÷THE MIND OF JESUS

By John MacDuff, 1870

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"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" Philippians 2:5

"Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind" 1 Peter 4:1

THE MIND OF JESUS! What a study is this! To attain a dim reflection of it, is the ambition of angel — higher they cannot soar.

"To be *conformed* to the image of His Son!" — this is the design of God in the *predestination* of His people from all eternity.

"We shall be *like* Him!" — this is the Bible picture of *heaven!*

In a former little volume, we pondered some of the gracious *Words* which proceeded out of the mouth of Jesus. In the present, we have a few faint lineaments of that holy *Character* which constituted the living expositor and embodiment of His precepts.

But how lofty such a standard! How all creature-perfection shrinks abashed and confounded before a Divine portraiture like this! He is the true "Angel standing in the sun," who alone projects no shadow; so bathed in the glories of Deity, that *likeness* to Him becomes like the light in which He is shrouded — "no man can approach unto it." May we not, however, seek at least to *approximate*, though we cannot adequately and fully *resemble*? It is impossible on earth to associate with a fellow-being without getting in some degree *assimilated* to him. Just so, the more we study "the Mind of Christ," the more we are in His company — holding converse with Him as our best and dearest friend — catching up His holy looks and holy deeds — the more shall we be "transformed into the same image."

"Consider," says the Great Apostle (literally 'gaze on') "Christ Jesus" (Hebrews 3:1.) Study feature by feature, lineament by lineament — of that Peerless Exemplar. *"Gaze"* on the Sun of Righteousness, until, like gazing long on the natural sun, you carry away with you, on your spiritual vision, dazzling images of His brightness and glory! Though He is the Archetype of all goodness — remember He is no shadowy model — though the Infinite Jehovah — He was "the *Man* Christ Jesus."

We must never, indeed, forget that it is not the *mind*, but the *work* of Emmanuel which lies at the foundation of a sinner's hope. He must be known as a *Savior,* before He is studied as an *Example.* His *doing* and *dying* is the center jewel — of which all the *virtues* of His holy life are merely the setting. But neither must we overlook the Scripture obligation to *walk* in His footsteps and imbibe His Spirit, for "if any man has not the *Spirit of Christ — he is none of His!"*

Oh, that each individual Christian were more Savior-like! that, in the manifestation of a holy character and heavenly demeanor, it might be said in some feeble measure of the faint and imperfect reflection — "Such was *Jesus!"*

How far short we are of such a criterion — our mournful experience can testify. But it is at least comforting to know that there is a day coming, when, in the full vision and fruition of the *Glorious Original*, the exhortation of our motto-verse will be needed no more; when we shall be able to say, in the words of an inspired apostle — "We *have* the MIND OF CHRIST!"

1. COMPASSION.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"I have **compassion** on the multitude." — Mark 8:2.

What a pattern to His people, the tender *compassion* of Jesus! He found the world He came to save a *moral Bethesda* — where crowds of sick people—blind, lame, or paralyzed—lay on the porches. The wail of suffering humanity was everywhere borne to His ear. It was His delight — to walk its porches, to pity, relieve, comfort, save! The faintest cry of misery arrested His footsteps — stirred a ripple in this fountain of Infinite Love.

Was it a *leper* — that dreaded name which entailed a life-long exile from friendly looks and kindly words? There was *One,* at least, who had tones and deeds of tenderness for the outcast. "Jesus, being moved with *compassion*, put forth His hand and *touched* him."

Was it some *blind beggars* on the Jericho highway, groping in darkness, pleading for help? "Jesus stood still, and had *compassion* on them, and touched their eyes!"

Was it the speechless pleadings of a *widow's* tears at the gate of Nain, when she followed her earthly pride and prop to the grave? "When the Lord saw her, He had *compassion* on her, and said, Weep not!" Even when He rebukes — the *rainbow of compassion* is seen in the cloud, or rather, that cloud, as it passes, dissolves in a rain-shower of mercy! He pronounces Jerusalem *"desolate,"* but the doom is uttered amid a flood of anguished sorrow!

Reader! do the compassionate *words* and *deeds* of a tender Savior find any feeble echo and transcript in yours? As you traverse in thought, the wastes of human wretchedness — does the spectacle give rise, not to the mere emotional feeling which weeps itself away in sentimental tears — but to an earnest desire to *do something* to mitigate the suffering of woe-worn humanity? How vast and world-wide, are the claims on your compassion! — now near, now at a distance — the unmet and unanswered cry of perishing millions abroad — the heathendom which lies unsaved at your own door — the public charity languishing — the mission staff dwarfed and crippled from lack of needful funds — a suffering district — a starving family — a poor neighbor — a helpless orphan — it may be, some crowded hovel where misery and vice run riot — or some lonely sick-chamber, where the dim lamp has been wasting for dreary nights — or some desolate home which death has entered, where "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not," and where some sobbing heart, under the tattered garb of poverty, mourns, unsolaced and unpitied, its "loved and lost one."

Are there none such within *your* reach, to whom a trifling pittance would be as an angel of mercy? How it would hallow and enhance all you possess, were you to seek to live as a *dispenser of Jehovah's bounties!* If He has given you of this world's substance, remember that it is *bestowed* — and not to be greedily *hoarded* or lavishly *squandered!* Property and wealth are *talents* to be traded on and laid out for the good of others — sacred trusts, not selfishly to be *enjoyed* — but generously to be *employed.*

The poor saints are the representatives of Jesus — their needs He considers as His own, and He will recompense accordingly. The feeblest expression of Christian pity and love, though it be but the widow's mite, or the cup of cold water, or the kindly look and word when there is neither mite nor cup to give — yet, if done in *His* name, it is entered in the "book of life" as a "loan to the Lord;" and in that day when "the books are opened," the loan will be paid back with interest!

"Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind."

2. RESIGNATION IN TRIAL.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"Yet I want Your will to be done — not Mine!" — Luke 22:42.

Where was there ever *resignation* like this? The life of Jesus was *one long martyrdom.* From Bethlehem's manger to Calvary's cross, there was scarcely one break in the clouds; these gathered more darkly and ominously around Him — until they burst over His devoted head as He uttered His expiring cry! Yet throughout this *pilgrimage of sorrow* — no murmuring accent escaped His lips. The most suffering of all suffering lives — was one of *uncomplaining submission*.

"Yet I want Your will to be done — not Mine!" was the motto of this wondrous Being! When He came into the world He thus announced His advent, "Lo, I come, I delight to do *Your will,* O my God!" When He left it, we listen to the same prayer of blended agony and acquiescence, "O My Father, if it is possible — let this cup pass from Me! Yet I want Your will to be done — not Mine!"

Reader! is this mind also in *you?* Ah, what are your trials — compared to His! What are the ripples in your tide of woe — compared to the waves and billows which swept over Him! If He, the spotless Lamb of God, "murmured not," how can *you* murmur? *His* were the sufferings of a bosom never once darkened with the passing shadow of guilt or sin. *Your* severest sufferings are deserved — yes, infinitely *less* than you deserve! Are you tempted to indulge in hard suspicions, as to God's faithfulness and love, in appointing some peculiar trial? Ask yourself, Would Jesus have complained? Should *I* seek to pry into "the deep things of God," when *He,* in the spirit of a weaned child, was satisfied with the solution, *"Even so, Father — for so it seems good in Your sight!"*

"Even so, *Father!"* Afflicted one! "tossed with tempest, and not comforted," take that *word* on which Your adorable Redeemer pillowed His suffering head, *"Father!"* — and make it, as He did, the secret of your resignation. "My Father!" my covenant God! the God who *spared not Jesus!* It may well hush my every repining word.

The sick child will take the bitterest medicine from a *father's* hand. "This cup which You, O God, give me to drink — shall I not drink it? Be it mine to lie passive in the *arms of Your chastening love*, exulting in the assurance that all Your appointments, though sovereign, are never arbitrary — but that there is a gracious 'need be' in them all."

Drinking deep of His sweet spirit of submission, you will be able thus to meet, yes, even to welcome, your sorest cross, saying, "Yes, Lord, all is well, just because it is Your blessed will. *Take* me, *use* me, *chasten* me — as seems good in Your sight. My will is resolved into Yours. This trial is dark; I cannot see the 'why and the wherefore' of it — yet I want Your will to be done — not mine! My *gourd* is withered; I cannot see the reason of so speedy a dissolution of my beloved earthly shelter; my sense and sight ask in vain why these *leaves of earthly refreshment* have been doomed so soon to droop in sadness and sorrow. But it is enough. *'The Lord prepared the worm!'* I want Your will to be done — not mine!"

Oh, how does the stricken soul honor God by thus being *silent* in the midst of dark and perplexing dealings, recognizing in these, part of the needed *discipline* and *training* — for a sorrowless, sinless, deathless world; regarding every trial as a link in the chain — which draws it to heaven, where the whitest robes will be found to be those here baptized with suffering, and bathed in tears!

"Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind."

3. DEVOTEDNESS TO GOD.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"I must be about my Father's business" — Luke 2:49.

"My food and my drink are to do the will of Him who sent me, and to finish His work." That *one* object brought Jesus from heaven — that *one* object He pursued with unflinching, undeviating constancy, until He could say, "It is finished!"

However short *man* comes of his 'chief end' — bringing glory to God was the motive, the rule, and exponent of every act of *Christ's* wondrous life. With us, the magnet of the soul, even when truest, is ever subject to partial oscillations and depressions, trembling at times away from its great attraction-point. But Christ's soul never knew one tremulous wavering from its all glorious center. With Him there were no ebbs and flows, no fits and starts. He could say, in the words of that prophetic psalm which speaks so pre-eminently of Himself, "I have set the Lord always before me!"

Reader! do you feel that in some feeble measure, this lofty life-motto of the sinless Son of God — is written on your home and heart, regulating your *actions*, chastening your *joys*, quickening your *hopes*, giving energy and direction to your whole being, subordinating all the affections of your nature to their high destiny? With pure and unalloyed motives, with a single eye, and a single aim — can you say, somewhat in the spirit of His brightest follower, "This *one* thing I do!" Are you ready to regard all you have — rank, name, talents, riches, influence, distinctions — as valuable, only so far as they contribute to promote the glory of Him who is "first and last, and all in all?" Seek to feel that your heavenly Father's glory is *the* main business of life.

"Whose I am, and whom I serve," — let this be the superscription written on your thoughts and deeds, your employments and enjoyments, your sleeping and waking. Be not, as the fixed stars, cold and distant; but be ever bathing in the sunshine of conscious nearness to Him, who is the sun and center of all happiness and joy.

Each has some appointed work to perform, some little *niche* in the spiritual temple to occupy. Yours may be no *splendid* services, no *flaming* or *brilliant* actions to blaze and dazzle in the eye of man. It may be the quiet unobtrusive inner work — the secret prayer, the mortified sin, the forgiven injury, the trifling act of self-sacrifice for God's glory and the good of others, of which no eye but the Eye which sees in secret is cognizant. It matters not how *small.* Remember, with Him — *motive* dignifies *action*. It is not *what* we do — but *how* we do it. He can be glorified in *little* things as well as *great* things — and by nothing more than the daily walk, the daily life.

Beware of anything that would interfere with a surrender of heart and soul to His service — worldly entanglements, indulged sin, an uneven walk, a divided heart, nestling in creature comforts, shrinking from the cross. How many hazard, if they do not made shipwreck, of their eternal hopes — by becoming *idlers* in the vineyard; lingerers, like Lot; world-lovers, like Demas; "do-nothing Christians," like the inhabitants of Meroz! The command is, "Go, work!" *Words* tell what you *should* be; *deeds* tell what you *are!* Let those around you see there is a *reality* in walking *with* God — and working *for* God!

"Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind."

4. FORGIVENESS OF INJURIES.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"Father, forgive them — for they know not what they do!" — Luke 23:34.

Many a death-struggle has been made — to save a *friend*. A dying Savior gathers up His expiring breath — to plead for His *foes!* At the climax of His own woe, and of human ingratitude — forsaken by man, and deserted by God — His faltering voice mingles with the shout of His murderers — "Father, forgive them — for they know not what they do!" Had the faithless Peter been there, could he have wondered at the reply to a former question — "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him — until seven times?" Jesus said unto him, "I say not unto you, until seven times; but, until seventy times seven," (Matthew 18:21, 22).

Superiority to insult and disgrace, with some, proceeds from a callous and indifferent temperament — a cold, phlegmatic, stoical insensibility, alike to kindness or unkindness. It was not so with Jesus. The tender sensibilities of His holy nature rendered Him keenly sensitive to ingratitude and injury, whether this was manifested in the malice of undisguised enmity, or the treachery of trusted friendship. Perhaps to a noble nature — the latter of these is the more deeply wounding. Many are inclined to forgive an open and unmasked antagonist, who are not so willing to forget or forgive heartless faithlessness, or unrequited love.

But see, too, in this respect, the conduct of the blessed Redeemer! Mark how He deals with His own disciples who had basely forsaken Him and fled, and that, too, in the hour He most needed their sympathy! No sooner does He rise from the dead than He hastens to disarm their fears and to assure them of an unaltered and unalterable affection. "Go tell *my brethren,"* is the first message He sends; *"Peace be unto you,"* is the salutation at the first meeting; *"Children!"* is the word with which He first greets them on the shores of Tiberias. Even Joseph, (the Old Testament type and pattern of generous forgiveness,) when he makes himself known to his brethren, recalls the bitter thought, "I am Joseph your brother — *whom you sold into Egypt."* The true Joseph, when *He* reveals Himself to His disciples, buries in oblivion the memory of bygone faithlessness. He *meets* them with a benediction. He *leaves* them at His ascension with the same — "He lifted up His hands and *blessed* them!"

"Father, forgive them!" Reader! follow in all this, the spirit of your Lord and Master. In rising from the study of His holy example, seek to feel that with you there should be no such name, no such word, as *enemy!* Harbor no resentful thought, indulge in no bitter recrimination. Surrender yourself to no sullen fretfulness. Let "the law of kindness" be always in your heart. Put the *best construction* on the failings of others. Make no injurious comments on their frailties; no uncharitable insinuations. When disposed at any time to cherish an unforgiving spirit towards a brother, think — if your God had retained His anger forever, where would *you* have been? If *He,* the Infinite One, who might have spurned you forever from His presence, has had patience with you, and forgiven you *all* — will *you,* on account of some petty grievance which your calmer moments would pronounce unworthy of a thought, indulge in the look of cold estrangement, the unrelenting word, or unforgiving deed? "Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you."

5. MEEKNESS

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"I am meek and lowly in heart." — Matthew 11:29.

In great minds, there is often a beautiful blending of majesty and humility, magnanimity and lowliness. *The mightiest and holiest of all Beings that ever trod our world — was the meekest of all.* The Ancient of Days — was as the "infant of days." He who had listened to nothing but angel-melodies from all eternity, found, while on earth, melody in the lispings of an infant's voice, or in an outcast's tears! No wonder an innocent *lamb* was His emblem, or that the anointing Spirit came down upon Him in the form of the gentle *dove*. He had the wealth of worlds at His feet. The hosts of heaven had only to be summoned as His retinue. But all the pageantry of the world, all its dreams of carnal glory, had, for Him — no fascination. The Tempter, from a mountain-summit, showed Him a wide scene of "splendid misery;" but He spurned alike the thought and the adversary away! John and James would call down fire from heaven on a Samaritan village; He rebukes the vengeful suggestion! Peter, on the night of the betrayal, cuts off the ear of an assassin; the intended Victim, again, only challenges His disciple, and heals His enemy!

Arraigned before Pilate's judgment-seat, how meekly He bears nameless wrongs and indignities! Suspended on the cross — the execrations of the multitude are rising around Him — but He hears as though He heard them not; they extract no angry look, no bitter word — "Behold the *Lamb* of God!" Need we wonder that "meekness" and "poverty of spirit" should stand foremost in His own cluster of beatitudes; that He should select *this* among all His other qualities for the peculiar study and imitation of His disciples, "Learn of Me, *for* I am *meek;"* or that an apostle should exhort "by the *meekness* and *gentleness* of Christ!"

How different the world's maxims — and His! The *world's* maxim — "Resent the affront, vindicate honor!" *His* maxim — "Overcome evil with good!" The *world's* maxim — "Only let it be when for your *faults* you are buffeted, that you take it patiently." *His* maxim — "When you do *well* and suffer for it, you take it patiently; *this* is acceptable with God." (1 Pet. 2:20.)

Reader! strive to obtain, like your adorable Lord, this "ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which, in the sight of God, is of great price." Be "clothed" with gentleness and humility. Follow not the world's fleeting shadows, which mock you as you grasp them. If always aspiring — ever soaring on the wing — you are likely to become discontented, proud, and selfish! In whatever position of life God has placed you — be satisfied. What! ambitious to be on a pinnacle of the temple — to be in a higher place in the Church, or in the world? — Satan might hurl you down! "Be not high-minded — but fear." And with respect to others, honor their gifts; contemplate their excellences — only to imitate them. Speak kindly, act gently. "Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited."

Be assured, no happiness is equal to that enjoyed by the *"meek Christian."* He has within him a perpetual *inner sunshine*, a perennial well-spring of peace. Never ruffled and fretted by real or imaginary injuries, he puts the best construction on motives and actions, and by a gentle answer to unmerited reproach — often disarms man's anger.

6. THANKFULNESS

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"I thank You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth." — Matthew 11:25.

A thankful spirit pervaded the entire life of Jesus, and surrounded with a heavenly halo His otherwise darkened path. In moments we least expect to find it, this *beauteous ray* breaks through the gloom. In instituting the memorial of His *death,* He *"gave thanks!"* Even in crossing the Kedron to Gethsemane, "He sang a hymn!"

We know in seasons of deep sorrow and trial, that everything wears a gloomy aspect. Speechless nature herself to the burdened spirit, seems as if she partook in the hues of sadness. The life of Jesus was one continuous experience of privation and woe — a "Valley of Baca," from first to last; yet, amid accents of plaintive sorrow, there are ever heard subdued undertones of *thankfulness* and *joy!*

Ah, if He, the suffering "Man of Sorrows," could, during a life of *unparalleled woe*, lift up His heart in grateful acknowledgment to His Father in heaven, how ought the lives of those to be one perpetual "hymn of thankfulness," who are from day to day and hour to hour (for all they have, both temporally and spiritually) *pensioners on God's bounty and love!*

Reader! cultivate this thankful spirit — it will be to you, a perpetual feast. There is, or ought to be, with us no such thing as *small* mercies; all are *great,* because the least are *undeserved.* Indeed, a really thankful heart will extract motive for gratitude from everything, making the most even of scanty blessings. Paul, when in his dungeon at Rome, a prisoner in chains is heard to say, "I have *all* and abound!"

Guard, on the other hand, against that spirit of continual *fretting* and *moping* over *imagined* ills; that temptation to exaggerate the real or supposed disadvantages of our condition, magnifying the trifling inconveniences of every-day life into enormous evils. Think rather how much we have to be thankful for. The world in which we live, in spite of all the scars of sin and suffering upon it — is a pleasant world. It is not, as many would morbidly paint it, flooded with tears and strewn with wrecks, plaintive with a perpetual dirge of sorrow. True, the "Everlasting Hills" are in glory — but there are numberless eminences of grace, and love, and mercy below; many green spots in the lower valley — *many more than we deserve!*

God will reward a thankful spirit. Just as on earth, when a man receives with gratitude what is given we are more disposed to give again, so also, "the *Lord* loves" a cheerful "receiver," as well as a cheerful "giver."

Let ours, moreover, be a *Gospel* thankfulness. Let the incense of a grateful spirit rise not only to the Great Giver of all good — but to our Covenant God in Christ. Let it be the spirit of the child exulting in the bounty and beneficence of his *Father's* house and home! "Giving *thanks* always for all things unto the *Father,* in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!"

While the sweet melody of *gratitude* vibrates through every successive moment of our daily being — let love to our adorable Redeemer show for *whom* and for *what* it is, that we reserve our notes of loftiest and most fervent praise. Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift!

7. UNSELFISHNESS

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."
"For even Christ did not please Himself." Romans 15:3

Too legibly are the characters written on the fallen heart and a fallen world — "All seek their own!" *Selfishness* is the great law of our degenerated nature. When the *love of God* was dethroned from the soul, SELF vaulted into the vacant seat, and there, in some one of its ever-changing shapes, continues to reign.

Jesus stands out for our imitation, as a grand solitary exception in the midst of a world of selfishness. His entire life was one abnegation of self; a beautiful living embodiment of that love which "seeks not her own." He who for others turned water into wine, and provided a miraculous supply for the fainting thousands in the wilderness — exerted no such miraculous power for His own necessities. During His forty days' temptation, no table did He spread for Himself, no booth did He rear for His unpillowed head. Twice do we read of Him shedding tears — on neither occasion were they for Himself. The approach of His cross and passion, instead of absorbing Him in His own approaching sufferings, seemed only to elicit new and more gracious promises to His people. When His enemies came to apprehend Him, His only stipulation was for His disciples' release — "Let *these* go their way." In the very act of departure, with all the boundless glories of eternity in sight — *they* were still all His care.

Ah, how different is the spirit of the world! With how many is day after day only a new oblation to that idol SELF — pampering their own wishes; envying and grieving at the good of a neighbor; unable to brook the praise of a rival; establishing their own reputation on the ruins of another; thus engendering jealousy, discontent, peevishness, and every kindred unholy passion.

"But you have not so learned Christ!" Reader! have you been sitting at the feet of Him who "pleased not Himself?" Are you "dying daily;" — dying to *self* as well as to *sin?* Are you animated with *this* as the high end and aim of existence — to lay out your time, and talents, and opportunities — for God's glory and the good of your fellow-men; not seeking your own interests — but rather relinquishing these, if, by doing so, another will be made holier, and your Savior honored?

You may not have it in your power to manifest this "mind of Jesus" on a great scale, by enduring great sacrifices; nor is this required. His denial of self had about it no repulsive austerity; but you can evince its holy influence and sway, by innumerable little offices of kindness and goodwill; taking a generous interest in the welfare of others, or engaging in schemes for the mitigation of human misery.

Avoid *ostentation* — which is only another repulsive form of self. Be eager to be in the *shadows;* sound no *trumpet* before you. The evangelist Matthew held a great banquet for Jesus at his house; but in his Gospel, he says not one word about it!

Seek to live more constantly and habitually under the constraining influence of the love of Jesus. *Selfishness withers and dies beneath Calvary!*

Ah, believer! if Christ had "pleased Himself," where would *you* have been this day?

8. SUBMISSION TO GOD'S WORD

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."
"Jesus said unto him: It is written!" — Matthew 4:7.

We cannot fail to be struck, in the course of the Savior's public teaching, with His *constant appeal to the word of God*. While, at times, He utters, in His own name, the authoritative behest, "Truly, truly, *I* say unto you," He often thus introduces some mighty work, or gives intimation of some impending event in His own momentous life, "These things must come to pass, that *the Scriptures be fulfilled, which says . . ."* He commands His people to "search the Scriptures;" but He sets the example, by *searching* and *submitting* to them Himself. Whether He drives the money-changers from their sacrilegious traffic in the temple, or foils his great adversary on the mount of temptation — he does so with the same weapon, *"It is written!"* When He rises from the grave, the theme of His first discourse is one impressive tribute to the value and authority of the same sacred oracles. The disciples on the road to Emmaus listen to nothing but *a Bible lesson.* "He expounded unto them in all *the Scriptures* — the things concerning Himself."

How momentous the instruction herein conveyed! The necessity of the absolute subjection of the mind to God's written Word — making churches, creeds, ministers, books, religious opinions — all subordinate and subservient to Scripture; rebuking the philosophy, falsely so called, that would distort the plain statements of Revelation, and lay their *proud Reason* in the dust.

If an infallible Redeemer, "a law to Himself," was submissive in all respects to the *"written* law," — shall fallible man refuse to sit with the teachableness of a little child, and listen to the Divine message? There may be, there *is,* in the Bible, what Reason staggers at: "we have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep." But, *"Thus says the Lord,"* is enough. Faith does not first ask what the bread is made of — but *eats* it. It does not analyze the components of the living stream — but with joy draws the water from "the wells of salvation."

Reader! take that Word as "the lamp to your feet, and the light to your path." In days when *false lights* are hung out, there is the more need of keeping the eye steadily fixed on the unerring beacon. Make the Bible the *arbiter* in all difficulties — the ultimate court of appeal. Like Mary, "sit at the feet of Jesus," willing only to learn of Him. How many perplexities it would save you! how many fatal steps in life it would prevent — how many tears! "It is a great matter," says the noblest of modern Christian philosophers, "when the mind dwells on any passage of Scripture, just to think how true it is." *(Chalmer's Life).*

In every dubious question, when the foot is trembling on debatable ground, knowing not whether to advance or recede, make this the final criterion, "What says the Scripture?" The world may remonstrate — erring friends may disapprove — Satan may tempt — ingenious arguments may explain away; but, with our finger on the revealed page, let the words of our Great Example be ever a divine formula for our guidance — "This commandment I have received from my Father!"

"Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind."

9. PRAYERFULNESS

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."
"He continued all night in prayer to God." — Luke 6:12.

We speak of *this* Christian and *that* Christian as "a man of prayer," Jesus was emphatically so. The Spirit was "poured upon Him without measure" — yet He prayed! He was incarnate wisdom, "needing not that any should teach Him" — yet He prayed! He was infinite in His power, and boundless in His resources — yet He prayed! How deeply sacred the prayerful memories that hover around the solitudes of Olivet and the shores of Tiberias! He seemed often to turn night into day to redeem moments for prayer, rather than lose the blessed privilege.

We are rarely, indeed, admitted into the solemnities of His inner life. The veil of night is generally between us and the Great High Priest, when He entered "the holiest of all;" but we have enough to reveal the depth of fervor, the tenderness and confidingness of this blissful intercommunion with His heavenly Father. No morning dawns without His fetching *fresh manna* from the mercy-seat. "He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being taught," (Isaiah 50:4). Beautiful description! — a praying Redeemer, wakening, as if at early dawn, the ear of His Father, to get fresh supplies for the duties and the trials of the day! All His public acts were consecrated by prayer — His baptism, His transfiguration, His miracles, His agony, His death. He breathed away His spirit in prayer. "His *last* breath," says Philip Henry, "was *praying* breath."

How sweet to think, in holding communion with God — that *Jesus* drank of this very brook! He consecrated the *bended knee* and the *silent chamber*. He refreshed His fainting spirit at the same great Fountain-head from which it is life for us to draw, and death to forsake.

Reader! do you complain of your languid spirit, your drooping faith, your fitful affections, your lukewarm love? May you not trace much of what you deplore — to an unfrequented prayer chamber? The *treasures* are locked up from you — because you have allowed the *key* to rust! Your hands hang down — because they have ceased to be uplifted in prayer. Without prayer! — It is the pilgrim without a staff — the seaman without a compass — the soldier going unarmed to battle.

Beware of encouraging what indisposes to prayer — going to the audience-chamber of God with soiled garments, the din of the world following you, its distracting thoughts hovering unforbidden over your spirit. Can you wonder that the *living water* refuses to flow through obstructed channels, or the *heavenly light* to pierce murky vapors?

Among men, fellowship with lofty minds — imparts a certain nobility to the character. Just so, in a far higher sense, by communion with God you will be transformed into His image, and get assimilated to His likeness. Make every event in life — a reason for fresh going to Him. If difficulties in duty, bring them to the test of prayer. If bowed down with anticipated trial, "fearing to enter the cloud," — remember Christ's preparation, "Sit here while I go and *pray* yonder."

Let prayer consecrate everything — your time, your talents, your pursuits, your engagements, your joys, your sorrows, your crosses, your losses. By prayer, rough paths will be made smooth, trials are disarmed of their bitterness, enjoyments are hallowed and refined, the bread of the world turned into angels' food. "It is in the prayer-closet," says Payson, "where the battle is lost or won!"

"Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind."

10. LOVE TO THE BRETHREN

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."
"Live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us!" — Ephesians 5:2.

"Jesus," says a writer, "came from heaven on the wings of love." Love was the element in which He moved and walked. He sought to baptize the world afresh with it. When we find Him teaching us by love to vanquish an *enemy,* we need not wonder at the tenderness of His appeals to the *brethren* to "love one another." Like a fond father impressing his children, how the Divine Teacher lingers over the lesson, "This is *My* commandment!"

If *selfishness* had guided His actions, we might have expected Him to demand all His people's love for Himself. But He claims no such monopoly. He not only encourages mutual affection — but He makes it the *badge* of discipleship! He gave them at once its *measure* and *motive*. "Love one another — *AS* I have loved you!" What a love was that! — it reached to the lowliest and humblest — "Inasmuch as you did it to the least of these — you did it unto *Me."*

Ah! if such was the Elder Brother's love to His younger brethren — then what should the love of these younger brothers be for one another! How humbling that there should be so much that is sadly and strangely unlike the spirit which our blessed Master sought to inculcate alike by *precept* and *example!* Christians, why these bitter estrangements, these censorious words, these harsh judgments, this lack of kind consideration of the feelings and failings of those who may differ from you? Why are your friendships so often like the summer brook, soon dried? You hope, before long, to meet in glory. Doubtless, when you enter on that "sabbath of love," many a greeting will be this, "Alas! my brother, that on earth I did not love you more!"

Do you see the image of God in a professing believer? It is your duty to love him for the sake of that image. No church, no outward attire, no denominational creed — should prevent your owning and claiming him as a fellow-pilgrim and fellow-heir. It has been said of a portrait, however poor the painting, however unfinished the style, however faulty the touches, however coarse and unseemly the frame — yet if the *likeness* is faithful, we overlook many subordinate defects. So it is with the Christian: however plain the exterior, however rough the setting, or even manifold the blemishes still found cleaving to a partially sanctified nature — yet if the Redeemer's likeness is feebly and faintly traced there, we should love the *blemished copy* for the sake of the *Divine Original*. There may be other bonds of association and communion linking spirit with spirit — family ties, mental congenialities, intellectual tastes, philanthropic pursuits; but that which ought to take the precedence of all, is the love of *God's image* in the brethren. What will heaven be, but this love perfected — loving Christ, and beloved by those who love Him?

Reader! seek to love *Him* more — and you will love His *people* more. *John* had more love than the other disciples. Why? He drank deepest of the love within that Bosom on which he delighted to lean, every beat of which was love. "Walk," then, "in love!" Let it be the very foot-road you tread; let your way to heaven be paved with it. Soon shall we come to look within the portal. Then shall every jarring and dissonant note be merged into the sublime harmonies of "the new heavens and the new earth," and we shall all "see eye to eye!"

"Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind."

11. SYMPATHY

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."
"Jesus wept!" — John 11:35.

It is an affecting thing to see a *great* man in tears! *"Jesus wept!"* It was ever His delight to tread in the footsteps of sorrow — to heal the broken-hearted — turning aside from His own path of suffering — to "weep with those who weep."

Bethany! That scene, that *word,* is a condensed volume of consolation for yearning and desolate hearts. What a majesty was in those tears! He had just before been discoursing on Himself as the Resurrection and the Life — the next moment He is a Weeping Man by a human grave, melted in anguished sorrow at a bereaved one's side!

Think of the funeral at the gate of Nain, reading its lesson to dejected myriads — "Let your widows trust in me!" Think of the farewell discourse to His disciples, when, muffling all His own foreseen and anticipated sorrows — He thought only of soothing and mitigating theirs! Think of the affecting pause in that silent procession to Calvary, when He turns around and stills the sobs of those who are tracking His steps with their weeping! Think of that wondrous epitome of human tenderness, just before His eyes closed in their sleep of agony — in the mightiest crisis of all time — when filial love looked down on an anguished mother, and provided her a son and a home!

Ah, was there ever *sympathy* like this! Son! Brother! Kinsman! Savior! all in one! The *majesty of Godhead* almost lost in the *tenderness of the Friend*. But so it was — and so it now is! The heart of the now enthroned King beats responsive to the humblest of His sorrow-stricken people. "I am poor and needy — yet the Lord *carries me on His heart!"*

Let us "go and do likewise." Let us be ready, like our Lord — to follow the call of misery — "to deliver the needy when he cries, the poor also, and him that has no helper." *Sympathy costs but little.* Its recompense and return are great, in the priceless consolation it imparts. Few there are, who undervalue it. Look at Paul — the weary, jaded prisoner — chained to a soldier — recently ship-wrecked, about to stand before Caesar. He reaches Forum dejected and depressed. Brethren come from Rome, a distance of sixty miles, to offer their *sympathy.* The aged man is cheered! His spirit, like Jacob's, "revived!" "He thanked God — and took courage!"

Reader! let "this mind," this holy, Christ-like *habit* be in you, which was also in your adorable Master. Delight, when opportunity occurs — to frequent the *house of mourning* — to bind up the widow's heart, and to dry the orphan's tears. If you can do nothing else, you can whisper into the ear of disconsolate sorrow, those majestic solaces, which, rising first in the graveyard of Bethany, have sent their undying echoes through the world, and stirred the depths of ten thousand hearts — *"Your brother will rise again!"* "Exercise your souls," says Butler, "in a loving sympathy with sorrow in every form. Soothe it, minister to it, support it, revere it. It is the *relic of Christ* in the world, an *image* of the Great Sufferer, a *shadow* of the cross. It is a holy and venerable thing."

Jesus Himself *"looked* for some to take *pity* — but there was *none;* and for comforters — but He found *none!"* It shows how even He valued sympathy, and that, too, in its commonest form of "pity," though an ungrateful world denied it.

"Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind."

12. FIDELITY IN REBUKE

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."
"The Lord turned and *looked* straight at Peter." — Luke 22:61.

Jesus never spoke one unnecessarily harsh or severe word. He had a *divine sympathy* for the frailties and infirmities of the tried, the suffering, the tempted. He was *forbearing* to the ignorant, *encouraging* to the weak, *tender* to the penitent, *loving* to all.

Yet how faithful was He as "the Reprover of sin!" Silent under wrongs done to Himself — with what burning invective did He lay bare the Pharisees' masked corruption and hypocrisy! When His Father's name and temple were profaned — how did He sweep, with an avenging hand, the mammon-crowd away, replacing the superscription, "Holiness to the Lord," over the defiled altars!

Nor was it different with His own disciples. With what fidelity, when rebuke was needed, did He administer it: the withering reprimand conveyed, sometimes by an impressive *word* (Matthew 16:23); sometimes by a silent *look* (Luke 22:61). "Faithful always — were the wounds of *this* Friend!"

Reader! are you equally faithful with your Lord in rebuking evil — not with man's anger — but with a holy jealousy for His glory; feeling, with the sensitive honor of "the good soldier of Jesus Christ," that an affront offered to Him — is offered to yourself?

The giving of a wise reproof requires much Christian prudence and delicate discretion. It is not by a rash and inconsiderate exposure of failings, that we must attempt to reclaim an erring brother. But neither, for the sake of a false peace, must we compromise fidelity; for even friendship is too dearly purchased — by winking at sin. Perhaps, when Peter was led to call the Apostle who honestly *reproved* him, "Our beloved brother Paul," in nothing did he love his rebuker more, than for the honest boldness of his Christian reproof. If Paul had, in that crisis of the Church, with a timidity unworthy of him, evaded the difficult task, what, humanly speaking, might have been the result?

How often does a seasonable reprimand, a faithful caution — save from a lifetime of sin and sorrow! How many a deathbed has made the disclosure, "That *kind warning* of my friend put an arrest on my career of sin; it altered my whole being; it brought me to the cross; touched my heart, and, by God's grace, saved my soul!" On the other hand, how many have felt, when death has put his impressive seal on some close earthly intimacy, "I might have spoken a solemn word to my friend; but now he is no more, the opportunity is lost, never to be recalled!"

Reader! see that you act not the *spiritual coward*. When tempted to sit silent when the name of God is slighted or dishonored, think — *would Jesus have done so?* Would He have allowed the *blasphemy* to go unrebuked — or the *lie* to be uttered unchallenged? Where there is a natural shyness which makes you shrink from a more bold and open reproof, remember much may be done to *discountenance* sin, by the silent holiness of demeanor, which refuses to smile at the unholy allusion or ribald jest. "A word spoken in due season, how good is it!" "Speak gently," yet speak faithfully: "be pitiful — be courteous:" yet "be men of courage, be strong!"

13. GENTLENESS IN REBUKE

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."
"Simon son of John — do you truly love me?" — John 21:15

No word here of the erring disciple's past faithlessness — his guilty cowardice*,* his base denial, his oaths and curses, and treacherous desertion — all are *unmentioned!* The memory of a threefold denial is *suggested,* and no more, by the threefold question of unutterable tenderness, "Simon son of John — do you truly love me?"

When Jesus found His disciples sleeping at the gate of Gethsemane, He rebukes them; but how is the rebuke disarmed of its poignancy by the merciful apology which is added — "The spirit indeed is willing — but the flesh is weak!" How different from *their* unkind insinuation regarding *Him,* when, in the vessel or Tiberias, "He was asleep" — "Master, don't you *care* that we perish!"

The woman of Samaria is full of worldliness, carnality, sectarianism, sin — yet how gently the Savior speaks to her! How forbearingly — yet faithfully, He directs the arrow of conviction to that seared and hardened conscience, until He lays it bleeding at His feet! Truly, "He will not break the bruised reed — He will not quench the smoking flax." By "the *goodness* of God," He would lead to repentance. When others are speaking of merciless violence, He can dismiss the most guilty of *profligates* with the words "Neither do I condemn you — go, and sin no more."

How many have an *unholy pleasure* in discovering a brother's faults — blazing abroad his failings; administering rebuke, not in gentle forbearance and kindly admonition — but with harsh and impatient severity! How beautifully did Jesus unite intense sensibility to sin — along with tenderest compassion for the sinner, showing in this that "He knows our frame!"

Many a sinner needs *gentleness* in chastisement. The reverse would crush a sensitive spirit, or drive it to despair. Jesus tenderly "considers" the case of those He disciplines, "*tempering* the wind to the shorn lamb." In the picture of the good shepherd bearing home the wandering sheep, He illustrated by parable, what He had often and again taught by His own example. No word of needless harshness or upbraiding uttered to the erring wanderer! Ingratitude is too deeply felt, to need rebuke. In silent love, "He lays it on His shoulders rejoicing."

Reader! seek to mingle *gentleness* in all your rebukes; bear with the infirmities of others; make allowance for constitutional frailties; never say harsh things, if kind things will do as well; do not unnecessarily lacerate with recalling former delinquencies. In reproving another — let us rather feel how much we need reproof ourselves. "Consider yourself," is a searching Scripture motto for dealing with an erring brother. Remember your Lord's method of silencing fierce accusation — "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone." Moreover, anger and severity are not the successful means of reclaiming the backslider, or of melting the obdurate. Like the *smooth* stones with which David smote Goliath — *gentle rebukes* are generally the most powerful. The old fable of the traveler and his *cloak* has a moral here as in other things. The *warm sunshine* will effect its removal — sooner than the *rough tempest*. It was said of Leighton, that "he rebuked faults so mildly, that they were never repeated, not because the admonished were afraid — but ashamed to do so."

14. ENDURANCE OF CONTRADICTION

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."
"Who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself." — Hebrews 12:3.

What endurance was this!

Perfect *truth* — in the midst of error;
perfect *love* — in the midst of ingratitude and coldness;
perfect *rectitude* — in the midst of perjury, violence, fraud;
perfect *constancy* — in the midst of ridicule and desertion;
perfect *innocence* — confronting every debased form of depravity and guilt;
perfect *patience* — encountering every species of gross provocation! "Oppressed and afflicted, He opened not His mouth!" "For my love" (in return for my love,) "they are my adversaries; *but"* (see His endurance! — the only species of revenge of which His sinless nature was capable) *"I give myself unto prayer!"* (Psalm 109:4.)

Reader! "let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus!" The greatest test of an earthly soldier's courage is *patient endurance!* The noblest trait of the spiritual soldier is the same. "Having done all, to *stand,"* "He *endured,* as seeing Him who is invisible!" Beware of the angry recrimination, the hasty ebullition of temper. Amid unkind insinuations — when your motives are misrepresented, and reputation assailed; when your good deeds are ridiculed, kind intentions coldly thwarted and repulsed, chilling reproach manifested where you expected nothing but friendship — what a triumph over natural impulse to manifest a spirit of meek endurance! — like a rainbow, radiant with the hues of heaven, resting peacefully amid the storms of derision and "the floods of ungodly men." What an opportunity of magnifying the *sustaining grace of God!* "It is a small thing for me to be judged of you, or of man's judgment; He who judges me is the Lord." "The Lord is on my side. I will not fear what man can do unto me." "Blessed is the man who *endures."* "He who *endures* to the end, the same shall be saved."

If faithful to our God, we must expect to encounter contradiction in the same form which Jesus did — "the contradiction of *sinners."* It has been well said, "There is no cross of *nails* and wood erected now for the Christian — but there is one of *words* and *looks* which is never taken down!" If believers are set as *lights* in the earth, lamps in the "city of destruction," we know that "he who does evil *hates* the light." "Marvel not my brethren, if the world hates you!"

Weary and faint ones, exposed to the shafts of calumny and scorn because of your fidelity to your God — encountering, it may be, the coldness and estrangement of those dear to you, who cannot, perhaps, sympathize in the holiness of your walk and the loftiness of your aims — "consider *Him* who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest *you* be weary and faint in your minds!" What is *your* "contradiction" compared to *His?* Soon your cross, whatever it is, will have an end. "The seat of the scorner" has no place in yonder glorious heaven, where all will be peace — no jarring note to disturb its blissful harmonies! Look forward to the great coronation-day of the Church triumphant — the day of your divine Lord's appearing, when motives and aims, now misunderstood, will be vindicated; wrongs redressed, calumnies and aspersions wiped away. Meanwhile, "rejoice that you are counted worthy to suffer shame for His name."

15. PLEASING GOD

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"I do always those things that please Him." — John 8:29.

What a glorious motto for a man — *"I live for God!"* It is religion's truest definition. It is the essence of angelic bliss — the motive principle of angelic action — "You ministers of His that do His pleasure." The Lord of angels knew no higher, no *other* motive. It was during His incarnation — the regulator and directory of His daily being. It supported Him amid the depressing sorrows of His woe-worn path. It upheld Him in their dreadful termination in the *garden* and on the *cross*. For a moment sinking human nature faltered under the load which His Godhead sustained; but the thought of "pleasing God" nerved and revived Him. "Not my will — but *Yours* be done."

It is only when the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, that this animating desire to "please Him" can exist. In the holy bosom of Jesus, that love reigned paramount, admitting no rival — no competing affection. Though infinitely inferior in degree, it is the same impelling principle which leads His people still to link *enjoyment* with His *service*, and which makes consecration to Him of heart and life its own best recompense and reward. Says one, "When love to God is habitually in the ascendant, or occupying the place of will, it gathers round it all the other desires of the soul as satellites, and whirls them along with it in its orbit round the center of attraction." Until the heart, then, is changed, the believer cannot have this "testimony that he *pleases God."*

The *world, self, sin* — these are the *gods* of the unregenerate soul. And even *when* renewed, alas that there should be so many ebbings and flowings in our tide of devotedness! Jesus could say, "I do *always* these things that please the Father." Glory to God burned within His bosom like a living fire. "Many waters could not quench it." His were no fitful and inconstant frames and feelings — but *the persistent habit of a holy life,* which had the one end in view, from which it never diverged or deviated.

Let it be so, in some lowly measure with us. Let God's service not be merely set times and seasons; but, like the alabaster box of ointment, let us *always* be giving forth the fragrant perfume of holiness. Even when the shadows of trial are falling around us, let us "pass through the cloud" with the sustaining motive — "All my wish, O God, is to please and glorify You! By giving or taking — by smiting or healing — by the sweet cup or the bitter — Father, glorify your name!"

"I don't want to be weary of God's dealings with me," said Bickersteth, on his death-bed; "I want to glorify Jesus in them, and to find Him more precious." Do I shrink from trials — duties — crosses — because involving hardships and self-denial, or because frowned on by the world? Let the thought of God's approving countenance be enough. Let me dread no censure, if conscious of acting in accordance with *His* will. Let the Apostle's monitory word determine many a perplexing path — "If I please men — then I am not the servant of Christ."

16. GRIEF AT SIN

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"He looked around at them in *anger* — being deeply *grieved* at their hardness of their hearts." — Mark 3:5.

On this one occasion only, is the expression used with reference to Jesus — "He looked around at them in *anger!"* Never did He grieve for Himself. His intensest sorrows were reserved for those who were tampering with their own souls, and dishonoring His God. The continual spectacle of moral evil, thrust on the gaze of spotless purity, made His earthly history one consecutive history of grief, one perpetual "cross and passion."

In the tears shed at the grave of Bethany — *sympathy*, doubtless, for the world's myriad mourners, had its own share (the bereaved could not part with so precious a tribute in their hours of sadness) — but a far more impressive cause was one undiscerned by the weeping sisters and sorrowing crowd — His knowledge of the deep and obdurate impenitence of those who were about to gaze on the mightiest of miracles, only to "despise, and be astonished, and perish!" *"Jesus wept!"* — but His profoundest anguish was over resisted grace, abused privileges, scorned mercy! It was the *Divine Craftsman* mourning over His *shattered handiwork* — the *Almighty Creator* weeping over His *ruined world* — God, the God-man, "grieving" over the Temple of the soul — a humiliating wreck of what once was made "after His own image!"

Can we sympathize in any respect with such *exalted tears?* Do we mourn for sin, our *own* sin — the deep insult which it inflicts on God — the ruinous consequences it entails on ourselves? Do we grieve at sin in *others?* Do we know anything of Lots's grief, "Lot was a righteous man who was tormented in his soul by the wickedness he saw and heard day after day!" — by the stupid hardness and obduracy of the depraved heart, which resists alike the appeals of wrath and love, judgment and mercy? Ah! it is easy, in general terms, to condemn vice, and to utter harsh, severe, and cutting denunciations on the guilty! It is easy to pass uncharitable comments on the inconsistencies or follies of others; but to *"grieve"* as our Lord did, is a different thing; to mourn over the hardness of heart, and yet to have the burning desire to teach it better things — to hate, as He did, the *sin* — but, like Him also, to love the *sinner!*

Reader! look specially to your own spirit. In one respect, the example of Jesus falls short of your case. He had *no sin* of His own to mourn over. He could only commiserate others. *Your* intensest grief must begin with *yourself.* Like the watchful Levite of old, be a guardian at the temple-gates of your own soul. Whatever is your besetting iniquity, your constitutional bias to sin — seek to guard it with wakeful vigilance. Grieve at the thought of incurring one passing shadow of displeasure from so kind and compassionate a Savior. Let this be a holy preservative in your every hour of temptation, "How can I do this great wickedness — and sin against God?"

Grieve for a perishing world — a groaning creation fettered and chained in unwilling "subjection to vanity." Do what you can, by effort, by prayer — to hasten on the hour of jubilee when its *ashy robes of sin and sorrow* shall be laid aside, and, attired in the "beauties of holiness," it shall exult in "the glorious liberty of the sons of God!"

17. HUMILITY

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under His power, and that He had come from God and was returning to God; so He got up from the meal, took off His outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash His disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around Him!" John 13:3-5

What a matchless picture of humility! At the very moment when His throne was in view — angel-anthems floating in His ear — the hour come "when He was to depart out of this world" — possessing a lofty consciousness of His peerless dignity, that "He came *from* God and was going *to* God;" THEN "Jesus took a towel, and girded Himself, and began to wash the disciples' feet!" All heaven was ready at that moment to cast their combined crowns at His feet. But the High and the Lofty One inhabiting eternity is on earth "as one that serves!" "That *infinite stoop!* it sinks all creature humiliation to nothing, and renders it impossible for a creature to *humble* himself." — *(Evans.)*

Humility follows Him, from His unhonored birthplace — to His borrowed grave. It throws a subdued splendor over all He did. "The poor in spirit" — the "mourner" — the "meek" — claim His first beatitudes. He was severe only to one class — those who despised others. However He is employed — whether performing His works of miraculous power, or taking little children in His arms — He stands forth as "clothed with humility." No, this humility becomes more conspicuous as He draws nearer glory. Before His death, He calls His disciples *"Friends;"* subsequently, it is *"Brethren," "Children."* How sad the contrast between the Master — and His disciples! Two hours had not elapsed after He washed their feet, when "they began to argue among themselves about who would be the greatest among them!"

Let the image of that lowly Redeemer be ever in our mind's eye. His example may well speak in silent impressiveness, bringing us down from our *pedestal of pride*. There surely can be no labor of love too humiliating for us — when *He* stooped so low. Let us be content to take the humblest place — not envious of the success or exaltation of another; not, "like Diotrephes, loving pre-eminence;" but willing to be thought little of; saying with the Baptist, with our eye on our Lord, "*He* must increase — but *I* must decrease!"

How much we have cause to be humble for! — the constant cleaving of defilement to our souls; and even what is partially good in us — how mixed with imperfection, self-seeking, arrogance, vain-glory! A proud Christian is a contradiction in terms. The Seraphim of old (a type of believers) had six wings — *two* were for errands of love but "with *four* he *covered* himself!" It has been beautifully said, "You lie nearest the River of Life when you *bend* to it; you cannot drink — but as you *stoop."* The corn of the field, as it ripens — bows its head; just so, the Christian, as he ripens in the divine life, bends in this lowly grace. Christ speaks of His people as "lilies" — they are "lilies of the *Valley,"* they can only grow in the shade!

"I live in a high and holy place — but also with him who is contrite and humble in spirit."

"Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God." "Go" with what Rutherford calls "a low sail." Humility is the demeanor of your blessed Master; the family badge — the family likeness. "I live in a high and holy place — but also with him who is contrite and humble in spirit." Yes! the humble, sanctified heart is God's *second Heaven!*

"Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind."

18. PATIENCE

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth. Like a lamb led to the slaughter and like a sheep silent before her shearers, He did not open His mouth." — Isaiah 53:7.

Behold the infinite patience of Jesus!

Even among His own disciples, how forbearingly He endured their blindness, their misconceptions and hardness of heart! *Philip* had been with Him for three years — yet he had "not known Him" — all that time he had remained in strange and culpable ignorance of his Lord's dignity and glory! See how tenderly Jesus bears with him — giving him nothing in reply for his confession of ignorance — but unparalleled promises of grace!

Peter, the honored and trusted disciple — becomes a renegade and a coward. Justly might his dishonored Lord, stung with such *unrequited love*, have cut the unworthy cumberer down! But He spares him, bears with him, gently rebukes him, and loves him more than ever! See the Divine Sufferer in the terminating scenes of His own ignominy and woe! How patient! "Like a lamb led to the slaughter and like a sheep silent before her shearers, He did not open His mouth!" In these dreadful moments, *outraged Omnipotence* might have summoned twelve legions of angels — and put into the hand of each a *vial of wrath!* But He submits in meek, majestic silence. Truly, in *Him* "patience had her *perfect* work!"

Think of this same patience with His people — since He ascended to glory. The years upon years He has borne with their perverse resistance of His grace, their treacherous ingratitude, their wayward wanderings, their hardness of heart and contempt of His holy Word. Yet, behold the forbearing love of this Savior God! His *hand of mercy* is stretched out still!

Child of God! are you not undergoing some bitter trial? The way of your God, it may be, all mystery — no *footprints of love* traceable in the chequered path; no *light* in the clouds above; no *bright ray* in the dark future. *Be patient!* "The Lord is good to those who *wait* upon Him." "Those who *wait* upon the Lord shall renew their strength!"

Or have you been long tossed on some bed of sickness — days of pain and nights of weariness appointed to you? *Be patient!* "I trust this groaning," said a suffering saint, "is not murmuring." God, by this very affliction, is nurturing within you this beauteous grace which shone so conspicuously in the character of your dear Lord. With Him it was a lovely habit of the soul. With you, the "tribulation" which works "patience" is *needful discipline*. "It is *good* for a man that he should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of God."

Are you suffering some unmerited wrong or unkindness, exposed to harsh and wounding accusations, hard for flesh and blood to bear? *Be patient!* Beware of hastiness of speech or temper; remember how much evil may be done by a few inconsiderate words "spoken unadvisedly with the lip." Think of Jesus standing before a human tribunal, in the silent submissiveness of conscious innocence and integrity. Leave your cause with God. Let this be the only form of your complaint, "O God, I am oppressed — undertake for me!"

"In patience," then, "possess you your souls." Let it not be a grace for peculiar seasons, called forth on peculiar exigencies; but a habitable frame manifested in the calm serenity of a daily walk — placidity amid the *little fretting annoyances of every-day life* — a fixed purpose of the heart to wait upon God, and cast its every burden upon Him!

19. SUBJECTION

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"That the world may know that I *love* the Father and that I *do* exactly what my Father has commanded me." John 14:31

Jesus as God-man, had *omnipotence* slumbering in His arm. He had the *hoarded treasures of eternity* in His grasp. He had only to "speak — and it was done." But as an example to His people, His whole life on earth was one impressive act of *subordination* and *dependence*. At *Nazareth* He was "subject to his parents." There He remained in studied obscurity, occupying for thirty years a lowly hut, willing to continue in a state of seclusion, until the Father's summons called Him to His appointed work.

At His *baptism*, sinless Himself, He gives this reason for receiving a sinner's rite at a sinner's hands — "Allow it to be so now, for thus it befits Me to fulfill all righteousness." The same beautiful spirit of filial *subjection* shines conspicuous amid His acts of stupendous power. Even among His own disciples His language is, "I am among you as He who serves." With an act of submission He closed His pilgrimage and work of love. "Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit."

What an example to us, in all this, is our beloved Lord! Surely, if *He,* "God only wise" — the Self-existent One, to whom "all power was committed;" — the Sinless One, never liable to err, on whom "the Spirit was poured without measure" — if *He* manifested such *habitual dependence* on His heavenly Father — then how earnestly ought *we,* weak, erring, fallible creatures, to seek to live every hour — every moment — as *pensioners on God's grace and love*, following His directing hand in all things! As the *servant* has his eyes on his master, or the *child* on its parent, "so should our eyes be on the Lord our God." Whatever He speaks, be it ours with all docility to follow the voice, endorsing every utterance of providence, and every precept of Scripture, with our Lord's own words, *"This is the Father's will!"*

Beware of *self-dependence*. The first step in spiritual declension is this — "Let him that *thinks he stands!"* The secret of real strength is this — *"Kept* by the *power* of God!" How it sweetens all our blessings, and alleviates all our sorrows — to regard *both* as emanations from a loving Father's hand! Even if we should be like the disciples of old, *"constrained"* to go into the ship; if all should be darkness and tempest — frowning providences — "the wind contrary;" how blessed to feel that in embarking on the unquiet element, that "the Lord has bidden us!" Paul could not speak even of taking an earthly journey, without the parenthesis, ("if the Lord wills.")

How many trials, and sorrows, and sins, would it save us, if the same were the habitual regulator of our daily life! It would lead to calm contentment with our lot, hushing every disquieting suggestion with the thought that our lot, with all that is apparently *adverse* in it — was *ordained* for us! It would teach us not to be aspiring after *great* things — but humbly to wait the will and purposes of a wise Provider; not to go *before* our Heavenly Guide — but to *follow* Him, saying, in meek subjection, "Lord, my heart is not proud; my eyes are not haughty. I do not concern myself with matters too great or awesome for me. But I have stilled and quieted myself, just as a small child is quiet with its mother. Yes, like a small child is my soul within me!"

"Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind."

20. NOT RETALIATING

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"When they hurled their insults at Him — He did not retaliate; when He suffered — He made no threats. Instead, He entrusted Himself to Him who judges justly!" — 1 Peter 2:23.

What a common dictate of the fallen and unregenerate heart — to resent and recriminate! How alien to natural feeling — to answer cutting taunts, and meet unmerited wrong, with the Divine method the Gospel prescribes, "Overcome evil with good!" It was in the closing scenes of the Savior's humiliation, when silent, and unresenting, He stood "silent before His shearers," that this beautiful feature in his character was most wondrously manifested; but it beams forth also for our imitation in the ordinary and less prominent incidents of His pilgrimage.

When He met *Nathanael* of Cana in Galilee, He found him clinging to an unreasonable prejudice — "Can any good thing come out of *Nazareth?"* The severe remark is allowed to pass unnoticed. Overlooking the unkind insinuation, the Savior fixes on the favorable feature of his character, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!"

After His resurrection, He appears to His disciples. They were cowering in shame, half afraid to confront the glance of *injured goodness*. He breathes on them, and says, "Peace be unto you!" — Peter was the one of all the rest who had most reason to dread estranged looks and upbraiding words; but a special message is sent to reassure that trembling disciple, that there was no alienation in the unresentful Heart he had secretly wounded — "Go and tell the disciples — *and Peter!"*

Even when *Judas* first unveiled himself to his Lord as the *betrayer*, we believe it was not in bitter irony or rebuke — but in the fullness of pitying tenderness, that Jesus addressed him, *"Friend*, why have you come?"

Tears and prayers were His only revenge on Jerusalem — the city and scene of His murder. "Beginning at Jerusalem," was the closing illustration of a spirit "not of this world" — a significant parting testimony that in the bosom that uttered it — *retaliation* had no place.

More than one of the disciples seem to have imbibed much of this "mind" of their Lord. "They stoned *Stephen*. Then he fell on his knees and cried out — *Lord, do not hold this sin against them!"*

Take another example — The great Apostle of the Gentiles felt himself under a painful necessity faithfully to rebuke Peter in presence of the whole Church. He had *recorded* that rebuke, too, in one of his epistles. It was thus to be handed down to every age as a permanent and humiliating evidence of the *wavering inconstancy* of his fellow-laborer. Peter, doubtless, must have felt acutely the severity of the chastisement. Does he resent it? He, too, puts on record, long after, in one of his own epistles, a sentence regarding his rebuker — but it is this — "Our *beloved brother* Paul!"

Reader! when tempted to utter the harsh word, or give the cutting or hasty answer — seek to check yourself with the question, "Is this the reply my Savior would have given?" If your fellow-men should prove unkind, inconsiderate, ungrateful — be it yours to refer the cause to God. Speak of the faults of others only in *prayer;* manifesting more sorrow for their sin — than for the evil inflicted by them on yourselves. *Retaliate!* No such word should have a place in the Christian's vocabulary. *Retaliate!* If I cherish such a spirit towards my brother — how can I meet that brother in heaven? "But you have not so learned Christ."

"Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind."

21. BEARING THE CROSS

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"And He bearing His cross." — John 19:17.

When did Jesus bear the cross? Not that moment alone, surely, when the bitter tree was placed on His shoulders, on the way to Golgotha. Its *vision* may be said to have risen before Him in His infant dreams in Bethlehem's cradle; there, rather, its *reality* began; and He ceased not to carry it, until his work was finished, and the victory won! A *cloud* of old, hovered over the mercy-seat in the tabernacle and temple. So it was with the Great Antitype — the living Mercy-seat — He had ever a cloud of woe hanging over Him. "He *carried* our sorrows."

Reader! dwell much and often under the shadow of your Lord's cross — and it will lead you to think lightly of your own! If *He* gave utterance to not one murmuring word — how then, can *you* complain? "If we were deeper students of His bitter anguish — we would think less of the ripplings of *our waves*, amid His horrible tempest" — *(Evans.)*

The saint's cross assumes many and diverse shapes. Sometimes it is the bitter trial, the crushing pang of bereavement, desolate households, and aching hearts. Sometimes it is the crucifixion of sin, the determined battling with "lusts which war against the soul." Sometimes it is the resistance of the evil *maxims* and *practices* of a lying world — vindicating the honor of Christ, in the midst, it may be, of taunt, and ridicule, and shame. And as there are different *crosses* — so there are different *ways* of bearing them. To some, God says, "Put your shoulder to the burden; lift it up, and bear it on; work, and toil, and labor!" To others, He says, "Be still, bear it — and *suffer!"*

Believer! *your cross* may be hard to endure, it may involve deep struggles — tears by day, watchings by night; bear it meekly, patiently justifying God's wisdom in laying it on you. Rejoice in the assurance that He gives not one atom more of earthly trial than He sees to be really needful; not one *unnecessary thorn* pierces your feet. In the very bearing of the cross for His sake — there are mighty compensations. What new views of your Savior's love, His truth, His promises, His sustaining grace, His sufferings, His glory! What new filial nearness; increased delight in prayer; in inner sunshine when it is darkest without! The *waves* cover you — but underneath them all, are "the everlasting arms!"

Do not look out for a situation *without* crosses. Do not be over-anxious to walk in "smooth paths," — leaving your God, as Orpha did Naomi, just when the cross requires to be carried. Immoderate earthly enjoyments — unbroken earthly prosperity — write upon these *"Beware!"* You may live to see them become your greatest trials!

Remember the old saying, "No cross — no crown!" The sun of the saint's life generally struggles through "weeping clouds." One of the loveliest passages of Scripture is that in which the portals of heaven being opened, we overhear this dialogue between two ransomed ones: "Then one of the elders asked me, 'These in white robes — who are they, and where did they come from?' I answered, 'Sir, you know.' And he said, 'These are they who have come out of the *great tribulation!'"*

"Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind."

22. HOLY ZEAL

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"Zeal for Your house will consume Me." — John 2:17

Such was the holy heavenly zeal of our Great Exemplar. His were no *transient outbursts of ardor* which time cooled and difficulties impeded. His life was *one indignant protest against sin* — and *one ceaseless current of undying love* for souls which all the malignity of foes and unkindness of friends could not for one moment divert from its course. Even when He rises from the dead, and we imagine His work at an end — His zeal only meditates fresh deeds of love. "Still His heart and His care," says Goodwin, "is upon doing more. Having now dispatched that great work on earth — He sends His disciples word that He is hastening to heaven as fast as He can, to do another" (John 20:17).

Reader! do you know anything of this zeal, which "many waters could not quench?" See that, like your Lord's — it is steady, sober, consistent, and undeviating. How many are, like the children of Ephraim, "carrying bows" — all zealous when zeal demands no sacrifice — but "turning their backs to the day of battle!" Others running well for a time — but gradually "hindered," through the benumbing influences of worldliness, selfishness, and sin! Two disciples, apparently equally devoted and zealous, send through Paul, in one of his epistles, a joint Christian salutation — "*Luke* and *Demas* greet you." A few years afterwards, thus he writes from his Roman dungeon — "Only *Luke* is with me." *"Demas* has *forsaken* me, having loved this present world!"

While zeal is commendable, remember the Apostle's qualification, "It is good to be zealously affected always in a *good* thing." There is in these days, much base coin current, *called* "zeal," which bears not the image and superscription of Jesus. There is zeal for church-membership and denominations; zeal for creeds and dogmas; zeal for trifles and nonessentials. "From such turn aside!" Your Lord stamped with His example and approval — no such counterfeits. *His* zeal was ever brought to bear on two objects, and two objects alone — *the glory of God* and *the good of man*. Be it so with you.

Enter, first of all (as He did the earthly temple), the sanctuary of *your own heart,* with "the scourge of small cords." Drive out every *unhallowed intruder* there! Do not allow yourself to be deceived. Others may call such jealous searchings of spirit, "sanctimoniousness" and "wild enthusiasm." But remember, to be *almost saved* — is to be *altogether lost!* To be zealous about everything but "the one thing needful" — is an insult to God and your everlasting interests!

Have a zeal for *others*. Dying myriads are around you. As a member of the Christian priesthood, it becomes you to rush in with your censer and incense between the living and the dead, "that the plague may be stopped!"

Be it yours to say, "Blessed Jesus! I am Yours! — Yours only! — Yours wholly! — Yours forever! I am willing to *follow* You — and (if need be) to *suffer* for You. I am ready at Your bidding to leave the homestead in the valley — and to face the cutting blasts of the mountain. Take me — use me for Your glory. Lord, what will You have me to do?"

"Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind."

23. BENEVOLENCE

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."
"He went around doing good." — Acts 10:38.

"Christ's great end," says Richard Baxter, "was to save men from their *sins;* but He delighted to save them from their *sorrows."* His heart bled for human misery. Benevolence brought Him from heaven; and benevolence followed His steps wherever He went on earth. The journeys of the Divine Philanthropist were marked by tears of thankfulness, and breathings of grateful love. The helpless, the blind, the lame, the desolate — rejoiced at the sound of His footfall. Truly might it be said of Him, "All who heard Me praised Me. All who saw Me spoke well of Me. For I assisted the poor in their need and the orphans who required help. I helped those without hope — and they blessed Me. And I caused the widows' hearts to sing for joy" (Job 29:11-13).

All suffering hearts were a magnet to Jesus. It was not more His prerogative, than His happiness — to turn tears into smiles. One of the few pleasures which on earth gladdened the spirit of the "Man of sorrows" was the pleasure of *doing good* — soothing grief, and alleviating misery. Next to the joy of the widow of Nain when her son was restored, was the joy in the bosom of the *Divine Restorer!* He often went out of His way to be kind. A journey was not grudged, even if *one* aching heart were to be soothed (Mark 5:1; John 4:4, 5). Nor were His kindnesses dispensed through the intervention of others. They were all *personal* acts. His own *hand* healed. His own *voice* spoke. His own *footsteps* lingered on the threshold of bereavement, or at the precincts of the tomb. Ah! had the princes of this world known the loving tenderness and unselfishness of that wondrous heart, "they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory!"

Reader! do you know anything of such active benevolence? Have you ever felt the *luxury of doing good?* Have you ever felt, that in making others happy — you make yourself so? Do you know anything of that great law of your being, enunciated by the Divine Patron and Pattern of Benevolence, "It is more blessed to give — than to receive?"

Has God enriched you with this world's goods? Seek to view yourself as a consecrated medium for dispensing them to others. Beware alike of *miserly hoarding* — and *selfish extravagance!* How sad the case of those whose lot God has made thus to abound with temporal mercies, who have gone to the grave unconscious of diminishing one drop of human misery, or making one of the world's myriad aching hearts happier! How the example of *Jesus* rebukes the cold and calculating kindnesses — the *mite-like* offerings of many even of His own people! "whose libation is not like His, from the *brim* of an overflowing cup — but from the *bottom* — from the *dregs!"*

You may have *little* to give. Your sphere and means may be alike limited. But remember that God is as much glorified by the *trifle* bestowed from the *earnings of poverty* — as by the splendid benefaction from the *lap of plenty*. "The Lord loves a *cheerful* giver."

The nobler part of Christian benevolence is not vast donations, or munificent financial sacrifices. "He went about *doing good."* The merciful visit — the friendly word — the look of sympathy — the cup of cold water — the little unostentatious service — the giving without thought or hope of recompense — the kindly "considering of the poor" — anticipating their needs — considering their comforts — these are what God values and loves! They are "loans" to Himself — tributary streams to "the river of *His* pleasure". They will be acknowledged at last as such — "I assure you: Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of Mine — you did for Me!"

"Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind."

24. FIRMNESS IN TEMPTATION

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."
"Jesus said to him — *Away from Me, Satan!"* — Matthew 4:10.

There is a dreadful intensity of meaning in the words, as applied to Jesus, "He *suffered*, being tempted!" Though *incapable* of sin — there was, in the *refined sensibilities* of His holy nature, that which made temptation unspeakably appalling. What must it have been to confront the Arch-traitor? — to stand face to face with the foe of His throne, and His universe? But the "prince of this world" came, and found "nothing in Him." Billow after billow of Satanic violence spent their fury, in vain, on the Living Rock!

Reader! you have still the same malignant enemy to contend with; assailing you in a thousand insidious forms; astonishingly adapting his assaults to your circumstances, your temperament, your mental bent, your master passion! There is no place, where "Satan's seat" is not; The whole world lies in the Wicked one. — (1 John 5:19) He has his whispers for the ear of childhood; hoary age is not inaccessible to his wiles. *"All this will I give you"* — is still his bribe to deny Jesus and to "mind earthly things." He will meet you in the crowd; he will follow you to the solitude; his is a sleepless vigilance!

Are you bold in repelling him as your Master was? Are you ready with the retort to every foul suggestion, *"Away from me, Satan!"* Cultivate a tender sensitiveness about sin. The finest barometers are the most *sensitive*. Whatever your besetting frailty is — whatever bitter or baleful passion you are conscious aspires to the mastery — watch it, crucify it, Nail it to your Lord's cross! *You* may despise "the day of small things" — the *Great Adversary* does not. He knows the power of *littles* — that little by little consumes and eats out the vigor of the soul. And once the downwards movement in the spiritual life begins — who can predict where it may end? — the going on "from weakness to weakness," instead of "from strength to strength."

Make no compromises; never join in the ungodly amusement, or venture on the questionable path, with the plea, "It does me no harm." The Israelites, on entering Canaan, instead of obeying the Divine injunction of extirpating their enemies, made a hollow truce with them. — What was the result? Years upon years of tedious warfare. "They were scourges in their sides and thorns in their eyes!" It is quaintly — but truthfully said by an old writer, "Sin indulged, in the conscience, is like Jonah in the ship, which causes such a tempest, that the conscience is like a troubled sea, whose waters cannot rest." — *(Thomas Brooks.)*

"Keep," then, "your heart with all diligence," or, (as it is in the forcible original Hebrew,) "keep your heart *above all keeping,* for out of it are the issues of life" (Proverbs 4:23). Let this ever be our preservative against temptation, "How would *Jesus* have acted here? Would *He* not have recoiled, like the sensitive plant, from the remotest contact with sin? Can I think of dishonoring Him by tampering with His enemy — incurring from His own lips the bitter reflection of injured love — *'I am wounded in the house of My friends!'"*

He tells us *the secret of our preservation and safety*, "Simon! Simon! Satan has desired to have you, that he might sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for you — that your faith fail not!"

"Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind."

25. RECEIVING SINNERS

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."
"This man receives sinners!" — Luke 15:2.

The *ironic taunt* of proud and censorious Pharisees formed the *glory* of Him who came, "not to call the righteous — but sinners, to repentance." Publicans and outcasts; those covered with a deeper than any bodily leprosy — laid bare their wounds to the "Great Physician;" and as conscious guilt and timid penitence crept abashed and imploring to His feet — they found nothing but a forgiving and a gracious welcome!

"His ways" were not as "man's ways!" The "watchman," in the Canticles, "smote" the disconsolate one seeking her lost Lord; they tore off her veil, mocking with chilling unkindness her anguished tears. Not so "the Chief Shepherd and Bishop of souls." "This man *receives* sinners!" See in Nicodemus, stealing under the shadows of night to elude observation — a type of the thousand thousand who in every age have gone *trembling in their night of sin and sorrow* to this Heavenly Friend! Does Jesus punish his timidity by shutting His door against him, spurning him from His presence? — "He will not break the bruised reed, He will not quench the smoking flax!"

And He is still the same! He who arrested a *persecutor* in his blasphemies, and turned the lips of an *expiring felon* with faith and love — is at this hour standing with all the garnered treasures of Redemption in His hand, proclaiming, "whoever comes unto Me, I will never cast out!"

Are we from this to think lightly of sin? or by example and conduct to palliate and overlook its enormity? Not so! Sin, as sin, can never be sufficiently *stamped* with the *brand* of reprobation. But we must seek carefully to distinguish between the *offence* — and the *offender*. Nothing should be done on our part by word or deed to mock the penitential sighings of a guilty spirit, or send the trembling outcast away, with the despairing feeling of *"No hope."*

"This man receives sinners" — and shall not *we?* Does *He* allow the worst dregs of human depravity to crouch unbidden at His feet, and to gaze on His forgiving countenance with the uplifted eye of hope — and shall *we* dare to deal out harsh, and severe and crushing verdicts on an offending (it may be a *deeply* offending) brother? Shall we pronounce "crimson" and "scarlet" sins and sinners — beyond the pale of mercy, when *Jesus* does not? No! Rather, when *wretchedness*, and *depravity*, and *backsliding* cross our path — let it not be with the bitter taunt or the ironical retort that we bid them away. Let us bear — endure — remonstrate — deal tenderly with them; Jesus *did* so, Jesus *does* so! Ah! if we had within us His unconquerable love of souls; His yearning desire for the everlasting happiness of sinners — we would be more frequently in earnest admonition and affectionate appeal with those who have hitherto received no other than harsh looks and repulsive words. If this "mind" really was in us, "which was also in Him," we would more frequently ask ourselves, "Have I done all I *might* have done to pluck this *brand* from the burning? Have I remembered what grace *has* wrought, what grace *can* do?"

"My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back, remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins!"

"Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind."

26. TRUTHFULNESS

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."
"He committed no sin, and no *deceit* was found in his mouth." — 1 Peter 2:22.

How rare, and all the more beautiful because of its rarity, is a purely *deceitless* spirit! A transparent medium through which the light of Heaven comes and goes: open, candid, just, honorable, sincere; scorning every unfair dealing, every hollow pretension, every narrow prejudice. Wherever such characters exist, they are like "apples of gold, in pictures of silver." Such, in all the loveliness of sinless perfection, was the Son of God! His truthfulness and sincerity shining the more conspicuously amid the artful and malignant deceits alike of men and devils. Passing by manifold instances in the course of His ministry, look at its manifestation, as the hour of His death approached. When, on the night of His apprehension, He confronts the assassin band, in meek majesty He puts the question, "Whom do you seek?" They said to Him, "Jesus of Nazareth!" In guileless innocence, He replies, "I am He!" "Are You the King of the Jews?" asks Pilate, a few hours after. An evasive answer might again have purchased immunity from suffering and indignity — but once more the lips which scorned the semblance of evasion reply, "Yes, it is as you say!"

How He loved the same spirit in His people! "Behold," said He, of Nathaniel, "an Israelite indeed, in whom is *no deceit!"* That upright man had, we may suppose, been day after day kneeling in prayer under his fig-tree, with an open and candid spirit —

"Musing on the law he taught,
And waiting for the Lord he loved."

See how the Savior honored him; setting His own divine seal on the loveliness of this same spirit!

Take one other example: when the startling — saddening announcement is made to the disciples, "One of you shall betray Me!" they do not accuse one another; they attempt to throw no suspicion on Judas; each in trembling apprehension suspects only his own treacherous heart, *"Lord, is it I?"*

How much of a different "mind" is there abroad! In the school of the world (this *painted* world,) how much is there of what is called "policy," double-dealing! — accomplishing its ends by distorting means; outward artificial polish, often only a cloak for falseness and selfishness! — in the daily interchange of business, one seeking to overreach the other by tricky arts — sacrificing *principle* for temporal advantage. There is nothing so derogatory to religion as anything allied to such a spirit among Christ's people — any such *blots* on the "living epistles." "You are the *light* of the world." That world is a quick observer. It is sharp to detect inconsistencies; and slow to forget them. The true Christian has been likened to an *anagram* — you ought to be able to read him up and down, every way!

Be all *reality*, no counterfeit. Do not pass for current coin, what is base alloy. Let transparent honor and sincerity regulate all your dealings! Despise all deceitfulness; avoid the sinister motive — the underhand dealing; aim at that unswerving love of truth that would scorn to stoop to base compliances and unworthy equivocations; live more under the power of the purifying and ennobling influences of the gospel. Take its golden rule as the matchless directory for the daily transactions of life — "So in everything, do unto others — what you would have them do unto you."

"Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind."

27. ACTIVITY IN DUTY

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day; the night comes, when no man can work." — John 9:4

How constant and unremitting was Jesus in the service of His Heavenly Father! "He rose a great while before day;" — and when His *secret* communion was over, then His *public* work began. It mattered not to Him where He was: whether on the bosom of the deep, or a mountain slope — in the desert, or at a well side — the "gracious words" always "proceeded out of His mouth." He redeemed every precious moment!

Oh, how our most unceasing activities pale into nothing, before such an example as this! Would that we could remember that each of us has some great mission to perform for God — that true religion is not a thing of *dreamy sentimentalism* — but of energetic practical action; moreover, that no trade, no profession, no position, however high or however humble in the scale of society — can disqualify for this life of Christian activity and usefulness! Who were the writers in the Bible? We have among them a king — a lawgiver — a herdsman — a tax collector — a physician! Nor is it to high spheres, or to great services only, that God looks. The *widow's mite* and Mary's "alabaster box of ointment" are recorded as examples for imitation by the Holy Spirit, while many more munificent deeds are passed by unrecorded. We believe that God says, regarding the attempt of many a humble Christian to serve Him by active duty, "I saw that effort, that *feeble* effort, to serve and glorify Me; it was the very *feebleness* of it I loved!"

Did it ever strike you, that notwithstanding the *dignity* of Christ, and the *activity* of Christ — how *little success* comparatively He met with in His public work? We read of no *numerous* conversions; no Pentecostal *revivals* in the course of His ministry. May not this well encourage us — in the absence of great outward results? He sets up no higher standard than this — "She has done what she could." An artist may be great in painting a *peasant* — as well as a *king.* Yes, and if laid aside from the *activities* of the Christian life, we can equally glorify God by *passive endurance*. "Who am I," said Luther, when he witnessed the patience of a great sufferer, "who am I? a wordy preacher in comparison with this great doer."

Reader! do not forget the motive of our motto verse, *"The night comes!"* Soon our *tale* shall be told; our little day is flitting fast — the shadows of night are falling. "Our span length of time," as Rutherford says, "will come to an inch." What if the eleventh hour should strike after having been "*idle* all the day?" A long lifetime of opportunities allowed to pass unemployed and unimproved — and absolutely *nothing* done for God! A judgment-day arrived at — our golden moments squandered — our talents untraded on — our work undone — met at the bar of Heaven with the withering repulse, "Inasmuch as you did it *not."* "The time we have lost," says Richard Baxter, "cannot be recalled; should we not then redeem and improve the *little* that remains? If a traveler sleeps or trifles most of the day — he must travel so much the faster in the evening, or fall short of his journey's end."

"Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind."

28. COMMITTING OUR WAY TO GOD

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"He committed himself to Him who judges righteously" — 1 Peter 2:23.

With what perfect and entire confidingness did Jesus commit Himself to His Heavenly Father's guidance! He loved to call Him, *"My Father!"* There was music in that name, which enabled Him to face the most trying hour, and to drink the most bitter cup. The scoffing taunt arose at the scene of crucifixion, "He trusted in God that He would deliver Him — let Him deliver Him!" It failed to shake, for one moment, His unswerving confidence, even when the sensible tokens of the Divine presence were withdrawn; the realized consciousness of God's abiding love sustained Him still — "My God! my God!"

How many a perplexity would we save ourselves, by thus implicitly "committing ourselves," as He did, to God! In seasons of darkness and trouble — when our way is shut up with thorns — to lift the confiding eye of faith to Him, and say, "I am oppressed, undertake for me!" How blessed to feel that He *directs* all that befalls us; that no *contingencies* can frustrate His plans; that the way He leads us is not only *a* "right way," — but, with all its briers and thorns — its tears and trials — it is *the* right way!

The result of such an habitual staying ourselves on the Lord, will be a deep, abiding *peace* — any ripple will only be on the surface — no more. It is the *bosom* of the ocean alone, which the storm ruffles; all beneath is a serene, settled calm. "You will keep him, O God, in perfect peace — whose mind is stayed on *You!"*

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want." I shall be content alike with what he appoints or withholds. I cannot wrong that love with one shadow of suspicion! I have His own plighted promise of unchanging faithfulness, that "all things work together for good to those who love Him!" Often there are earthly sorrows which are hard to bear — the unkind accusation when it was least merited or expected — the estrangement of tried and trusted friends, the failure of cherished hopes, favorite schemes broken up, plans of usefulness demolished, the gourd breeding its own *worm* and withering. "Commit your cause and your way to God!" We little know what tenderness there is in the blast of the rough wind; what "needs be" are folded under the wings of the storm! "All is well," because *all* is from *Him*. "Events are God's," says Rutherford; "let Him sit at His own helm — that moderates all."

Christian! look back on your chequered path. How wondrously has He threaded you through the mazy way — disappointing your fears, realizing your hopes! Are evils looming through the mists of the future? Do not anticipate the trials of tomorrow, to aggravate those of today. Leave the morrow with Him, who has promised, by "casting all your care on Him, to care for you." No affliction will be sent greater than you can bear. His voice will be heard stealing from the bosom of the threatening cloud, "Be still, and know that I am God!"

"My Father!" With such a word, you can stretch out your neck for any yoke! As with Israel of old, He will make those very *waves* that may now be so threatening, a fenced wall on every side! "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him." "In *all* your ways acknowledge Him — and He shall direct your paths!"

29. LOVE OF UNITY

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"That they all may be one." — John 17:21.

Surely there is nothing for which Christian churches have such cause to hang their harps on the willows — as the extent to which the Shibboleth of *party* is heard in the camp of the faithful — *sectarianism* rearing its "untempered walls" within the Temple gates!

How different "the mind of Jesus!" Sent "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," He was never found disowning *"other* sheep not of that fold." "Them also will I bring," was an assertion continually illustrated by His deeds. Take one example: The woman of Samaria revealed what, alas! is too common in the world — a total absence of all real religion; combined with an ardent zeal for her sect. She was living in open sin; yet she was all alive to the petty distinctions between a Jew and a Samaritan — between Mount Gerizim and Mount Zion — "How is it that you, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, who am a woman of Samaria?" Did Jesus sanction or reciprocate her sectarianism? — did He leave her bigotry unrebuked? Hear His reply — "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that says to you, Give me a drink; you would have asked of *Him,* and *He* would have given you!" He would have allowed no such narrow-minded exclusiveness to have interfered with the interchange of kindly civilities with a stranger. No, He would have given you better than all, the "living water" which "springs up to everlasting life!"

How sad, that when the enemy is "coming in like a flood" — the ranks of Popery and infidelity linked in fatal and formidable confederacy — that the soldiers of Christ are forced to meet the assault with standards soiled, and mutilated by *internal* feuds! "Uniformity" there *may* not be — but "unity," in the true sense of the word, there *ought* to be. We may be clad in different livery — but let us stand side by side, and rank by rank, fighting the battles of our Lord. We may be different branches of the seven golden candlesticks, varying and diversified in outward form and workmanship; but let us combine in "showing forth the praises of Him" who recognizes as the one true "churchmanship," — fidelity in shining for His glory "as lights in the world." How can we read the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians, and then think of our divisions? "How miserable," says Edward Bickersteth, "would a hospital be, if each patient were to be so offended with his neighbor's disease, as to differ with him on account of it, instead of trying to alleviate it!"

Ah! if we had more real communion with our Savior — would we not have more real communion with one another? If Christians would dip their arrows more in "the balm of Gilead," would there not be fewer wounds in the body of Christ? "How that word *'toleration'* is used among us!" said one who drank deeper than most, of his Master's spirit — "how we *tolerate* one another — Dissenters *tolerate* Churchmen, and Churchmen *tolerate* Dissenters! Oh! hateful word! TOLERATE one for whom *Jesus* died! *Tolerate* one whom He bears upon His heart! *Tolerate* a temple of the living God! Oh! there ought to be *that* in the word which should make us feel *ashamed* before God!"

"Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind."

30. NOT OF THE WORLD

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."
"I am not of the world." — John 17:14.

In one sense it was *not* so. Jesus did not seek to maintain His holiness intact and unspotted — by *avoiding contact* with the world. He mingled familiarly in its busy crowds. He frowned on none of its innocent enjoyments; He fostered, by His example, no love of seclusion; He gave no warrant or encouragement to mortified pride, or disappointed hopes, to rush from its duties — yet, with all this, what a halo of heavenliness encircled His pathway through it! "I am from above," was breathed in His every look, and word, and action, from the time when He lay in the slumbers of infancy in His Bethlehem cradle, until He said, "I leave the world, and go to My Father!" He had moved *uncontaminated* through its varied scenes, like the *sunbeam*, which, whatever it touches, remains as unsullied, as when it issues from its great fountain.

But though Himself in His sinless nature "unconquerable" by temptation — immutably secure from the world's malignant influences, it is all worthy of note, as an example to us, that He never *unnecessarily* braved these. He knew the seducing spell that same world would exercise on His people, of whom, with touching sympathy, He says, *"These* are in the world!" He knew the *many* who would be involved and ensnared in its subtle worship, who, "minding earthly things," would seek to slake their thirst at *polluted streams!*

Reader! the great problem which you have to solve, Jesus has solved for you — to be *"in* the world, and yet not *of* it." To abandon it, would be a dereliction of duty. It would be servants deserting their work — soldiers flying from the battle-field. *Live* in it, that while you live, the world may feel the better for you. *Die,* that when you die, the world — the *Church* — may feel your loss, and cherish your example!

On its cares and duties, its trusts and responsibilities, its employments and enjoyments, inscribe the motto, *"The world passes away!"* Beware of everything in it that would tend to deaden spirituality of heart; unfitting the mind for serious thought, lowering the standard of Christian duty, and inducing a perilous conformity to its false manners, habits, tastes, and principles. As the best antidote to the love of the world — let the inner vacuum of the heart be filled with the love of God. Seek to feel the nobility of your regenerated nature — that you have a nobler heritage to care for, than the transitory shadows of this world. How can I mix with the potsherds of the earth? Once, "I lay among the pots;" now, I am "like a dove, whose wings are covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold!" "Stranger — pilgrim — sojourner;" — "my *citizenship* is in heaven!" Why covet tinsel honors and glories? Why be solicitous about the smiles of that which knew not, (no, which frowned on) its Lord?

Live above its corroding cares and anxieties; remembering the description Jesus gives of His own true people, "They are not of the world — even as I am not of the world!"

31. CALMNESS IN DEATH

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."
"Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit." — Luke 23:46.

In the death of Jesus, there were elements of fearfulness, which the believer can know nothing of. It was with Him the execution of a penal sentence. The sins of an elect world were bearing Him down! The very voice of His God was heard giving the tremendous summons, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd!" Yet His was a death of *peace,* no, of *triumph!* Before He closed His eyes, light broke through the curtain of thick darkness. In the calm composure of filial confidence He breathed away His soul — "Father, into your hands I commend My spirit!" What was the secret of such tranquility? This is His own key to it — "I have glorified You on the earth, I have *finished the work* which You gave me to do."

Reader! will it be so with *you* at a dying hour? will *your* "work" be done? Have you already fled to Jesus? Are you reposing in Him as your only Savior, and following Him as your only pattern? Then — let death overtake you when it may — you will have nothing to do *but to die!* The grave will be irradiated with His presence and smile. He will be standing there as He did by His own tomb of old, pointing to yours, tenanted with angel forms, no, Himself as the "Precursor," showing you *"the path of life!"* There can be no true peace until the fear of death is conquered by the sense of sin forgiven, through "the blood of the Cross." "Not until then," as one has said, "will you be able to be a quiet spectator of the open grave at the bottom of the hill which you are soon to descend." The sting of death is sin — but thanks be to God who gives us the victory through the Lord Jesus Christ!"

Seek now to live in the enjoyment of greater filial nearness to your covenant God; and thus, when the hour of departure *does* come, you will be able, without irreverence, to take the very words of your dying Lord, and make them your own — "FATHER, into Your hands I commend my spirit!" FATHER! *Death!* It is only going HOME! — the heart of the child leaping at the thought of the paternal roof, and the paternal welcome! "Son, you are ever with me, and all that I have is yours!"

Christian! can you dread that which your Savior has already vanquished? *Death!* It is as the angel to Peter breaking the dungeon-doors, and leading to open day — it is going to the world of your birthright, and leaving the one of your exile — "it is the soldier at nightfall lying down in his tent in peace, waiting the morning to receive his laurels." Oh! to be ever living in a state of holy preparation! — the mental eye gazing on the vista — view of an opening Heaven! — feeling that *every moment* is bringing us nearer and nearer that happy *Home!* — soon to be within reach of the Heavenly threshold, in sight of the Throne! — soon to be bending in adoring rapture with the Church triumphant — bathing in floods of infinite glory — "LIKE HIM," — seeing HIM *as He is,* and that *forever and Ever!*

"And every man that has this hope in Him purifies himself, even as He is pure!"