**—God would no longer   
be God. Thus sin is boiled up to a great height.

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**The frozen snake**  
  
Those sins are of greater magnitude, which are mixed   
with **ingratitude**. Of all things—God cannot endure to   
have His kindness slighted. His mercy is seen in reprieving   
men so long, in wooing them by His Spirit and ministers to   
be reconciled, in crowning them with so many temporal   
blessings. And to abuse all this love—when God has been   
filling up the measure of his mercy, for men to fill up the   
measure of their sins—is high ingratitude, and makes   
their sins of a deeper crimson!   
  
Some are worse for God's mercy. "The vulture," says Aelian,   
"draws sickness—from perfumes." So the sinner contracts evil  
—from the sweet perfumes of God's mercy. *Mr. Parry*, being   
condemned to die, Queen Elizabeth sent him her pardon. And   
after he was pardoned—he conspired and plotted the queen's   
death! Just so, some deal with God—He bestows mercy, and   
they plot treason against Him. "I have nourished and brought   
up children, and they have rebelled against me." Isa 1:2.   
In the fable, **the frozen snake**, after being warmed, stung   
him who gave it warmth! Certainly, sins against God's mercy,  
are more heinous.

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**An idle person**  
  
**An idle person** tempts the devil to tempt him!  
The devil hires such as stand idle, and puts them   
to his work.  
  
"Escape the Devil’s trap, having been captured   
by him to do his will." 2Ti 2:26

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**When He does not punish!**  
  
"*Happy* is the man whom God corrects; so do not  
despise the discipline of the Almighty." Job 5:17  
  
The godly have some *good* in them—therefore   
the devil afflicts them; and some *evil* in them  
—therefore God afflicts them.   
  
The holiness of the saints will not excuse them   
from sufferings. Christ was the holy one of God  
—yet He was in the iron furnace. His spouse is   
"a *lily* among *thorns*." Canticles 2:2  
 *Affliction is not always the sign of God's anger.*   
We are apt to judge and censure those who are   
in an afflicted state. When the barbarians saw the   
*viper* on Paul's hand, they said, *"No doubt this man   
is a murderer!"* Act 28:4. So, when we see the *viper   
of affliction* fasten upon the godly, we are apt to   
censure them, as greater sinners than others. But   
this rash censuring is for lack of wisdom.   
  
God's afflicting is so far from evidencing His hatred,   
that His **not** afflicting is an evidence of His hatred.   
"I will **not** punish your daughters when they commit   
whoredom." Hos 4:14. God punishes most—**when   
He does not punish!** His hand is heaviest—when it   
seems to be lightest. The judge will not burn him in  
the *hand*—whom he intends to execute at the *stake!*  
  
"Ephraim is attached to idols; **leave him alone!**"   
Hos 4:17

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**God sanctifies all our afflictions**  
  
**God sanctifies all our afflictions.** They shall   
not be destructive punishments—but medicines!   
They shall corrode and eat out the venom of sin;   
they shall polish and refine our grace. The more   
the diamond is *cut*—the more it sparkles.

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**Your Husband**  
  
"Your Maker is **your Husband**." Isa 54:5   
  
God is our husband. He esteems us as precious to   
Him, as the apple of His eye! Zec 2:8. He imparts   
His secrets to us! (Psa 25:14) He bestows a   
kingdom upon us for our dowry! (Luk 12:3)  
  
God calls His people, the "dearly beloved of my soul."   
(Jer 12:7) He rejoices over them with joy. (Zep 3:17)  
They are His refined silver (Zec 13:9); His jewels   
(Mal 3:17); His royal diadem (Isa 62:3). He gives   
them the cream and flower of His love. He not only   
opens His *hand* and fills them—but opens His *heart*   
and fills them.

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**He would only have this flower**  
  
It is nothing but your love, which God desires.   
  
The Lord might have demanded your children to be   
offered in sacrifice; He might have bid you cut and   
lance yourselves, or lie in hell awhile! But He only   
desires your *love*—**He would only have this flower**.   
  
Is it a hard request, to love God? Was ever any debt   
easier paid, than this? Is it any labor for the wife to   
love her husband? Love is delightful.  
  
What is there in our love—that God should desire it?   
Why would a king desire the love of a woman who is   
in debt and diseased? **God does not need our love**.   
There are angels enough in heaven to adore and love  
Him. What is God the better for our love? It adds not   
the least cubit to His essential blessedness. He does   
not need our love, and yet He seeks it.

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**My own special treasure!**  
  
Obedience is the beauty of a Christian. Obedience makes us   
precious to God—*His favorites.* "Now if you will **obey** Me and   
keep my covenant—you will be **My own special treasure!**"   
Exo 19:5. You shall be My portion, My jewels, the apple   
of My eye. "You are honored, and I love you." Isa 43:4.

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**It mellows and ripens them**  
  
Our obedience to God must be free and cheerful—  
or it is penance, not sacrifice. "If you are willing   
and obedient." Isa 1:19. Though we serve God   
with *weakness*, it must be with *willingness*.   
  
Hypocrites obey God grudgingly, and against their   
will; they do good, but not willingly. Cain brought   
his sacrifice—but not his heart. It is a true rule—  
whatever the *heart* does not do, is not done.   
  
Willingness is the soul of obedience. God sometimes   
accepts of willingness without the work—but never   
of the work without willingness. Cheerfulness shows   
that there is *love* in the duty. And love is to our   
services, what the sun is to fruit—**it mellows and   
ripens them**, and makes them come off with a   
better relish.

÷**The Mischief of Sin**

by Thomas Watson, 1671

CHOICE EXCERPTS  
  
**When you were marching to hell!**  
  
"Even though I was once a blasphemer and a   
persecutor and a violent man, **I was shown  
mercy**." 1 Timothy 1:13   
  
Literally, *"I was bemercied."* Christians, why might not  
you have been in the number of those who persist in   
sinning? Because God has *bemiracled you with mercy!*  
  
See what cause you have to admire the stupendous   
goodness of God, who has wrought a change in you  
—and checked you in your full career of sin!   
  
Christians, you who are *vessels of election—*were by   
nature as wicked as others—but God had compassion   
on you and plucked you as brands out of the fire! He   
stopped you in your course of sinning—**when you   
were marching to hell!** He turned you back to   
Him by sincere repentance. Oh, here is the banner   
of love displayed over you!   
  
Behold sovereign grace! Let your hearts melt in love   
to God. Admire His royal bounty. Set the crown of all   
your praises, upon the head of free grace! *"By the   
grace of God I am what I am!"* 1 Corinthians 15:10   
  
  
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**Another *stick* to heat hell**  
  
See what *vast treasures of wrath* are laid up for unrepentant  
sinners. "Because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant   
heart, you are ***storing up wrath***against yourself for the day   
of God's wrath, when His righteous judgment will be revealed."   
Romans 2:5  
  
As *guilt* increases—so does *wrath*. Every *sin* committed, is  **another *stick* to heat hell**—and make it burn the hotter!   
  
It is a thing to be lamented—that men should live in the   
world, only to increase their torments in hell. While they   
commit new sins, they are burdening themselves with   
more iron chains, which will be so heavy at last, that   
they will not be able to *bear* them—or *avoid* them.   
  
Oh, sinner! Know that for every sin, you are only adding   
to your torment! **Every dish Satan serves you**—will   
only increase your fatal reckoning, and make your   
condemnation heavier.   
  
Every sin is a *drop of oil* upon hell's eternal furnace!

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**Linked together with adamantine chains!**   
  
Sin is the *womb of sorrow*—and the *grave of   
comfort!* Sin turns the body into a hospital.   
It causes fevers, ulcers, and cancers.  
  
Sin is the Trojan horse, out of which a   
whole troop of afflictions come.   
  
Sin drowned the old world, and burnt Sodom.   
  
Sin and punishment are **linked together with   
adamantine chains!** Sin as naturally draws   
punishment to it—as the magnet draws iron!  
  
Sin is a coal which not only blackens—but burns!   
  
Sin draws hell at its heels. "The *wicked* shall   
be turned into *hell*." Psalm 9:7  
  
Sin lays men low in the grave, and in   
hell too—without repentance.   
  
Sin first tempts—and then damns!

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**They tempt the devil to fall in love with them!**  
  
"I hate pride and arrogance." Proverbs 8:13  
  
Pride runs in the blood.   
  
Augustine calls pride, *"the mother of all sin!"*  
  
Some people would be better—if they could   
pluck the *worm of pride* out of their head!   
  
Pride ruins our virtues—and poisons our mercies.   
  
Some are proud of their **estates**. Riches are fuel for   
pride. Ezekiel 28:5, "Your heart has become proud   
because of your wealth." Men's hearts rise with their   
estates.  
  
Some take pride in their **abilities**. The Lord enriches   
them with wit and talents—and pride fumes from   
their heart into their head—and makes them giddy.   
  
Some are proud of their **bodies**. Pride is seen in   
long and meticulous *dressings*. They spend that   
time between the *comb* and the *looking-glass*,   
which should be spent in prayer and holy meditation.  
  
Pride is seen in painting their faces—*overlaying God's   
work with the devil's colors!* But *virtue* is most beautiful   
to God. "Don't be concerned about the outward beauty   
that depends on fancy hairstyles, expensive jewelry, or   
beautiful clothes. You should be known for the beauty   
that comes from within—the unfading beauty of a gentle   
and quiet spirit, which is so precious to God." 1 Pet. 3:3-4   
  
Pride is seen in the outlandish *fashions* with which some   
people *dress—*or rather *disguise* themselves. They clothe   
themselves like the rainbow. Adam was ashamed of his   
nakedness; these should be ashamed of their clothing.   
They are so plumed and gaudily attired—that **they   
tempt the devil to fall in love with them!**  
  
"The Lord detests all the proud of heart! Be sure of   
this—They will not go unpunished!" Proverbs 16:5

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**The *devils* are scrambling for his soul!**  
  
"Covetousness, which is idolatry." Colossians 3:5  
  
Covetousness is the cancer of the soul.  
  
Covetousness is *a key which opens the door* to further   
wickedness. 1 Timothy 6:10, "For the *love of money* is   
at the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving   
money, have wandered from the faith and pierced   
themselves with many sorrows!"  
  
And what is one the better for all his wealth—**at death?**   
1 Timothy 6:10, "We brought nothing into the world—and   
it is certain that we can carry nothing out." When the **rich   
miser** **dies**—what *scrambling* is there!  
  
His *friends* are scrambling for his money!  
  
The *worms* are scrambling for his body!  
 **The *devils* are scrambling for his soul!**

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**Milk-white!**  
  
"The blood of Jesus *cleanses* us from all our sin!"  
1 John 1:7  
  
Christ's blood is a CLEANSING blood.  
  
As the merit of Christ's blood *pacifies God*—so the   
virtue of it *purifies us*. Christ's blood is *heaven's bath*.   
It is a laver to wash in. It washes a *crimson* sinner—  
**milk-white!**  
  
The *Word of God* is a looking-glass to show us our   
spots—and the *blood of Christ* is a fountain to wash   
them away! "On that day a fountain will be opened  
—to cleanse them from all their sins and defilement!"   
Zechariah 13:1  
  
But this blood will not wash—if it is *mingled* with   
anything. If we mingle our good works with Christ's   
blood—it will not wash. Let Christ's blood be pure and   
unmixed—and there is no spot which it cannot wash   
away! It purged out Noah's drunkenness—and Lot's   
incest!

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**Make us 'clods of earth' into 'stars of glory'**  
  
Christ is that *golden pipe*—through which the *golden oil  
of salvation* is transmitted to us.  
  
"Because of His great love that He had for us" Ephesians 2:4  
  
*Nothing could fasten Jesus to the cross—but the golden link of love!*   
  
The emperor Trajan tore off a piece of his own *robe* to bind up   
one of his soldier's wounds. But Christ tore off His own *flesh* for us!   
  
"He gave **Himself** for us to redeem us." Titus 2:14. Christ gave   
*Himself* for us—*what more could He give?* If He had anything to   
part with of more worth—He would have bestowed it upon us!  
  
What astonishing love—that Christ should die for such as we are.   
What are we? Not only *vanity*—but *enmity!*   
  
When we were *rebelling*—He was *dying!* When we had *weapons*   
in our hands—then He had the *spear* in His side! This is the very   
quintessence of love! "God demonstrates His own love for us in   
this: While we were still *sinners*, Christ died for us!" Romans 5:8.  
When we were engulfed in misery and had lost our beauty—then   
Christ died for us. O amazing love, which should swallow up all   
our thoughts!  
  
What astonishing love—that Christ should die for us—rather than   
for the *fallen angels*. They were creatures of a more noble extraction   
and, in all probability, might have brought greater revenues of glory   
to God. Yet, that Christ should pass by those *golden vessels*, and   
**make us 'clods of earth' into 'stars of glory'**—O the hyperbole   
of Christ's love!

What a stupendous love is this!   
  
Who can meditate upon His love—and not be in ecstasy!  
  
We may behold the *odiousness of sin*—in the red looking-glass of   
Christ's sufferings. Sin is to be abominated, since it turned Adam out   
of paradise and threw the angels down to hell. Sin is the birthplace   
of our sorrows—and the grave of our comforts. But that which may   
most of all *disfigure the face of sin* and make it appear abominable   
is this—*It crucified our Lord Jesus!*  
  
O let us look upon sin with indignation! When a temptation to sin   
comes—let us say, "Is not this the sin which poured out Christ's   
blood!" Let our hearts be enraged against sin!   
  
When the senators of Rome showed the people *Caesar's bloody   
robe*, they were incensed against those who slew him. Sin has   
rent the white robe of Christ's flesh—and died it a crimson color!  
Let us, then, seek to be avenged of our sins!  
  
Under the Law, if an *ox* gored a man so that he died—the ox   
was to be killed, Exodus 21:28. *Sin* has gored and pierced our   
Savior! Let it die!  
  
Let us be deeply affected with the great love of Christ for us.   
Who can tread upon these hot coals—and his heart not burn?   
Cry out with Ignatius, *"Christ, my love, is crucified!"*

If a *friend* would die for us—would not our hearts be much   
affected with his kindness? That the God of heaven would   
die for us—how should this stupendous mercy have a melting   
influence upon us! The body of Christ broken—is enough to   
break the most flinty heart. At our Savior's passion, "the   
rocks split apart!" He who is not affected with Christ's love  
—has a heart harder than the rocks!

How should we be affected with Christ's kindness who, to   
spare our life—lost His own! Let us pray that, as Christ was   
fastened to the *cross*—so He may be fastened to our *hearts!*"May you experience the love of Christ, though it is so great   
you will never fully understand it!" Ephesians 3:19

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**The fire will make them forget the pleasure!**   
  
"Lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God."   
2 Timothy 3:4   
  
"Reveling in their pleasures." 2 Peter 2:13   
  
"They actually rejoice in doing evil!" Jerem. 11:15  
  
It is worse to *love* sin—than to *commit* it. He who   
loves sin—his *heart* is in the sin. He follows it with   
delight—like a man hunts his game.   
  
Sinners say they hate the devil—but they love that   
which will bring them to the devil! *Lovers of sin* shall   
have more of hell torment. **The fire will make them   
forget the pleasure!** *Oh, who would, for a cup of   
pleasure, drink a sea of wrath!* "Don't be deceived:   
God is not mocked. For whatever a man sows he   
will also reap." Galatians 6:7

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**A private back door to hell**  
  
"*Can anyone hide in secret places so that I  
cannot see him? Do not I fill heaven and  
earth?* declares the Lord." Jeremiah 23:24   
  
Let me not only speak to *scandalous* sinners,   
who seem to have 'damnation' written upon   
their foreheads—but to *secret* sinners.   
  
"Cursed is he who makes an idol and puts it  
in a *secret* place." Deuteronomy 27:15. Some   
of the Jews would not be seen openly bowing   
to an idol—but they would put it in their closet   
or some other secret place and there worship it.   
  
There are many in like manner who will not   
*sin on the balcony*, or be like Absalom and   
sin in the sight of all Israel, 2 Samuel 16:22.  
But they shut up their windows, and commit  
their sin in secret. They have **a private back   
door to hell**—which nobody knows of!   
  
Perhaps they live in secret *adultery,* or secret   
*envy* and *malice,* or secret *neglect of duty*. God   
knows that they are living in secret sins. What   
an aggravation of sin is this! These desperate,   
*heaven-daring sinners,* though they see the   
flaming sword of God's justice before them,   
resolvedly venture on in sin!  
  
*"I have been watching!"* declares the Lord.   
Jeremiah 7:11   
  
"I have seen your detestable acts! Woe to you!  
How long will you be unclean?" Jeremiah 13:27

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**A never-dying appetite for sin**  
  
"They were seared by the intense heat and they cursed   
the name of God, who had control over these plagues,  
but *they refused to repent* and glorify Him. Men gnawed   
their tongues in agony and cursed the God of heaven   
because of their pains and their sores, but *they refused   
to repent* of what they had done." Revelation 16:9, 11   
  
If men would men live forever—they would sin forever.   
  
Some think it harsh that for the sins committed in a few   
years—they should undergo eternal torment. But here   
lies the justice and equity of it—it is because sinners   
have *an everlasting principle of sin* in them. Their stock   
of corruption is never spent. They have **a never-dying   
appetite for sin**—which is justly punished with a   
never-dying worm! "Their worm does not die, and   
the fire is not quenched!" Mark 9:44

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**They commit their filthy sins against Him!**  
 *"In spite of all this, they kept on sinning!"* Psalm 78:32   
  
See the sordid ingratitude of sinners. Notwithstanding   
the fact that they had such eminent and signal favors  
from God—the pillar of fire to lead them, the rock split   
to give them water—yet God's mercy could not, with   
all its oratory, prevail with them to leave their   
iniquities. "They kept on sinning!"  
  
God would draw men from sin by His mercies—yet they   
will indulge their lusts. Oh, how ungrateful! It is an ill   
nature—which will not be won with love. Beasts are   
wrought upon with kindness, Isaiah 1:3—but sinners   
are not! T*he wicked are worse for God's mercies!* They,   
like vultures—draw sickness from these perfumes!  
  
The wicked deal with God as we do with the Thames.   
The Thames brings us in our riches—our gold, silks   
and spices—and we throw all our filth into the Thames.  
Just so do the wicked deal with God. He gives them all   
their mercies—and **they commit their filthy sins   
against Him!** *"They kept on sinning!"*  
  
If mercy is not a magnet to draw us nearer to God—it   
will be a millstone to sink us deeper into hell. Nothing   
is so cold as lead—yet nothing is more scalding when   
it is melted. Nothing is so **sweet** as God's mercy—yet   
nothing is so **dreadful**, when it is abused!

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**Take these three spears**  
  
Do with your sin—as Joab did with Absalom.   
He took three spears and thrust them through   
the heart of Absalom! 2 Samuel 18:14   
  
**Take these three spears**—the Word of God,   
prayer, and mortification—and strike through  
the heart of your lusts, so that they die!   
  
What is the end of all a Christian's duties, praying,   
and hearing—but to weaken and mortify lust!   
Why is this spiritual medicine taken—but to kill   
the child of sin! Sin will insinuate itself and plead  
for a reprieve—but show it no mercy!  
  
Saul's sparing Agag lost him the kingdom—and   
your sparing sin will lose you the kingdom of heaven.   
Do with your sin, what Samuel did to Agag, "He   
*hacked Agag to pieces* before the Lord at Gilgal."   
1 Samuel 15:33.

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**Nothing will convince them**  
  
If we could see hell-fire in every sin—it would   
make us fear to commit it! The fiercest creatures   
dread fire. When Moses' rod was turned into a   
serpent, he was afraid and fled from it. Sin will   
prove to be a stinging serpent. Oh, fly from it!   
  
Most people are like the leviathin—a creature   
devoid of fear, Job 41:33. They play upon the   
hole of the asp. Sinners never *fear* hell—until   
they *feel* hell! **Nothing will convince them**  
—but fire and brimstone!

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**A shortcut to hell!**  
  
The *unchaste* heart is a volcano—burning with lust!   
Immorality is the shipwreck of chastity—and the   
murder of conscience.  
  
Immorality is a **brutish** sin. "They are well-fed,   
*lusty stallions*, each neighing for another man's   
wife." Jeremiah 5:8  
  
Immorality is a **costly** sin; it proves a *purgatory* to   
the purse. Proverbs 6:26, "The prostitute reduces you   
to a loaf of bread, and the adulteress preys upon your   
very life." "You will lose your honor and hand over to   
merciless people everything you have achieved in life.   
Strangers will obtain your wealth, and someone else   
will enjoy the fruit of your labor. Afterward you will   
groan in anguish when disease consumes your body!"   
Proverbs 5:9-11   
  
Immorality is a **foolish** sin. Proverbs 5:20. "The man   
who commits adultery is an *utter fool*, for he destroys   
his own soul!" Proverbs 6:32  
  
The immoral person *hastens his own* ***death*.** "She   
seduces him with her persistent pleading; she lures   
with her flattering talk. He follows her impulsively like   
an ox going to the slaughter, like a deer bounding   
toward a trap until an arrow pierces its liver, like a   
bird darting into a snare—he doesn't know it will cost   
him his life!" Proverbs 7:21-23. By an early death—  
the immoral person takes **a shortcut to hell!**   
  
The fire of lust—kindles the fire of God's anger.  
  
"Nothing impure will ever enter it." Revelation 21:27   
  
"Outside are the dogs, the sexually immoral."   
Revelation 22:15  
  
  
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**The heart of a beast**  
  
"Man, who is vile and corrupt, who drinks up  
evil like water!" Job 15:16  
  
People sin with greediness, "Having lost all sensitivity,   
they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to   
indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust   
for more." Ephesians 4:19. They have grown rampant   
in wickedness, having laid aside the veil of modesty.   
"The wicked know no shame." Zephaniah 3:5   
  
We read that Nebuchadnezzar had **the heart of a beast**   
given to him, Daniel 4:16. If all who have the hearts of   
beasts, had the faces of beasts—men would be very scarce!  
  
  
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Were our sins engraved upon our foreheads,   
**we would be ashamed to look up!**~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
 **Worldly things** can no more relieve a troubled   
mind—than a silk stocking can ease a broken leg!   
  
  
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**A father who chastises his child with tears**  
  
"When My anger is spent and I have vented My  
wrath on them—I will be comforted." Ezekiel 5:13  
  
God does not take delight in punishing. Judges 10:16,   
"His soul was grieved for the misery of Israel." He is like   
**a father who chastises his child with tears**. But God   
was so provoked with the Jews, that it seemed a *delight*   
to Him to afflict. "When My anger is spent and I have   
vented My wrath on them—I will be comforted." Oh,   
what a venomous, accursed thing sin is—which makes   
a merciful God take comfort in the destruction of His   
own creature!  
  
  
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**It will soften a stone!**  
Christ's blood is a SOFTENING blood.   
  
There is nothing so hard, that it cannot be softened   
by this blood. **It will soften a stone!** Water will   
soften the earth—but it will not soften a stone; but   
Christ's blood mollifies a stone. It softens a heart of   
stone. It turns a flint into a spring. The heart, which   
before was like a piece hewn out of a rock, being   
steeped in Christ's blood—becomes soft, and the   
waters of repentance flow from it.  
  
How was the jailer's heart dissolved and made tender   
when the blood of sprinkling was upon it! "Sirs, what   
must I do to be saved?" Acts 16:30. His heart was   
now like *melting wax*. God might now set whatever   
seal and impression He desired, upon it.  
  
"I will give you a new heart with new and right desires,  
and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your  
stony heart of sin and give you a new, obedient heart."  
Ezekiel 36:26   
  
  
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**Keep this medicine next to your heart**  
  
"The people of Israel called the bread *manna*.   
It was white like coriander seed and tasted  
like wafers made with *honey*." Exodus 16:31  
  
The *manna* was a lively type and emblem of Christ, for   
manna was *sweet*. It was a delicious food—and was   
called **angel's food** for its excellency. Psalm 78:25. So   
Christ, the sacramental manna, is sweet to a believer's   
soul. "His fruit was sweet to my taste," Song of Solomon   
2:3. Everything of Christ is sweet. His name is sweet. His   
virtue is sweet. This manna sweetens the bitter waters of   
Marah.  
  
Nay, Christ's flesh excels manna. Manna was *food*—but   
not *medicine*. If an Israelite had been sick, manna could   
not have cured him. But this blessed manna is not only   
for food—but for medicine! Christ has healing under His   
wings, Malachi 4:2. He heals the *blind eye*, and the *hard  
heart*. **Keep this medicine next to your heart**—and it   
will heal you of all your spiritual distempers.   
  
Also, manna was corruptible. It ceased when Israel came   
to Canaan. But this blessed manna will never cease! The   
saints will feed with infinite delight and soul satisfaction   
upon Christ—to all eternity! The joys of heaven would   
cease—if this manna would cease.   
  
*Every crumb of this Bread of life is precious!*  
  
  
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**Must we have our *bracelets* and *diamonds***,   
when Christ had the *nails* and *spear* going to His heart!  
  
  
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**The scum**  
  
Murmuring against God is not the way to get out   
of trouble—but rather to go lower into trouble!  
What does the child get by struggling—but more   
blows? Oh, do not lisp out a murmuring word  
against God! Murmuring is **the scum** which   
boils off from a discontented heart!  
  
"I was *silent*; I would not open my mouth—for   
You are the one who has done this!" Psalm 39:9   
David's ear was open to hear *the voice of the rod*—but his mouth was not open in complaining.   
  
  
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**That *duty* which makes me proud!**  
  
"I hate pride and arrogance." Proverbs 8:13  
  
Some take pride in their **duties**. This *worm of pride*,   
breeds in *sweet fruit.* They have said so many prayers,   
heard so many sermons. Luke 18:12, "I fast twice a   
week, and give a tenth of all I get." Now they think   
they have made God amends—that He is indebted to   
them and they shall be accepted for their religious   
performances. What is this but pride? Is this not to   
make *a Christ* of our duties? The devil destroys some   
by making them *neglect* duty, and others by making   
them *idolize* duty. Better is that *infirmity* which humbles   
me—than **that *duty* which makes me proud!**  
  
Some take pride in their **graces**. They look down on  
others whom they think are inferior to them in grace.   
  
  
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**The more bitterness we taste in sin**   
—the more sweetness we shall taste in Christ!