



HEAVENLY CALLING

JAMES SMITH (1802-1862)

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HEAVENLY CALLING

1. The Heavenly Calling

Partakers of the heavenly calling.—Hebrews 3:1

Beloved, **God hath called us** by
His grace and gospel:
into the *knowledge* of the
Lord Jesus Christ;
into the *favour* of Jesus
Christ;
to *partake* of the Holy Spirit
of the living God.

He has called us:
to enjoy fellowship with
Jesus Christ the Lord;
to wear the image of Jesus Christ;
to possess and enjoy His
righteousness, strength,
wisdom, unsearchable riches,
and eternal glory.

This calling is heavenly in its origin,
nature, tendency, and
consummation.¹

It is from heaven and to heaven.

All believers partake of the same
calling. They are called:
by the same Voice,
to the same cross and throne,
to possess and enjoy the same
title, and
to claim and use the same
blessings.

This calling is the greatest honour
that can be conferred upon a sinner.

It is altogether a favour, the fruit of free and
everlasting love.

Its enjoyment calls for gratitude and praise.

Are we called with an heavenly
calling? **Then we should:**
come out from the world,
walk with God,
imitate the Savior,
set our affections upon things
above, and
prepare for, and hasten to, our
blessed home, our glorious
inheritance.

Let us make our calling and our
election sure, and then sing—

*Speak to us, Lord, Thyself reveal,
while here o'er earth we rove;
Speak to our hearts, and let us feel
the kindling of Thy love.*

*Thou callest me to seek Thy face;
'tis all I wish to seek;
To tend the whispers of Thy grace,
and hear Thee inly² speak.*

*Let this my every hour employ,
'till I Thy glory see;
Enter into my Master's joy,
and find my heaven in Thee.*

2. Trust the Lord

*Trust ye in the LORD
for ever.—Isaiah 26:4*

We are often discouraged by the
difficulties of the way, and the
weakness of our faith.

¹ **consummation** – completion.

² **inly** – inwardly.

We look to people and things, instead of looking to the Lord; and
We reflect upon our weakness, instead of believing His promises, and trusting His faithfulness.

But the Lord our God should be the only and the constant object of our trust.

His Word warrants us to look to Him for all we need, both temporal and spiritual; and His character assures us that we cannot be disappointed.

If we connect *prayer* to God with *trusting* in God, and *waiting* for God,
it is impossible that we should be left in trouble, or be neglected in distress.

We may trust Him with the fullest confidence, and expect without doubting all He has promised to bestow.

Are you at this time tried, tempted, and distressed?

Cast your burden upon the Lord.
Commit your way unto Him;

He will bring to pass His largest promises and your best desires.

Seek out His promises,
confide in them,
plead them with God, and expect their accomplishment.

“Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength” (Isa 26:4).

“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee” (Isa 26:3).

*Begone, unbelief; my Savior is near,
and for my relief will surely appear:
By prayer let me wrestle, and He will perform;
with Christ in the vessel, I smile at the storm.*

3. Gone Astray

I have gone astray like a lost sheep.—Psalm 119:176

This is the humble confession of a true man of God, and might not we adopt it as our own this morning? Have not we also gone astray?

Does not this display *our weakness*?

How weak to wander from:
so kind a Shepherd,
so rich a pasture,
so good a fold!

Is it not a mark of *inattention*?

The Lord Jesus Christ has warned and cautioned us against it in His Word.

Is it not a proof of our *ingratitude*? Oh, how ungrateful to forsake

Him after:
so many favors,
such rich blessings,
such tokens of unmerited kindness!

Does it not betray our *folly*? To go:

from good to bad,
from safety to danger,
from plenty to want³ and
wretchedness.

Oh, the power of corruption! the deceitfulness of the human heart!

Lord, seek Thy servants, for we do not forget

Thy commandments:
we smart for our folly;
we grieve over our sin;
we desire to return.

Restore us to Thy fold, to the enjoyment of Thy favour; and enable us to delight ourselves in Thy ways.

Lord Jesus, blessed Shepherd of the sheep, bring us back from all our wanderings, and keep us near Thyself; for why should we turn aside from Thy flock and fold?

³ want – need.

*O Jesus, full of truth and grace,
 more full of grace than I of sin,
 Yet once again I seek Thy face;
 open Thine arms and take me in.
 And freely my backslidings heal,
 and love the faithless sinner still.
 Thou knowest the way to bring me back,
 my fallen spirit to restore.
 Oh, for Thy truth and mercy's sake,
 forgive, and bid me sin no more;
 The ruins of my soul repair,
 and make my heart a house of
 prayer.*

4. What Think Ye of Christ

*What think ye of Christ?
 —Matthew 22:42*

Beloved, let us inquire, **what do we think of the Lord Jesus Christ?**

What do we think:

- of His divinity, as one with the Father?
- of His humanity, as one with us?
- of His complex person, as God and man in one Christ?

What think we of His one sacrifice for sin?

What think we of His grace as displayed in the whole work of our redemption?

What think we of His Word, as:
 the ground of our hope,
 the source of our comfort, and
 the rule of our lives?

What think we of His kingdom?
 What think we of His coming?

How do we think of Jesus Christ
 our Lord? Do we think of Him:
 frequently, as of a subject full of
 pleasure?
 naturally, as we do of refreshing
 food?
 pleasantly, as of choice and
 delightful music?

What does our thinking of Christ produce?
 Does it produce desire, contrition, love,
 trust, resolution, prayer, action?

What are we willing to suffer for
 Christ?

What are we willing to part with
 for Christ?

What can we cheerfully give to
 Christ, to feed His poor, or to
 help His cause?

*If ask'd what of Jesus I think,
 though still my best thoughts
 are but poor,*

*I say, He's my meat and my drink,
 my life, and my strength, and
 my store.*

*My shepherd, my husband, my friend,
 my savior from sin, and from
 thrall;⁴*

*My hope from beginning to end,
 my portion, my Lord, and my all.*

5. To Hoar Hairs

*Even to hoar hairs will I carry you.—Isaiah
 46:4*

What a sweet portion is this for the aged disciples of the Lord Jesus.

Heart and flesh may fail them, but **God will not forsake them.** Having begun a good work in them, He will carry it on. His gifts and callings are without repentance. He will be as kind, as tender, and as gracious at last as at the first.

He will carry us. The eternal God is our refuge; underneath are the everlasting arms.

He will carry us safely:
 through every danger,
 over every difficulty,
 into His presence and glory.

⁴ **thrall** – bondage.

Aged pilgrim, lean upon your God, look unto Him; and as the mother carries the infant child, so will your God carry you.

He will prove Himself faithful to His Word, and ultimately call you forth as a witness to the same.

Fear not then in reference to the evening of old age; your God will supply you.

He will support you,
and at last land you safe:
where the storms of trouble never
blow,
where weakness and fears are
never felt.

“Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof” (Mat 6:34).

The promise of your God cannot fail you. He will guide you and carry you to His kingdom and glory.

He says,

*Even down to old age, all My people
shall prove
my sovereign, eternal,
unchangeable love;
And when hoary hairs shall their
temples adorn,
like lambs they shall still in My
bosom be borne.*

*In every condition—in sickness, in
health,
in poverty’s vale, or abounding in
wealth;*

*At home and abroad, on the land, on
the sea—
as thy days may demand shall thy
strength ever be.*

6. A Clean Heart

*Create in me a clean heart,
O God.—Psalm 51:10*

Such a prayer implies:

a conviction of sin,

a sense of pollution,
a desire for holiness,
a knowledge of weakness, and
a grief for inconstancy.

Such a prayer implies the possession of true wisdom.

It is the prayer of every Christian.

Let it be our prayer this day.

Let us lift up our hearts and voices
to our God, and cry,
Remove guilt and pollution,
Produce purity and peace in
our hearts.

Cleanse us by:

Thy Word,
the blood of the Lord Jesus
Christ, and
the influence of the Holy Spirit.

Purity of heart can only be produced by God.

It enters into the very essence of Christian faith.

We cannot be godly except we are holy.

If we love sin,

if we can indulge in sin, or
if a sense of having sinned does
not pain us,
if it does not cause us to adopt
this prayer—

[then] our religion is spurious;
we are destitute of the power
of godliness.

No real Christian can live in sin—
he is called to holiness;

he is the temple of the Holy Spirit;
holiness is his element and health.

His God says, “Be holy, for I am holy.”

He cries, “Create in me a clean heart, O God.”

Let us be holy

in all manner of conversation,

looking for and hasting to the coming of Christ our Lord.

*Take the strong power of sin away,
nor let me in its bondage stay;
My inmost soul convert;
Oh, wash me from my ugly stain,
Come, Lord, and make me
thoroughly⁵ clean,
create me pure in heart.*

7. Thy Salvation Cometh

*Behold, thy salvation cometh.
—Isaiah 62:11*

The Lord's people may be now sorely tried and often cast down; but the present is the worst state they will ever be in.

They are hastening to the Day of God, which is to them the day of deliverance.

Their salvation is on the road. They will soon be freed:

from all disease, from which they
now suffer;
from all sin, under which they
now groan;
from all foes, of whom they are
now afraid; and
from all cares and troubles, with
which they are now burdened.

Beloved, are you ever fearful? Do desponding thoughts ever arise in your hearts?

Behold, your Salvation comes!
Behold, His reward is with Him,
and His work before Him.
He will free you from all that
pains you, and raise you above
all that you fear.

The time of deliverance is at hand;
the year of release is near;
the trumpet of the Jubilee will
soon be heard.

Our Savior will arrive to lead us
to our Father's house,
to the mansions which He has
prepared for us.
So shall we be ever with the Lord.

Comfort one another with these words,
“Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye out
to meet him” (Mat 25:6)!

*I am waiting for the dawning
of the bright and bless'd day,
When the darksome night of sorrow
shall have vanished far away.*

*When, forever with the Savior,
far beyond this vale of tears,
I shall swell the song of worship
through the everlasting years.*

*I am waiting for the coming
of the Lord Who died for me;
O, His words have thrilled my spirit,
'I will come again for thee.'*

*I can almost hear the footfall
on the threshold of the door,
And my heart, my heart is longing
to be with Him evermore.*

8. Consider How Great

*My people doth not consider.
—Isaiah 1:3*

This is a complaint brought against us by our infinitely gracious God.

Let us consider it right now.

What should we consider? Surely, how great things the Lord hath done for us.

He hath delivered:

our souls from death,
our eyes from tears, and
our feet from falling, that we
may walk before God in the
land of the living.

How God provides for all His creatures, even the least, and therefore will certainly provide

⁵ **thoroughly** – thoroughly; completely.

for us;
being engaged to do so as our
Creator, Preserver, covenant
God, and gracious Father.

That He is the supreme and universal Governor; arranging, managing, and directing every event, so that:

accidents can never happen,
chance can have no place,
but all is directed by infinite
wisdom and omnipresent love.

Why do we not consider? Because:
our hearts are fickle, false, and
worldly;
our minds are influenced by
unscriptural notions;
we endeavor to walk by sight
instead of faith.

What are the consequences of our
not considering?
our God is dishonored and
displeased;
our souls are alarmed and misled;
Satan gains an advantage over us.

*Jesus, mighty to renew,
work in me to will and do;
Stem my nature's rapid tide,
slay my vile self-righteous pride!
All Thy power in me be shown,
take away this heart of stone!*

9. Having Not Seen

*Whom having not seen ye love.
—1 Peter 1:8*

We have never seen the glorified Lord Jesus Christ, but we have believed what His Word declares of Him, and believing, we love Him.

We love Him as the only-begotten Son of God, Who was exalted, dignified, and glorified from everlasting; as the voluntary Savior of poor lost sinners, Who became incarnate, suffered, bled and died for them.

We love His precious person:
His countenance is majesty,
His heart is love,
His hand is omnipotence,
His eye is bountifulness,
His affections are compassion,
His presence and smile are heaven.

We love His precious salvation, in its freeness, completeness, and glory.

We love His delightful promises, which anticipate our wants, meet all our wishes, and fill our souls with peace.

We love His throne, where He meets us, attends to our requests, and blesses us indeed.

We love His holy precepts, which exhibit His authority, display His love, and call us to holiness.

We love His heaven-born family, who wear His likeness, are the excellent of the earth, and the children of a King.

Oh, to love Him more!
to love Him with all our hearts,
minds, souls, and strength!
to manifest our love to Him by
holy actions, and a useful life!

*Object of my first desire,
Jesus, crucified for me;
All to happiness aspire,
only to be found in Thee.
Thee to praise, and Thee to know,
constitute our bliss below.
Thee to see, and Thee to love,
constitute our bliss above.*

10. Abide in Me

Abide in me.—John 15:4

By nature we are without Christ and are far from Him.

By grace we accept His invitation, and come to Him, feel our need of Him.

We are brought:
to see that nothing but union to

the Lord Jesus Christ can make us safe and happy; and to give ourselves up to Him, praying to be one with Him.

He receives us;
 He sheds abroad His love in our heart, and we become members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.

He then bids us abide in Him, which we do:
 by living in absolute dependence upon Him;
 by cleaving to Him in love as our beloved Savior, God, and Friend;
 by openly professing our attachment to Him, and expectations from Him;
 by walking in daily fellowship and communion with Him; and
 by identifying our cause with His.

Beloved, we must abide in the Lord Jesus if we would have:
 our sins mortified,
 our lusts subdued, and
 our graces nourished.

We must abide in the Lord Jesus if we would:
 obtain victory over the world;
 prove a match for Satan; and
 obtain all necessary supplies for our faith and practice.

Abiding in the Lord Jesus Christ will give us
 a single eye,
 a burning zeal,
 holy discretion, and
 enable us to seize all opportunities to glorify His adorable Name.

*Hail, gracious Savior, all divine,
 mysterious, ever living Vine!
 To Thee united may I live,
 rich in the influence Thou canst give.
 Still may my soul in Thee abide,
 torn by no tempest from Thy side,
 Nor from their place within my heart,
 Thy promise or Thy law depart.*

11. The Way of Peace

The way of peace.—Romans 3:17

Peace is an invaluable blessing, whether we consider it as reconciliation to God, or tranquility and comfort of mind.

It is not to be obtained by the works of the law. If we would obtain peace, it must be:

by receiving the Savior's Word into our heart;
 by believing on Him as able and willing to save;
 by trusting the testimony God hath given of His Son.

If we would obtain peace, it must be:

by renouncing self, as loathsome in the sight of God;
 by relying simply and always on the Lord Jesus Christ for all we need; and
 by daily making a hearty surrender of all to infinite love.

If we would maintain peace, we must:

confide in the promises;
 walk by the precepts;
 be loyal to the King of kings and Lord of lords.

If we would maintain peace, we must:

commune daily with our heavenly Father;
 attend upon Him in the ordinances of His own appointment;
 rely on His special and particular providence.

If we would maintain peace, we must:

frequent the open fountain of the blood of Christ for purification;
 cleave to the saints in love, as the body of Christ; and
 disentangle our affections from the world, and set them on things above.

*"This is the way, walk ye in it"
 (Isa 30:21).*

Let nothing tempt you to leave it.
Endeavor by all means to attract others to it.

*There is no path to heavenly bliss,
or solid joy, or lasting peace,
But Christ, the appointed road.
Oh, may I tread the sacred way,
by faith rejoice, praise, and pray;
Till I sit down with God.*

12. Be Still

*Be still, and know that I am God.—Psalm
46:10*

The dispensations of divine providence are often very perplexing.

Our God has His way in the sea,
His path in the deep waters, and
His footsteps are not known.

Reason is confounded, and faith is staggered;
but He hushes our fears, silences our cries,
and bids us, “Be still.”

We must lie before Him:
as the lamb at the shepherd’s feet;
as the child in the parent’s arms.

He will not harm us Himself,
nor will He let others do so.

We must learn that He is God, infinitely
wise, invariably good, always a Sovereign.

He doeth according to His will in heaven, on
earth, in the sea, and all deep places.

None can stay His hand, or dispute His right
to accomplish His will.

Let us therefore keep silence before
Him.

He is our God, and we are His
people.

His mercy is everlasting, and His truth en-
dureth throughout all generations.

Let us not murmur, for He is
gracious.

Let us not complain, for He is a

Father unto us.

Let us not fear, for He is faithful.

Let us wait upon Him:
submitting in all things to His
will, and
surrendering ourselves into His
hands with “Here am I...do to
me as seemeth good” (2Sa 15:26).

*Leave God to order all thy ways,
and hope in Him whate’er betide;
He will be found in evil days
an all-sufficient strength and guide:
Who trusts in God’s unchanging love
builds on the rock that cannot move.
Only thy restless heart keep still,
and wait in cheerful hope, content
To take whate’er His gracious will,
His all-discerning love, has sent;
Nor doubt our inmost wants are known
to Him Who chose us for His own.*

13. Glory in the Lord

*He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.—
1 Corinthians 1:31*

It is unlawful to glory in ourselves, our de-
scent, our possessions, our connections, or
doings.

If we glory it must be in the Lord.

We must glory in Him:
as gracious and merciful,
exercising loving-kindness and
tender mercies in the earth;
in what He is to His people, their
God, their portion, and their
Friend;
in what He has for us, has already
given to us, and will without
doubt bestow upon us.

In Jesus Christ our Lord, as:
crucified for our sins,
raised for our justification, and
ascended to heaven in order to
plead our cause, and take

possession of the kingdom in
our names.

In our relation to Him, interest in
Him, and oneness with Him.

This is our glory:

that we are one with Christ, and
one with the Father through
Him;

that we are heirs of God and
joint-heirs with Jesus Christ;
that all things are for our sakes;
that the abundant grace might,
through the thanksgiving of
many, redound to the glory of
God.

Beloved, let us glory in the Lord, in His:
free grace,
eternal love,
well-ordered covenant,
precious promises,
splendid mansions, and
glorious Name.

*Join all the glorious names
of wisdom, love, and power,
That ever mortals knew,
that angels ever bore;
All are too mean to speak His worth,
too mean to set my Savior forth.
My Savior and my Lord,
my Conqueror and my King!
Thy scepter and Thy sword,
Thy reigning grace I sing.
Thine is the power: behold I sit
in willing bonds beneath Thy feet.*

14. These Things

*The things that accompany
salvation.—Hebrews 6:9*

Let us inquire: What are these “things”? Do
we possess them?

[First,] spiritual life, evidenced by:
convictions of sin;
crying to God for deliverance

from sin;

groaning under the weight of the
body of sin and death.

These things further include:

a tender conscience, which
trembles at sin, and

feels deeply for God’s glory;

a filial fear of God, lest we should
dishonor His Name,
disgrace His cause, and
grieve His love.

And also:

an anxiety and deep-rooted
concern for holiness, both
in the heart and the life,

contrition or brokenness of heart
for sin, accompanied with:

holy mourning before God, and
fervor in devotion,

earnestly breathing out the
desires of the heart before
God, or

grieving when it is not so.

And finally:

a jealousy of self, as to our
sincerity and uprightness of
intention, lest we should be led
astray by the corruptions which
are within;

a chaste conversation⁶ coupled
with fear; and

diligence in the means of grace:
searching the Scriptures, to
ascertain our real state and
condition, and what the Lord’s
will and our duty is; with

an increasing discovery of our
own weakness, imperfection,
and misery.

*Oh, give me, Savior, give me still
my poverty to know;*

⁶ **conversation** – lifestyle.

*Increase my faith; each day in grace
and knowledge may I grow:
Unfold the glories of Thy cross,
for which I count all else as loss.*

15. You Shall Know

*Thou shalt know hereafter.
—John 13:7*

We are often at a loss to account for many things:

in our feelings,
in our circumstances, and
in the Lord's dealings with us;
but what we know not now, we
shall know hereafter.

This is our Savior's promise: "Thou shalt know hereafter."

Let us take the comfort of it, and expect its fulfillment to our perfect satisfaction by-and-by.

We shall know some things before the coming of our Lord, and we shall know all things after.

Every difficulty will then be cleared up, and all the trying dispensations of divine providences accounted for.

Let us therefore be patient and wait for the Lord's time; the coming of our Lord draweth nigh.

Let us silently submit to the Father's will, for we shall see that it was wise and kind.

Let us acknowledge the right of God to conceal the cause of His working until He has fully accomplished His designs.

Let us praise Him for all that is past; let us trust Him for all that is to come.

"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known" (1Cor 13:12).

May the Lord direct our hearts into His love, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

*My Father, it is good for me
to trust and not to trace;
And wait with deep humility
for Thy revealing grace.*

*Lord, when Thy way is in the sea,
and strange to mortal sense,
I see Thee in the mystery,
and trust Thy providence.*

*So, faith and patience! Wait awhile,
not doubting, not in fear;
For soon in heaven my Father's smile
shall render all things clear.*

16. I Come Quickly

*Surely I come quickly.
—Revelation 22:20*

Who is this proposing to come quickly? Is it an enemy threatening us? Is it a stranger?

No, it is the Lord Jesus Christ,
Whom we love, speaking to cheer
us.

It is Emmanuel, to Whom we are
betrothed in righteousness,
judgment, lovingkindness,
mercies, and faithfulness.

It is our Savior, Who
saved us by His death, and
preserves us by His life.

He will come *soon*, the period cannot be far distant.

He will come *gladly*, with delight and pleasure, to receive us to Himself.

"Surely," He says, "I come quickly."

Is it not a source of joy to us? Does it not excite and draw forth holy expectation?

He comes:

to conform us to His image,
to fill us with His love,
to clothe us with His glory, and
to bring us final salvation.

Do we say with the church, "Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus"?

Or, are we indifferent about His coming?

He comes for our redemption; His coming completes our salvation.
Let us look for, and hasten to the coming of the Day of God!

*Thou art coming, O my Savior;
we shall meet Thee on that Day.
We shall see Thee, we shall know
Thee,
we shall bless Thee, we shall show
Thee
All our hearts could never say.
What an anthem that will be,
ringing out our love to Thee,
Pouring out devotion sweet
at Thine own all-glorious feet!*

17. Consider Adversity

*In the day of adversity, consider.
—Ecclesiastes 7:14*

Circumstances sometimes regulate duties.

Sometimes prosperity calls for rejoicing.

Sometimes adversity calls for *consideration*.

If prayer appears to be shut out, if our petitions seem to be denied, and we cannot enjoy the life and power of our faith—

It is the day of adversity.

If providence frowns, and the heart contracts and becomes hard—

It is a day of adversity.

Now we should consider, **is there not a cause?** What is it? Has: sin been indulged? or mercy slighted? or duty neglected? or self deified?⁷

What is the intention? Is it to correct, reprove, and restore us?

How should we now act? Let us: take shame to ourselves; and justify our God, for He is always faithful and true; confess sin; lament over our folly; beg for pardon; and plead for restoration.

It is our comfort to know that the Lord: calls us to return, declares He is ready to forgive, promises a gracious reception, and assures us He will heal our backslidings and love us freely. Let us, believing, look for His blessing.

*O Jesus, full of truth and grace,
more full of grace than I of sin,
Yet once again I seek Thy face;
open Thine arms and take me in,
And freely my backslidings heal,
and love the faithless sinner still.
Thou know'st the way to bring me
back,
my fallen spirit to restore:
O, for Thy Truth and mercy's sake,
forgive, and bid me sin no more;
The ruins of my soul repair,
and make my heart a house of
prayer.*

18. Remember the Lord

*Remember the LORD.
—Nehemiah 4:14*

The Lord is the great author of your being. He is the only proper object of your faith, fear, and worship.

Remember: the promises He has made, the deliverances He has wrought, the blessings He has conferred, and the invitations He has given.

⁷ **deified** – treated as a god, worshipped.

Remember Him:

in calamity, to trust Him;
in prosperity, to praise Him;
in danger, to call upon Him;
in difficulty, to expect His help.

Remember:

to obey His commands;
to attend to His exhortations;
to keep His company;
to seek His blessings; and
to aim at His glory in all you do.

Remember Him, for it is your duty; it is your privilege.

Remember Him:

in order to strengthen your faith;
as an antidote to your fears;
as a source of encouragement to
your soul; and
as a preventative to sin.

Remember He is holy, just, and good. He will be glorified in all them that draw nigh unto Him.

“Remember the LORD” (Deu 8:18).

He is your life, your strength, your food,
your portion, your God, your *all*.

Remember Him, for He never forgets you.
Cleave to Him, for He will never forsake you.

*God made me for Himself, to serve
Him here
with love's pure service and in
filial fear;
To show His praise, for Him to labor
now;
then see His glory where the angels
bow.*

*O Holy Spirit, with Thy fire divine,
melt into tears this thankless
heart of mine;
Teach me to love what once I seemed
to hate,
and live to God, before it be too
late.*

19. Be Not High-minded

*Be not high-minded, but fear.
—Romans 11:20*

Believers are sometimes tempted to think more highly of themselves than they ought to think (Rom 12:3).

They forget that they are indebted to the free, sovereign, and distinguishing grace of God for whatever difference there is between them and the vilest of the vile.

They should consider that they are still:
weak, and liable to be overcome;
foolish, and prone to wander;
sinful, and easily wrought upon.

They should consider that Satan is:
strong and determined;
subtle and insinuating;
malicious and designing;
active and persevering.

They should consider that the world is:

alluring and ensnaring,
treacherous and vain,
attracting and deceitful.

This would preserve them from being too secure.

A high-minded Christian is sure to be unfruitful, and is generally left to fall.

“Therefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed” (1Co 10:12).

David fell, Peter fell, and thousands beside have fallen; and they exhort us with groans, sighs, and tears,

“Be not highminded, but fear” (Rom 11:20).

“Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling” (Phi 2:12).

Let us cultivate humility of mind, and habitual dependence upon God; so shall we be safe, holy, and happy.

*I need Thee every hour,
stay Thou near by;*

*temptations lose their power
when Thou art nigh.
I need Thee every hour,
stay Thou near by;
temptations lose their power
when Thou art nigh.
I need Thee every hour,
in joy or pain;
come quickly and abide,
or life is vain.*

20. Gospel of Our Salvation

*The gospel of our salvation.
—Ephesians 1:13*

Our salvation is our deliverance from sin, the curse, and the wrath of God.

This was impossible to man, but God sent His own Son in our nature, to save us freely, fully, and eternally.

The gospel is the “good news” of our salvation.

It is sent to inform us:
that God is love;
that grace reigns;
that heaven is opened.

It informs us:
that provision is made for our
guilt, weakness, and fears;
that God waits to receive us, bless
us, and glorify us with Himself
forever.

It sets before us:
all the Lord Jesus Christ has done,
all He possesses.

It invites us to come and receive, to use, and be happy.

It requires nothing of us to entitle us.

It presents all it has, and gives it freely to the poor, the halt, the maimed, and the blind.

It has all our misery requires,
all our needs demand.

We cannot wish for more than

it brings.

It is full of grace, and full of glory.
Precious gospel! Glorious news!
May we receive it, act upon it daily,
and so be happy. It is intended:
to fill us with joy and peace in
believing,
to lead us to abound in hope, and
to make us more than conquerors
over despondency, doubt, and fear.

*‘Come unto me, ye weary,
and I will give you rest.’
O gracious voice of Jesus,
which comes to hearts oppressed;
It tells of free forgiveness,
of pardon, life, and peace,
Of joy that has no ending,
and love which cannot cease.*

21. O, Love the Lord

*O, love the LORD, all ye his saints.—Psalm
31:23*

Our God has revealed Himself as the source, center, and end of everything lovely. In Jesus Christ our Lord, He appears as the fairest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely.

The wealth of the universe is His.
He is worthy of our highest love.
He is all we could wish or desire.

To possess Him is to be made for eternity; to have Him on our side is to be safe forever.

But you may ask, **What is His mind towards us?** Emphatically, “grace”:

We have found favour in His eyes.
He is the friend of penitent sinners.
He loveth us with an infinite love.

Do you doubt it? [Then:]
read His Word;
look at Calvary;
ask His people;
prove for yourselves.

Consider what He has already done for us:

Have we a being? He gave it.

Have we a good hope? He
bestowed it.

Have we liberty? He bought it.

Have we holiness? He wrought it.

Consider:

what we may have been but for
His grace;

what we certainly should have
been but for His salvation;

what we are now, and what we
shall be, as the effect of His
love.

*“O, love the LORD, all ye his saints” (Psa
31:23).*

It is happiness! It is holiness!

It is heaven!

*A monument of grace,
a sinner saved by blood:
The streams of love I trace
up to their fountain—God!
And in His heart of mercy see
eternal thoughts of love to me.*

22. For the Sheep

*I lay down my life for the sheep.
—John 10:15*

Jesus Christ the Lord has a flock peculiarly
His own. His Father chose them and gave
them to Him.

He received them and became their Shep-
herd. They wandered and were doomed to
die, but He interceded and died for them.

Oh, what an infinite love is the love of the
Lord Jesus!

He:

left His Father’s bosom,
left the songs of angels,
left the throne of glory.

The Lord Jesus Christ became a man, that
He might become a Substitute.

He offered:

Himself for His sheep,

His blood for theirs,

His life for theirs.

The sacrifice was accepted, and He redeemed
them to God by His blood out of every na-
tion, people, kindred, and tongue.

They are doubly His, for, though before they
were given Him by His Father in love, He
bought them when they had sold them-
selves to sin.

Herein is love:

not that we loved the Lord Jesus,
but that He loved us; and
gave Himself to be the
propitiation⁸ for our sins.

Are we among His sheep?

Are we like them?

Do we love them, cleave to them,
and walk with them?

His sheep are gentle, harmless,
peaceful, humble, dependent
upon Him, and devoted to Him.

They hear His voice, love His
ways, and follow Him
whithersoever He goeth.

*When the Shepherd’s life was needful
to redeem the sheep from death,
Of their safety ever heedful.*

*Thou for them didst yield Thy
breath;*

Faithful Shepherd!

Love like Thine no other hath.

23. Imitators of God

*Be ye imitators of God, as dear children.—
Ephesians 5:1*

**The Lord proposes Himself to us as our pat-
tern:**

He gives grace to everyone who
desires it to imitate Him.

He exhorts us as His dear and

⁸ **propitiation** – sin offering that appeases wrath.

tenderly beloved children.

He, in mildest strains, proposeth
Himself for our imitation.

Let us imitate the Lord:

dealing justly;
ever acting from holy principles,
and by a righteous rule;
adhering strictly to truth, for our
God is the God of truth;
choosing our companions, being
familiar only with them who
are familiar with God;
doing good to all, and especially
unto them who are of the
household of faith.

Let us imitate Him:

cultivating a spirit of love,
exercising forbearance and pity,
being slow to anger and ready to
forgive, and
being always ready to help in
trouble and distress.

*“He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on
the good, and sendeth rain on the just and
on the unjust”
(Mat 5:45).*

Let us imitate our God:
for He commands us;
our relation to Him requires it; and our
peace rests in it.

*Give me a faithful heart, likeness to Thee.
that each departing day henceforth
may see*

*Some work of love begun,
some deed of kindness done,
some wanderer sought and won,
Something for Thee.*

*All that I am and have, Thy gifts so free,
in joy, in grief, through life, O Lord,
for Thee!*

*And when Thy face I see,
my ransomed soul shall be
through all eternity,
Something for Thee.*

24. He Shall Sustain You

*Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall
sustain thee.*

—*Psalm 55:22*

The Lord’s people are often heavy laden;
their burdens are heavy and their grief great;
but the Lord kindly directs them to cast every
burden upon Him, and promises to sustain
them.

Guilt in the conscience and a sense of sin in
the soul, often prove an intolerable burden;
but the Lord will remove it by the blood of
His Son and the whisper of His Spirit.

The care of a family sinks the spirit, and fills
with distress; but the Lord Jesus says, “Cast
them all on Me.”

Losses, crosses, enemies, temptations, and
the inward conflict often burden the soul;
but our God will sanctify them to us, sustain
us through them, and deliver us out of them
all.

Our God has determined that we shall use
Him, feel our dependence upon Him, and
glory only in Him.

Believer, He will sustain thee:

by speaking peace to thy troubled
heart;

by enabling you to leave your
intricate affairs in His hands;

by strengthening you with
strength in your soul; and

by enabling you to contrast the
present with the future.

Thanks be unto God Who gives us the victory!

O blessed Lord Jesus, teach me:
to bring every burden to Your
feet, and
to cast every care upon You.

*Cast thy burden on the Lord,
only lean upon His Word;
Thou wilt soon have cause to bless
His eternal faithfulness.*

*He sustains thee by His hand,
He enables thee to stand;
Those whom Jesus once hath loved
from His grace are never moved.*

*Jesus, guardian of Thy flock,
be Thyself our constant Rock;
Make us, by Thy powerful hand,
strong as Zion's mountain stand.*

25. Straited

*Is the Spirit of the Lord
straited?*⁹—Micah 2:7

No! Why then are you cast down? The Holy Spirit is promised:

to teach us all things;
to testify of the Lord Jesus Christ
to our hearts;
to help our infirmities,
to comfort us by taking of the
things of Christ and showing
them to us; and
to lead us in the way everlasting.

Do we experience His love in these particulars? If not, what is the cause?

“Is the Spirit of the Lord
straited?” No! Then what?

Do we sow to the Spirit?
Do we pray for the Spirit?
Do we expect the Father to give
Him in answer to our prayers;
Do we expect that the Lord Jesus
will send Him according to His
promise?

Oh, beloved, look at:
your doubts, your fears,
your worldliness, your coldness,
your lack of life, love, and power.

And now ask,
Are these His doings?
Is His arm shortened?
Is His love changed?
Is His Word false?

Or, rather, have you not
grieved Him,
quenched His operations, and
caused Him to withhold His hand?

Oh, pray for the Spirit! You are absolutely
dependent upon Him, for without Him you
can do nothing!

*Come, Holy Spirit, come;
let Thy bright beams arise;
Dispel the sorrow from our minds,
the darkness from our eyes.*

*Revive our drooping faith,
our doubts and fears remove;
And kindle in our hearts the flame
of never-dying love.*

26. With Us to the End

*I will never leave thee, nor
forsake thee.*—Hebrews 13:5

If the Lord is with us, all will be well; and He
has promised to be with us always, even
unto the end.

Anyone but our God would have left
us long ago, but:

He is longsuffering, full of
compassion, and of great mercy;
He will go through the whole
journey with us;
He will be our God to all eternity,
and will conduct us through life
with safety.

He will be with us:
in every trouble,
to support us in every trial,
to comfort us in every difficulty,
to provide for us in every danger,

He will be with us:
to deliver us, and
under all circumstances, to bless
us.

He will be with us
as our heavenly Father,

⁹ **straited** – restricted.

as our firm and faithful Friend,
as our God.
We shall be with Him by-and-by, as
His children,
His dependents, and
His jewels,
to be glorified with Him forever.
Beloved, let us rejoice in this, that God will
never leave us.
Troubles may come upon us; but our God
will not forsake His people for His great
name's sake.
It hath pleased the Lord to make them His
people, and—having loved His own—He
will love them unto the end.

*Fear not, I am with thee, O be not
dismayed;
I am thy God, and will still give
thee aid:
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and
cause thee to stand,
Upheld by My righteous,
omnipotent hand.
The soul that on Jesus has leaned for
repose,
I will not, I will not desert to its
foes;
That soul, though all hell should
endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never
forsake!*

27. Thou Art the Same

*But thou art the same, and
thy years shall have no end.
—Psalm 102:27*

Everything below is liable to change:
health may give place to sickness,
pleasure to pain,
plenty to poverty,
love to enmity,
honor to disgrace,
strength to weakness, and
life to death.

The days of darkness may be many. But
though all our circumstances and friends
should change, there is One Who never
changes:
He is in one mind, and none can turn Him.
With Him is no variableness.
He is the same yesterday, today, and forever;
and
He is our best Friend, our nearest relation,
our gracious Savior.
Yesterday, His Name was Jesus, the Lord
Christ. His nature was love and His pur-
pose was to do us good with His whole
heart and soul.
Today, He is the same.
We cannot expect too much from Him, or be
too confident in Him, if we are walking
humbly with Him.
He will be our God, and we shall be His peo-
ple.
Let us cultivate:
intimacy with Him,
dependence upon Him,
concern to please Him,
fear to offend Him,
zeal to glorify Him;
And it must be well with us in health and
sickness, plenty and poverty, life and death.
He is the same, and will never turn away
from doing us good.
He is forever the Fountain of love and holi-
ness. Praise ye the Lord!

*This, this is the God we adore,
our faithful, unchangeable friend;
Whose love is as great as His power,
and neither knows measure nor end.
'Tis Jesus, the First and the Last,
Whose Spirit shall guide us safe home;
We'll praise Him for all that is past,
and trust Him for all that's to come.*

28. Confess Our Sins

Only acknowledge thine iniquity.—Jeremiah 3:13

Will the Lord receive us when we have backslidden from Him, and are desirous of returning to Him? Oh, yes! He invites, He exhorts, He beseeches us to return.

Nor does He prescribe any hard conditions, but He says, “only acknowledge thine iniquity.”

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us...for the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin” (1Jo 1:9, 7).

Have we wandered? Have we left our first love? Then,

“Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for...he will heal us...and he will bind us up” (Hos 6:1).

He is so ready to forgive, so infinitely gracious in His nature, that His heart yearns over us, His arms are open to receive us.

Let us go to His throne, and there:
confess our sins,
beseech His pardon,
sigh for the enjoyment of His love, and

He will restore unto us the joys of His salvation, and establish us with His free Spirit.

Let us daily confess our iniquities unto the Lord; He will pardon our numerous sins.

In His favour is life; in His frown is distress and woe.

He delighteth in mercy. He will receive us, pardon us, and bless us. “His mercy endureth for ever” (Psa 106:1).

*Great God of wonders! all Thy ways display the attributes divine;
But countless acts of pardoning grace,
beyond Thine other wonders shine:
Who is a pardoning God like Thee?
or who has grace so rich and free?*

*In wonder lost, with trembling joy,
we take the pardon of our God,
Pardon for sins of deepest dye,
a pardon bought with Jesus' blood.*

29. He That Loves Me

He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father.—John 14:21

Do we love the Lord Jesus Christ? Are we cultivating a deep acquaintance with Him?

If we love Him, we desire:

to know Him more fully,
to serve Him more cheerfully,
to enjoy Him continually.

If we love the Lord Jesus, we are willing:

to part with all things for Him,
to renounce whatever He forbids,
to pursue whatsoever He commands.

If we love Him, we want to love Him more; and to be always with Him.

If we love Him, He assures us His Father will love us, for the Father so delights in His beloved Son, that He visits, revives, and blesses every soul that loves the Lord Jesus Christ.

If God loves us, what good thing will He withhold from us? Will He suffer any one to hurt us? Oh, no!

He will manifest Himself to us;
He will appear for us;
He will glorify Himself in us;
He will be to us all a God can be,
and do for us far above our expectations and hopes.

To be the object of the love of God is to enjoy the highest honour, and to possess a title to the greatest happiness which it is possible for rational creatures to enjoy.

Let us therefore be certain beyond a doubt, that we love the Lord Jesus, ardently, sincerely.

*Jesus, Thy boundless love to me
no thought can reach, no tongue
declare:*

*O knit my thankful heart to Thee,
and reign without a rival there.*

*Thine wholly, Thine alone, I am;
Lord, with Thy love my heart inflame.*

*O grant that nothing in my soul
may dwell, but Thy pure love alone;*

*O may Thy love possess me whole,
my joy, my treasure, and my crown.*

*All idols from my heart remove;
My every act, word, thought, be love.*

30. Remember His Love

We will remember thy love.

—Song of Solomon 1:4

What subject is so sweet as the love of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Think of the goodwill of His heart towards us which He fixed on us sovereignly, immutably,¹⁰ and eternally!

Let us remember this love of the Lord Jesus, for it is sufficient to fill us with joy, peace, and love.

Oh, how it condescended to:

look upon us,
come and die for us, and
now to dwell with us!

What benevolence it has and does display, giving everything that is necessary for life and godliness.

How it dignifies its objects, raising them to glory, honour, immortality, and eternal life.

Let us remember His love:
to comfort our hearts amid
changing friendships;

to encourage our souls in seasons of darkness;

to produce confidence in times of trial;

to inspire with fortitude in times of danger;

to beget patience when burdened and oppressed;

to reconcile the mind under bereaving dispensations; and

to produce zeal and devotedness in the Lord's cause and service.

Oh, love of Jesus! Be thou my daily subject and constant theme!

Beloved, let us remember His love, if we forget everything beside. There is nothing so sweet, so valuable, so excellent as this!

*O love divine, how sweet Thou art!
when shall I find my willing heart*

All taken up by Thee?

*I thirst, I faint, I die to prove
the greatness of redeeming love,*

The love of Christ to me.

God only knows the love of God:

O, that it now were shed abroad

In this poor stony heart:

for love I sigh, for love I pine;

this only portion, Lord, be mine,

Be mine this better part.

31. Committing Our All

The poor committeth himself to thee.—

Psalm 10:14

Those who commit themselves to God have the best and truest friend. The Lord's people are poor, but they are not friendless nor forsaken.

They have:

Jehovah for their God,

Jesus Christ the Lord for their

Savior, and

the Holy Spirit for their

Comforter and Guide.

¹⁰ **immutably** – unchangeably.

They know God, and commit themselves and their all to Him.

But how do they commit themselves to Him?

as the debtor does to his surety,¹¹
as a sick man does to his
physician,
as the client does to his lawyer
or advocate,
as the needy does to his rich and
generous friend,
as the loving bride to her beloved
bridegroom,
as a sinner to the Savior.

But why do they commit themselves unto Him? They commit themselves:

to His grace, to be saved by it;
to His power, to be kept by it;
to His providence, to be fed by it;
to His Word, to be ruled by it;
to His care, to be preserved by it;
to His arms at death, to be safely
landed in glory.

This commitment flows from grace. It produces peace, safety, satisfaction, and success.

Let us commit ourselves to the Lord daily, heartily, deliberately, and unreservedly.

*My soul shall cry to Thee, O Lord,
to Thee, supreme, incarnate Word,
My rock and fortress, shield and friend,
Creator, Savior, source, and end.
And Thou wilt hear Thy servant's
prayer,
though death and darkness speak
despair.*

32. Sin

*Be sure your sin will find you out.—
Numbers 32:23*

Sin cannot be concealed; it meets the eye and affects the heart of God.

Unless we find it out, confess it with sorrow, and forsake it with disgust, it will find us out, and expose us to the rod of God.

It found Achan out, and proved his ruin (see Jos 7:19 -26).

It found Noah out, and covered him with disgrace (see Gen 9:21).

It found David out, so that the sword never departed from his house (see 2Sa 12:9-12).

God cannot be reconciled to sin, nor should we be. However secret the sin, God is a witness; and He will bring it to light.

Let us be careful that we give sin no quarter,¹² or vainly fancy that because God loves us He will not expose us—He assures us our sin will find us out.

Oh, to hate sin as God hates it,
to loathe it as the Lord Jesus
Christ loathed it, and suffered
unspeakably for it;
to become dead to it, and be
entirely delivered from it!

It is:

the source of all our miseries,
the cause of all our pains, and
the occasion of all our troubles.

It cannot be hid; it will find us out, and sorely wound us.

*“He that covereth his sins shall not prosper:
but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them
shall find mercy” (Pro 28:13).*

*God be merciful to me,
on Thy grace I rest my plea;
Plenteous in compassion Thou,
blot out my transgression now;
Wash me, make me pure within;
cleanse, oh, cleanse me from my sin.*

*My transgressions I confess,
grief and guilt my soul oppress;
I have sinned against Thy grace,
long provoked Thee to Thy face.*

¹¹ **Surety** – one who takes on the responsibilities or debts of another.

¹² **give...no quarter** – make no allowance for.

*I confess my judgment just,
only in Thy mercy trust.*

33. Walk in Life's Newness

*We should also walk in newness of life.—
Romans 6:4*

All who *profess* Christ are supposed to *possess* a new nature.

They are brought under new obligations; and they are expected to keep new objects in view.

Being united to Christ in His death, and participating in His resurrection, they walk as influenced by new principles.

The free grace, holy truth, and divine power of God lead them to newness of life.

They walk by new rules, no longer following custom, or imitating the world.

They walk according to:

God's Word,
the Savior's golden rule, and
His bright example.

The motives from which they act are:

the love of God,
gratitude to God, and
zeal for His glory.

The ends they have constantly in view are:

to honor God,
to enjoy His presence, and
to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ.

These ends work:

to benefit others,
to prove the power and purity of
their principles,
to justify their profession, and
to evidence their faith and love.

A new life is expected from new creatures; and without it, our religion is vain and our profession a falsehood.

Beloved, do we walk in newness of life?

Behold the servant of the Lord!

*I wait Thy guiding hand to feel,
To hear and keep Thy every word,
to prove and do Thy perfect will;
Ready from my own works to cease,
glad to fulfill all righteousness.*

*Oh, may my life be fit for use,
meanest of all Thy creatures, me:
The deed, the time, the manner choose,
let all my fruit be found of Thee;
Let all my works in Thee be wrought,
by Thee to full perfection brought.*

34. Come unto Me

Come unto me.—Matthew 11:28

The Lord Jesus calls you to His throne; He is there waiting to hear, relieve, and bless you.

You are to go to Him just as you are, and receive from Him all you need.

He will give you:

wisdom, to direct your steps;
peace, to keep your hearts;
strength, to do His will;
righteousness, to justify your
souls; and
rest, unspeakably sweet.

He is glorified in bestowing these blessings upon you.

He calls you this very moment, to receive without money and without price.

Let us go boldly to the throne of
grace, that we may:

obtain mercy, and
find grace to help in time of need.

What a precious Savior is the Lord Jesus Christ! What a kind and tender Friend!

“Come,” He says, “Come to Me; go not to self, to the world, to the empty cisterns which creatures idolize. Come unto Me, and I will do for you exceeding abundantly, above all you can ask or think:

your sins I will pardon;
your graces I will revive;
your comforts I will restore;

your holiness I will increase;
your efforts to glorify Me I will
crown with success;
I will bless you, and you shall be a blessing.”
Oh, how great is Your goodness:
which You have laid up for them
that seek You,
which You have wrought for
them that trust in You.

*O precious word that Jesus said!
The soul that “cometh to Me,
I will in no wise cast out,”
whoever he may be.*

*O precious word that Jesus said!
“Behold, I am the door”;
And all who enter in by Me
have life for evermore.*

35. Subdue Our Iniquities

*He will subdue our iniquities.
—Micah 7:19*

Sin must not only be pardoned, but corruption must be subdued; the one is freely promised as well as the other.

The grace of God pardons, the power of God subdues. Grace and power always go together in the salvation of a sinner.

Pardon comes first, and sanctification follows.

Light shining upon the understanding reveals corruption working in the soul.

Holiness seated in the heart produces hatred and opposition to it.

Prayer ascends to God for deliverance from it. Power descends and subdues it. But like fire apparently quenched, it will break out again and again. Like rebels in a state, it will seize every opportunity of disturbing the peace and happiness of the soul.

Hear, then, what the Lord says to you this morning, “I will subdue your iniquities.”

Carry your complaint to His throne.
Plead His faithful Word.

Expect His promised power to
subdue your iniquities.

Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law, but under grace.

Grace reigns, and will conquer every rival lust.

*O that I knew the secret place,
where I might find my God!
I'd spread my wants before His face
and pour my woes abroad.*

*I'd tell Him how my sins arise,
what sorrows I sustain;
How grace decays and comfort dies,
and leaves my heart in pain.*

*Arise, my soul, from deep distress,
and banish every fear;
He calls you to His throne of grace
to spread your sorrows there.*

36. Search the Scriptures

Search the scriptures.—John 5:39

The Bible is God's book, a favor bestowed on man. It is intended to lead him to a knowledge of the:

nature,
perfections,
purposes,
will,
providence, and
salvation of God.

It contains all that is really necessary to be known.

Every part of the Bible should be read, meditated upon, and prayed over.

It should be read carefully, prayerfully, frequently, and in course.¹³

Praying, reading, and thinking should go together, and what profit may be thus gained!

¹³ **in course** – in order; sequentially.

It makes us wise unto salvation through
faith which is in Christ Jesus.

We cannot understand the Scriptures, or
gather spiritual profit from them but by
the Holy Spirit; nor should we expect to be
taught the mind of God but by the Scrip-
tures.

In the Bible, God speaks to your
soul. By it He will:
sanctify your nature,
direct your steps, and
give you joy and peace.

Let not the works of man occupy the place of
the Book of God. Search the Scriptures
daily, and exercise faith therein.

*“Open Thou mine eyes, that I may see won-
drous things out of thy law” (Psa 119:18).*

Unfold to me the riches of Your grace re-
vealed in Your Word.

*Here wisdom all her light imparts,
to teach our minds and move our
hearts;*

*Such influence bids the sinner live,
and makes the burdened soul
revive.*

*O grant us grace, our Savior God,
to understand Thy holy Word;
With meekness, all its truth receive,
and by its light, forever live.*

37. In the Midst of Snares

*Walk circumspectly.*¹⁴
—Ephesians 5:15

We are in an enemy’s land. We are surround-
ed by temptations; and we have a heart that
is deceitful above all things, and desperately
wicked.

To honor the Lord Jesus Christ
in our spirits,
in our communications, and

in our every action,
should be our constant aim.

We are to live unto the Lord, for
Him Who died for us and rose
again.

To this end, provision was laid up
in the everlasting covenant.

For this purpose the precious
promises were made.

With this design the Holy Spirit
is given;

That we may serve Him in righteousness and
holiness all the days of our lives.

This world is not our home:

Satan’s family are not to be our
associates.

Riches, honors, or pleasure are
not to be our objectives.

We are to walk as in the midst of
snares:

watchful,
prayerful,
depending upon the Lord
Jesus,
cultivating fellowship
with Him.

Oh, may we keep our eyes on the Lord Jesus
Christ as our example; and walk by His
Word as our rule.

May we not be venturesome¹⁵ or presumptu-
ous, but avoid the very appearance of evil.

May we never leave the Lord’s ways or ordi-
nances, to make worldly alliances or to
please a carnal fancy.¹⁶

May we keep close to our Lord Jesus and fol-
low after Him, acting as loving children
traveling home to their father’s house.

*So let our lips and lives express
the holy Gospel we profess;
So let our works and virtues shine,
to prove the doctrine all divine.*

¹⁴ **circumspectly** – cautiously; with careful attention.

¹⁵ **venturesome** – adventurous; taking risks.

¹⁶ **carnal fancy** – fleshly feeling or emotion.

*Our flesh and sense must be denied,
passion and envy, lust and pride.
While justice, temperance, truth and
love
our walk of righteousness approve.*

38. The Preserver of Man

*O thou preserver of men.
—Job 7:20*

We have neither wisdom nor strength to preserve ourselves. We are daily liable to fall; and unless God preserves us, we certainly shall.

Our hearts are so deceitful, our corruptions are so strong, and Satan is so vigilant, that: we need to look to God as our preserver every hour; we need to call upon Him to uphold us every moment.

He can preserve; He does preserve; but only in the way of our obedience. Except we are watchful, prayerful, and walking humbly with Him:

we have no security;
we may fall into the grossest sins,
and commit the greatest
crimes.

O believer, never think yourself safe, but as you are:

leaning on the Lord Jesus Christ,
calling upon your heavenly
Father, and
cultivating communion with the
Holy Ghost!

Indeed you are in danger! Satan, the world, and your corruptions are all leagued against you. Nothing but omnipotent grace can keep thee.

Cease from relying upon man.
Trust not your own heart.
Keep close to the good Shepherd.

He “is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy” (Jude 1:24).

*Our heavenly Father calls,
and Christ invites us near;
With both our friendship shall
be sweet,
and our communion dear.*

*God pities all our griefs,
He pardons every day,
Almighty to protect our souls,
and wise to guide our way.*

*Jesus, our living head,
we bless Thy faithful care,
Our advocate before the throne,
and our forerunner there.*

39. Alpha and Omega

*I am Alpha and Omega.
—Revelation 22:13*

Jesus Christ the Lord is the first and the last. He began, He carries on, and He will complete the great work of our eternal salvation.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the first object to which we were directed to look, and He will be the last we shall wish to see.

He is the first subject we began to learn, and we shall be learning Him to all eternity.

He is first with us in every trial and trouble, and He will never leave us nor forsake us.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the foundation on which we build, and He will be for a covering.

We should look to Him first in every trouble, and go to Him first with every want.

He includes all that is good, great, and glorious. He that has the Lord Jesus Christ has all things.

Let us:

begin with Jesus Christ the Lord,
and then
go on with the Lord Jesus Christ,

so shall we
end with Him, and a blessed
ending it will be.

He is our great Lesson, and we have learned
nothing to purpose until we know Him.

Then we may say, "This is the true God, and
eternal life" (1Jo 5:20).

Let us endeavor to learn the happy
art of:

looking to Jesus Christ,
expecting from Jesus Christ, and
glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ
as our Alpha and Omega
from day to day.

*Christ is my hope, my strength, my guide,
for me He groaned, and bled, and died;
Christ is the source of all my bliss,
my Wisdom, and my Righteousness.
My Savior, Brother, faithful Friend,
on Him alone I now depend.*

40. I Would Do Good

I would do good.—Romans 7:21

Every believer has experienced the renewing
of the Holy Ghost; sin has not dominion over
him.

He perceives the beauty of holiness, and
loathes himself on account of sin.

He would be internally holy, and externally
conformed to the precepts of the Bible.

He would:

pray with fervor;
praise with gratitude;
believe with confidence;
war against sin, Satan, and the
flesh with courage; and
glorify God by every feeling,
thought, word, and action.

Thus he feels, and for this he prays in his
best moments.

But he finds that he needs the frequent re-
newing of the Holy Spirit, for he is prone

to sink into coldness, deadness, darkness,
and sloth, and he is obliged to cry out:
*"My soul cleaveth unto the dust; quicken¹⁷
thou me according unto thy word" (Psa
119:25).*

The Lord must work in us to will as well as
to do. By nature we are unwilling, and the
desire after holiness, proved by effort to ob-
tain it, is from God.

Beloved, you must be coming to the Lord
Jesus daily for fresh supplies of the Spirit,
or you will find yourself not only weak, but
careless. Not only will the power of godli-
ness decline, but you will become indiffer-
ent.

Watch against temptation.

Watch unto prayer.

Watch over your own heart.

*Dear Lord, and shall Thy Spirit rest
in such a fallen heart as mine?
Unworthy dwelling! glorious Guest!
favor astonishing, divine!*

*When some kind promise lifts my soul,
do I not find His healing voice
The tempest of my fears controls,
and bids my drooping powers
rejoice?*

*Whene'er to call the Savior mine,
with ardent wish my heart aspires,
Can it be less than power divine,
which animates these strong
desires?*

41. Arise and Depart

*Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your
rest.—Micah 2:10*

There is no permanent rest for the believer
on earth. Here briars and thorns will be with
him. A voice is daily sounding in his ears,
"Arise ye, and depart."

Here you are not to loll at ease, or to idle on
your journey.

¹⁷ **quicken** – make (spiritually) alive.

Here you are not to expect to find satisfaction, for it is an enemy's land; and you are only passing through it to your heavenly home.

If your march is quick and your conduct scriptural, be not surprised if the dogs bark at you. They know you not, nor did they know your Master.

The Lord Jesus was pursued, annoyed, and at last put to death by them. In agony of soul He cried out,

*"Dogs have compassed¹⁸ me:
the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet"
(Psa 22:16).*

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal...but set your affection on things above...where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God" (Mat 6:9; Col 3:2, 1).

Use the world, but do not abuse it.
Pass through it, but never seek a home in it.
Remember it is peopled by the enemies of your God.

*Twice born by a celestial birth,
why should we grovel here on earth?
Why grasp at this world's passing toys,
when we have heaven's eternal joys?
Shall we be side-tracked on the road,
when we are traveling back to God?
From exile—into life we come!
And dying is but going home.*

42. Made Whole

*Wilt thou be made whole?
—John 5:6*

The great Physician presents Himself to us and He asks, "Wilt thou be made whole?"

This is a searching question.

Are you willing to be sanctified¹⁹ throughout?

Are you willing that He should use what means He pleases, to conform you to Himself?

Jesus Christ the Lord is able to sanctify us wholly. The time of mercy is now; are we desirous of being healed?

If so, let us put ourselves into His hands for the purpose. Let us submit without hesitation to His terms. He performs the cure; He receives all the glory.

Let us look to the Lord Jesus, Who alone can heal us.

Open thy whole case to Him,
consult Him daily,
trust Him implicitly, and
expect to shine before the
Father's throne as a proof
of His skill and kindness.

No case can be desperate, while the Lord Jesus Christ lives to heal. No sinner can be too poor, for He heals without money and without price.

O blessed Lord Jesus! Heal us this day:
soften our hard hearts;
regulate our disorderly wills;
elevate our earthly affections;
fill us with holiness;
fill us with love.

We lie at Your feet, and we trust in Your Word.

*Jesus, to Thee for help I call;
with pitying eye behold me fall.
Diseased at Thy throne,
oh, heal my soul, remove my sin,
now make the filthy leper clean.
Remove the heart of stone.*

¹⁸ compassed – surrounded.

¹⁹ sanctified – made holy; set apart for God.

43. They All Slept

They all slumbered and slept.
—Matthew 25:5

When we think of:
the warnings the Lord Jesus
Christ has given,
the promises He has made, and
the precepts²⁰ He has delivered,
we are ready to conclude that His people
must be always active and always happy.
But when we look around us, or when we
look at our own course, we are obliged to
lament that this
is not the case.

The Lord Jesus Christ is gone to receive a
kingdom and to return. He has given tal-
ents²¹ to His servants, and to every man his
work, and commanded the porter to watch.
But it is said of the wise, as well as the fool-
ish virgins, “They all slumbered and slept”
(Mat 25:5).

Are we awake to our duties, to our privileges,
to our expectations?

Are we looking for, longing for, and prepar-
ing for the coming of our Lord Jesus?

Are we sober and vigilant, because our adver-
sary the devil, as a roaring lion, is going
about seeking whom he may devour?

Are we active for God?

Are we traveling steadily toward home?

Do we pass the time of our sojourning²² here
in fear?

Is the talent in the napkin or at the bank?
(See Mat 25:24-29.)

Let us not sleep as do others, but let us
watch and be sober.

Behold, the Judge stands before the door. It
is high time to awake out of sleep!

*Day of judgment, day of wonders,
hear the trumpet’s awful sound;
Louder than ten thousand thunders,
shakes the vast creation round!
How the summons
will the sinner’s heart confound!
But to all who have confessed,
loved and served the Lord below,
He will say, “Come near ye blessed,
see the kingdom I bestow:
You forever
shall My love and glory know.”*

44. Just Before God?

*Their righteousness is of me, saith the
LORD.—Isaiah 54:17*

The longer the Christian lives, the more he
learns. The more the Spirit teaches him, the
more he loathes himself and renounces his
own righteousness as filthy rags.

He hoped sensibly:²³

to grow in holiness,
to feel his corruptions subdued,
to enjoy without interruption the presence
of his God.

But instead of this he seems to grow more
like Satan. Corruption appears to get
stronger and stronger, and the depravity²⁴
of his nature appears so dreadful, that he
wonders how God can possibly love him, or
show any favor unto him.

This experience:

endears free grace,
reveals Christ to be unspeakably
precious, and
renders the gift of righteousness
invaluable.

How can a man be just before God? Where is
his righteousness to come from?

Jehovah answers, his righteousness is of Me:
the Father purposed it;

²⁰ precepts –commandments.

²¹ talents – a sum of money.

²² sojourning – temporary stay.

²³ sensibly – in a manner perceived by the senses.

²⁴ depravity – sinful corruption.

the Lord Jesus Christ wrought it;
the Holy Spirit applies it.

The Gospel reveals it.

Faith receives it, puts it on, and pleads it
before God.

O Lord Jesus! In You alone have I righteous-
ness and strength.

*My hope is built on nothing less
than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame;²⁵
but wholly lean on Jesus' name;
On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;
all other ground is sinking sand.*

45. All Our Springs

*All my springs are in thee.
—Psalm 87:7*

Jesus Christ the Lord is the fountain of living
water. The wells of salvation are found in His
Person, work, and Word.

He says, "If any man thirst, let him come un-
to me, and drink" (Joh 7:37).

The springs of comfort, peace, and salvation
are all in Him; and in Him for us; therefore
they are called "our springs."

These waters:

cleans from all defilement,
refresh the faint and weary, and
satisfy the longing soul.

The springs present plentitude.²⁶ Whosoever
will may come and take, for they are never
dry.

We are absolutely dependent on the Lord Je-
sus, this is our mercy.

We are not absolutely dependent on any be-
sides, this is our happiness.

Our desires should concentrate
in Him.

Our affections should be fixed
upon Him.

Our expectations should be only
from Him.

In the Lord Jesus Christ is all possible varie-
ty. He can do, and bestow, all we can possi-
bly want; for it hath pleased the Father that
in Him should all fullness dwell.

If all our springs are in Christ Jesus the
Lord, let us not then look to any other; but
let us with joy draw water out of the foun-
tains of the Savior.

Let us ask, and He will give us living water,
that we may thirst no more. Only what
comes from the Lord Jesus Christ can sat-
isfy the soul.

*To whom, dear Jesus, oh, to whom
shall needy sinners flee,
But to Thyself, Who bid'st us come?
Our springs are all in Thee.*

*Here in Thy love will we rejoice:
all sovereign, rich, and free.
Singing with hope in heart and voice,
"Our springs are all in Thee."*

46. Sighing for Christ

*As the hart panteth after the water brooks,
so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My
soul thirsteth for God, for the living God:
when shall I come and appear before
God?—Psalm 42:1-2*

The dying experience of a true believer was
comprehended in this one sentence, "I am
sighing for my Lord Jesus!" He did not sigh
for life, nor for ease—but for the Lord Jesus.
How much of my experience now, is ex-
pressed in those words, "I am sighing for my
Lord Jesus."

I can do without riches, or fame, or the hon-
or which man confers.

I am content with what providence sends
me—and yet I often sigh, and sigh deeply
too.

I expect I shall continue to sigh—until I ob-
tain my desire.

²⁵ **frame** – state of mind; feeling.

²⁶ **plentitude** – abundance.

I have had a glimpse of the Lord Jesus—and
I sigh for a full view of Him.

I have tasted the sweetness of communion
with Him—and I sigh for uninterrupted
fellowship.

I have felt a little of the cleansing influence
of His precious blood, and Holy Spirit—
and I sigh for a thorough cleansing, that I
may be perfectly and forever holy.

I sigh for the blessed Lord Jesus—that I may:
know Him more perfectly,
love Him more entirely, and
enjoy Him uninterruptedly.

I sigh to be exactly like my Lord Jesus, and I
sigh to be forever with my Lord Jesus. I
think that nothing else will put a complete
stop to my sighing.

And the day is coming, and it may be very
near, when I shall breathe the last sigh and
begin the never-ending song.

My sorrows will end, and my sighing will
forever cease. For I shall:
be with my Lord Jesus,
like my Lord Jesus, and
everlastingly employed in
praising my Lord Jesus.

*My soul amid this stormy world,
looks to its home above:
And longs to fly on angel's wing,
and go to Him I love.*

*A child, when far away, may long
for home and kindred dear,
And we who wait our absent Lord
may sigh till He appear.*

47. Be Patient

Be ye also patient.—James 5:8

Our God is a God of patience;
the Lord Jesus Christ is the great
example of patience;
the Holy Spirit is the agent
producing patience.

Trials, troubles, and disappointments are the
means which exercise and strengthen it.

The patience required is a
disposition:²⁷

to bear all that God has appointed
for us, without complaining,
with submission and hope;
to wait God's time for the mercies
we need, or for answers to the
prayers we put up.

Patience is the daughter of faith. It is only as
we believe that God has appointed, over-
rules, or commands all for our good and
His glory that we can be patient.

Patience:

produces self-possession,
shuts the mouth from
complaining, and
keeps back the heart from seeking
retaliation.

Patience is a principal point in self-
government.

Are you impatient? Then confess it, and
mourn over it before God. It will make you
miserable, and lead you to dishonor God.

Watch against it, for the coming of the Lord
draws nigh.

Look at our Lord Jesus and be patient.

*"In your patience possess ye your souls"
(Luk 21:19).*

*Father, I know that all my life
is portioned out for me;
The changes that are sure to come
I do not fear to see.
I ask Thee for a present mind
intent on pleasing Thee.*

*Briars beset our daily path,
that call for patient care;
There is a cross in every lot,
an earnest need for prayer:
But lowly hearts that lean on Thee,
are happy anywhere.*

²⁷ **disposition** – attitude or inclination.

48. Rest in His Love

He will rest in His love.

—Zephaniah 3:17

Man's love is changeable, being a passion.
God's love is unchangeable, being a perfection.

Having loved, He will always love. Nothing can occur in time, but what He knew from eternity.

Consequently there can be no reason today why God's love for His own should change, for He knew all before He set His heart upon them.

He
fixed His love upon us, knowing
all that would be done or
thought by us, and
united us to His beloved Son, the
Lord Jesus Christ, that He
might never withdraw His love
from us.

The love of God is from everlasting to everlasting; without variableness, or the shadow of a turn.

Here God rests, and here we should rest.

Herein is love, that God should take such poor, vile, ungrateful, wretched creatures, and make them:

the bride of His Son,
the delight of His soul, and
His portion for evermore.

Oh, the riches of divine love!

Admire it, trust it, rejoice in it, and make it the subject of your daily meditation.

He will rest in His love.

On this rock we may rest with confidence.

On this pillow we may repose²⁸ in peace.

*Awake my soul, in joyful lays,
and sing your great Redeemer's
praise;*

²⁸ **repose** – rest comfortably.

*He justly claims a song from me;
His lovingkindness, O how free!
He saw me ruined in the Fall,
yet loved me notwithstanding all;
He saved me from my lost estate;
His lovingkindness, O how great!
Soon shall I pass the gloomy vale,
soon all my mortal powers must
fail;
O may my last expiring breath
His lovingkindness sing in death.*

49. Examine Yourself

Let a man examine himself.

—1 Corinthians 11:28

This is necessary that we may know upon what we are resting, and whether we are growing or declining. Let us examine ourselves:

Upon what foundation are we building for eternal life?

From what does our hope arise?

What is the source of our satisfaction, pleasure, and peace?

What do we possess to prove the reality of our walk with God?

Have we been quickened²⁹ by the Holy Spirit?

Is the Lord Jesus Christ our life, and is He living in us?

Are we enlightened to see sin in its nature, character, and actions?

Have we living faith which:
receives the Lord Jesus Christ,
believes His Word, and
lives to Him?

Is the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost?

Do we love God because He first loved us, and walk with Him in peace and holiness?

²⁹ **quickened** – made spiritually alive.

Have we the earnest and witness of the Spirit
in our hearts?

Are we:
battling sin, and
praying to be delivered from it, as
from a tyrant, a plague, the
most fearful evil?

Let us examine [ourselves]:
carefully,
deliberately,
prayerfully,
taking God's Word for our rule
and guide.

*"These things have I written unto you that
believe on the name of the Son of God; that
ye may know that ye have eternal life" (1Jo
5:13).*

*Searcher of hearts! Oh, search me still;
the secrets of my soul reveal.
My fears remove; let me appear
to God and my own conscience clear.
Each evidence of grace impart,
and deeply sanctify my heart!*

50. Going Home, Part 1

*These all died in faith...they
confessed that they were strangers and pil-
grims on the earth.
—Hebrews 11:13*

For these believers, the day of life is ended.
Its duties are ended. Its responsibilities are
past. Its hours are fled away.
What a trying day some of them had! How
stormy. How scorching. How often overcast.
How gloomy.

But it is now past, and past forever. The toils
of the wilderness are over.

They had much to afflict and pain them—a
difficult and dangerous journey, a long wea-
risome march.

They had:
many a heavy cross to carry,
many a stubborn foe to face,

many a painful doubt,
numerous gloomy fears.

But now the wilderness is all behind them.
The afflictions of the pilgrimage are termi-
nated.

Those sufferings were sharp, and some of
them continued long.

Many of them were endured in secret, with-
out sympathy and without relief. There
were soul sorrows, agony of mind, as well
as sharp pains of body.

But however multiplied, however severe,
however protracted those sorrows, they are
past and gone, never, never to return. The
sweetest repose is now enjoyed.

The poor tabernacle³⁰ has been taken down,
and is laid in a quiet resting-place until the
resurrection morning.

The soul is gone to be with the Lord Jesus.
It has traveled through the rough path of
life, and is now in God's presence, where
there is fullness of joy, and pleasures for
evermore.

*How bright these glorious spirits shine!
whence all their white array?
How came they to the blissful seats
of everlasting day?*

*Lo! these are they from sufferings great,
who came to realms of light;
And in the blood of Christ have washed
those robes that shine so bright.*

*Hunger and thirst are felt no more,
nor suns with scorching ray.
God is their sun, Whose cheering beams
diffuse eternal day.*

51. Going Home, Part 2

*And God shall wipe away all tears from
their eyes; and there shall be no more
death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither
shall there be any more pain: for the former*

³⁰ tabernacle – tent; used here to refer to the human body as the dwelling place of the soul.

things are passed away.
—Revelation 21:4

All strangers and pilgrims of the earth, dying in faith, have gone to be with the Lord Jesus Christ. They are now in God's presence, where there is fullness of joy, and pleasures for evermore.

Beloved, we are going to the same place. The graves will soon be ready for our bodies, and the mansions of glory for our souls.

We are going home:
home to our Father's house,
home where our hearts have long
been,
home where all our prayers will
be answered, and all our best
desires will be gratified.

Home, sweet home. There is no place like home.

Especially our home! A paradise without a tempting serpent. A paradise where all are holy, all are safe, all are happy.

Those pure and perpetual joys, which are at God's right hand, await us.

We taste them now and are delighted with a sip, but there we shall soon drink full draughts of eternal glory, eternal joy, and eternal blessedness.

Amidst present toils and trials, dangers and distresses—when wearied, way-worn, and tempted to fret—remember that you will soon be home.

Think, think, O my soul, of an eternity of joy in the presence of your Lord, when the sufferings of time are ended.

*The sands of time are sinking,
the dawn of Heaven breaks;
The summer morn I've sighed for,
the fair, sweet morn, awakes:
Dark, dark has been the midnight,
but dayspring is at hand,
And glory, glory dwelleth
in Emmanuel's land.*

*I've wrestled on towards Heaven,
'gainst storm and wind and tide;
Now, like a weary traveler
who leans upon his guide,
Amid the shades of evening,
while sinks life's lingering sand,
I'll hail the glory dawning
from Emmanuel's land.*

52. Righteousness by Faith

The righteousness which is of God by faith.—Philippians 3:9

The righteousness here intended is that which God requires in His law. This righteousness is provided by the life and death of His Son.

It is presented to sinners in the everlasting gospel. Of richest grace, it is imputed³¹ to every believer.

It is accepted when pleaded at the throne of His grace; and it is honored with a title to eternal life.

This righteousness is by faith. It is the office of faith to receive it, plead it, trust it.

Faith rejoices in it, emboldens the soul through it, and clothes the soul in it.

It is not offered to anything but faith, nor can it be received and enjoyed in any other way.

Every unbeliever and self-righteous person rejects it.

Every man who is taught of God:
knows that he needs it;
discovers the beauty, glory, and
value of it;
applies for it with ardent desire
and earnest longing.

Every believer:
embraces it as one of God's
greatest favors;
enjoys it as a rich and durable
treasure; and

³¹ **imputed** – credited to one's account.

dies confidently expecting to be accepted in it and admitted to glory through it.

Oh, may we be found in Christ Jesus the Lord, not having our own righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness which is of God by faith!

And while we yet long for holiness with every breath, and aim at it in every action, may each of us gratefully sing—

*A debtor to mercy alone,
of covenant mercy I sing;
Nor fear, with Thy righteousness on,
my person and offering to bring.
Yes, I to the end shall endure,
as sure as the earnest is given;
More happy, but not more secure,
the glorified spirits in heaven.*

53. Christ Is All

Christ is all.—Colossians 3:11

This is God's purpose, which cannot be frustrated, that Jesus Christ shall be all. He is all in our justification³² and sanctification,³³ for we are justified and sanctified in His Name.

He is all in our preservation and glorification, for we are kept by His power, and enter heaven through His merits.

He should be all in our pursuits, pleasures, hopes, motives, and aims.

Many put their comforts in the place of the Lord Jesus Christ, and then God puts comfort out of their reach.

Others put their graces in the place of the Lord Jesus Christ, and then faith, hope, and love are concealed by a cloud.

³² **justification** – the act by which God declares the sinner righteous by His free grace on the basis of the righteousness of Christ imputed to (put on the account of) the sinner, who receives this by faith alone.

³³ **sanctification** – the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in our whole being after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.

There must be nothing between God and us, but Jesus Christ the Lord.

We must look away from our sin, from our graces, and from our works; we must expect to be accepted, blessed, and honored only in the name and for the honor of Christ Jesus the Lord.

The Lord Jesus Christ is:
our conquering weapon, by which we overcome our foes;
our plea, by which we prevail with God³⁴;
our righteousness, by which we are justified; and
our peace, which supports and comforts us in life and in death.

The Lord Jesus Christ is all we want, and all God can give.

He is our sun and shield; our present joy and endless portion.

He is our all on earth; He will be our all in heaven.

*I've found the pearl of greatest price!
my heart doth sing for joy;
And sing I must, for Christ is mine!
Christ shall my song employ.
Christ Jesus is my all in all,
my comfort and my love;
My life below, and He shall be
my joy and crown above.*

54. Be Found in Him

*And be found in him.
—Philippians 3:9*

To be in Christ is to be united to Him by faith and love, and it is of the utmost importance.

Apart from Christ we are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.

United to the Lord Jesus Christ, we are immensely rich;

³⁴ **we prevail with God** – we are effective in prayer to God.

are immutably safe;
are exalted to the highest honor;
shall appear without a fault before
the throne of God.

If we are in Jesus Christ the Lord,
we are one with Him,
we are justified³⁵ by His
obedience, as a debtor is
cleared by the payment made
by his surety³⁶;
we are sanctified³⁷ through Him,
as the vessel is cleansed in the
fountain;
we are protected by Him, as Noah
was in the ark;
we are preserved from judicial
proceeding, as the manslayer in
the city of refuge; and
we are exalted to honor as the
bride of the King Eternal,
Immortal, the only wise God.

Well may the Apostle Paul desire to be found
in Him!

No mind can conceive, no tongue can de-
clare the blessedness that flows from being
one with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us therefore, beloved, ask
ourselves, am I in Christ Jesus
at present? Am I living:
with Him as His faithful bride;
for Him as His devoted servant;
upon Him as His dependent
child?

Do I renounce all for the Lord Jesus Christ?

Can I say, "I am crucified with Christ" (Gal
2:20)?

³⁵ **justified** – forgiven and declared righteous by an act of God's free grace on the basis of the righteousness of Christ imputed to (put on the account of) the sinner, who receives this by faith alone.

³⁶ **surety** – one who enters into an agreement to undertake the responsibilities or debt of another.

³⁷ **sanctified** – the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in our whole being after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.

Is "the world...crucified unto me, and I unto
the world" (Gal 6:14)?

*Object of my first desire,
Jesus crucified for me;
All to happiness aspire,
only to be found in Thee:
Thee to please, and Thee to know,
constitute my bliss below;
Thee to see, and Thee to love,
constitute my bliss above.*

55. A Divided Heart

*Their heart is divided.
—Hosea 10:2*

This is a very serious charge, for God de-
mands the whole heart, and His people pro-
fess to surrender it.

But have we not reason to fear that many are
guilty on this point?

They appear so undecided, that we
must think that the heart is divided:

between God and the world;
between sin and holiness;
between truth and error; or
between the Lord Jesus Christ
and self.

What are the symptoms of a divided
heart?—

habitual cleaving to earth;
being satisfied with a form of
godliness;
backwardness to examine
ourselves;
a dislike of plain, close, soul-
searching, rousing preaching;
putting eternal things away to a
distance.

Soul, how is it with you? God rejects half the
heart; He will have all or none.

Do you fear that you have a divided
heart? There is a remedy:

Thoroughly examine your heart.
Condemn whatever you detect

amiss in it.
Take it to the Lord Jesus Christ
and beseech Him to heal it.
Expose it to the keen edge of
God's Word.
Endeavor to keep a constant
awareness of the nearness of
God.
Meditate much on eternal
realities.
As the heart is, so will the life be; so will the
comfort and peace be.
*"O LORD...unite my heart to fear³⁸ thy
name" (Psa 86:11).*

*Let me, according to Thy word,
a tender, contrite heart receive,
Which grieves at having grieved its
Lord,
and never can itself forgive;
A heart Thy joys and griefs to feel,
a heart where Christ alone may
dwell.*

56. He Will Deliver Us

*He will yet deliver us.
—2 Corinthians 1:10*

How many times has our God
delivered us already! From how many dan-
gers, in how many ways!
He has delivered, does deliver, and in Him
we trust that He will yet deliver us.
He delivered us:
from spiritual death, by the
operations of His Holy Spirit,
from eternal death, by the
sacrifice of His beloved Son on
Calvary's cross.
We were dead, but we are now alive unto
God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

He Who delivered us from the greatest evil,
spiritual death, will not refuse to deliver us
from any lesser danger.

Let us trust in Him, rely upon Him, and ex-
pect Him to deliver.

*"Many are the afflictions of the righteous:
but the LORD delivereth him out of them
all" (Psa 34:19).*

*"[He] knoweth how to deliver the godly out
of temptations" (2Pe 2:9).*

We may rejoice with Paul the apostle,
*"The Lord stood with me, and strengthened
me...and I was delivered out of the mouth of
the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from
every evil work, and will preserve me unto
his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for
ever and ever. Amen" (2Ti 4:17-18).*

If He had not intended to carry on
the work,
He would not have begun it, for He well
knew what opposition it
would meet with—but
He that began it will perfect³⁹ it
in the day of Jesus Christ.

*Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come:
'Tis grace that brought me safe thus far,
and grace will lead me home.
The Lord has promised good to me,
His Word my hope secures;
He will my Shield and Portion be
as long as life endures.
Yes, when this heart and flesh shall fail,
and mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess within the veil
a life of joy and peace.*

57. Emmanuel

*Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and
shall bring forth a son, and they shall call
his name Emmanuel, which being interpret-
ed is, God with us.—Matthew 1:23*

³⁸ **fear** – reverence with awe.

³⁹ **perfect** – complete; finish.

Consider the Lord Jesus Christ as “God with us,” God and man, for your salvation and consolation.

The Lord Jesus Christ is fully God—
here is His ability to save you.

He is fully man also, though
without sin—here is His
suitability to be your all in all.

The Lord Jesus is God with you:
to hear your prayers,
to check your fears,
to deliver you from your
grievances,
to sympathize with you in
your sorrows, and
to be your constant friend.

Jesus Christ is God with you:
observing your conduct,
directing your ways,
reproving your follies,
providing your supplies, and
making all things work together
for your good.

Remember that the Lord Jesus Christ is with
you always.

Every sin is committed under His eye,
against His love, and goes to His heart.

Think, when tempted to sin, that you hear
Emmanuel, the suffering, bleeding, dying,
reigning Savior, say,
*“Oh, do not this abominable thing that I
hate” (Jer 44:4).*

Walk before Him in love, peace, holiness, and
zeal for His glory.

He is God *for* you, as well as with you.

Look to His wisdom, power, and love—for
safety and supply,

And with filial⁴⁰ confidence, trust His Word—
so shall you be safe and happy.

*More gratitude give me;
more trust in the Lord;*

*More zeal for His glory;
more hope in His Word;
More tears for His sorrows;
more pain at His grief;
More meekness in trial;
more praise for relief.
More holiness give me;
more strivings within;
More patience in suffering;
more sorrow for sin;
More faith in my Savior;
more sense of His care;
More joy in His service;
more purpose in prayer.*

58. Divine Instruction

I will instruct thee.—Psalm 32:8

At best we know but little, and we are slow to
learn. But as the Lord has promised to in-
struct us, we may yet expect to be made wise
unto salvation.

The Lord’s teaching always produces:
humility,
self-loathing,
confidence in God,
zeal for His glory, and
devotes the heart to His praise.

It brings us to the feet of the Lord Jesus
Christ, and delivers us from the present
evil world.

Under divine instruction we learn:
the true nature of sin,
the vanity⁴¹ of the world,
the emptiness of creatures, and
the fullness and preciousness of
Christ.

Is God willing to instruct us?

Then let us be early and often at His throne,
praying, as the psalmist David did,
*“Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for
thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do
I wait all the day” (Psa 25:5).*

⁴⁰ **filial** – as of a child toward a parent.

⁴¹ **vanity** – futility; emptiness.

Then shall we exclaim, as Elihu did,
“Behold, God exalteth by his power: who
teacheth like him?”
(Job 36:22).

The Lord will teach us to profit, and sanctify⁴² us through the truth He imparts.⁴³

Is Jesus Christ the Lord thy
teacher? He says, “Learn of me”
(Mat 11:29). Learn to:
know Him,
love Him,
obey Him, and
live upon Him.

He is our great Lesson, and to know Him
rightly is life, peace, and joy.

Sit at His feet, treasure up His Words, and
show forth His praise.

*Come, Savior Christ, our only Lord,
Thou great Interpreter divine,
Explain Thine own transmitted Word,
to teach and to inspire is Thine:
Thou only canst Thyself reveal,
open Thy book, and loose its seal.*

59. The Cross, Our Glory

*They are the enemies of the cross of
Christ.—Philippians 3:18*

The cross of Christ is the Christian’s glory.
Nothing would give him more pain or more
horror than to be considered its enemy.

The cross of the Lord Jesus Christ embraces
the whole doctrine of salvation by grace.

The cross of Christ is viewed by the Christian
as the:

foundation of his hope, and
object of his faith;
glory of eternal wisdom, and the
mystery of incarnate⁴⁴ love;

destruction of death, and the
gate to everlasting life.

The believer views the cross as:
the satisfaction of the law, and the
antidote of misery;
the center of truth, and the
subject of the church’s song;
mercy’s scepter,⁴⁵ and
the Savior’s throne;
the mirror in which Jehovah
displays all the perfections of
His nature.

The believer views the cross
as the key that opens the gates of
the celestial paradise,
as the object of the angels’
wonder, and
as the cause of the devil’s
everlasting confusion.

Beloved, let us fix our eyes and hearts upon
this glorious, this surprising Object.

Never, never let us, by our conduct or con-
versation, bring a disgrace upon it.

Let us endeavor to:

advance its triumphs,
spread its glories, and
bring other sinners to admire,
love, and trust in it.

*“God forbid that I should glory, save in the
cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the
world is crucified unto me, and I unto the
world” (Gal 6:14).*

*When I survey the wondrous cross
on which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
and pour contempt on all my pride.*

*Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
save in the death of Christ my God:
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.*

*Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were an offering far too small,*

⁴² **sanctify** – renew our whole being by His free grace, after the image of God, and enable us more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.

⁴³ **imparts** – communicates.

⁴⁴ **incarnate** – in the person of the man Jesus Christ.

⁴⁵ **mercy’s scepter** – symbol of mercy’s favor; see Esther 4:11.

*Love so amazing, so divine,
demands my soul, my life, my all.*

60. Look for Him

*We look for the Saviour.
—Philippians 3:20*

Our beloved Savior is now at the right hand of God. He waits, expecting His enemies to be made His footstool.

He will come again. The time is hastening on, and we should be living in expectation of His appearing.

He will come the second time, as certainly as He did the first.

He will come as a thief in the night.

He will come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him.

He will come to reign, to reward His people, and to punish His foes.

Let us not be slothful, careless, or indifferent about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He comes for our salvation.

Let us look for Him daily, with:

earnest desire,
ardent hope,
fervent love,
importunate⁴⁶ prayer, and
diligent preparation.

When He comes, the earth will be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

When He comes:
the groans of creation will be silenced,
the prayers of the Lord's people will be answered, and
crowns of righteousness will be bestowed.

Let us abide in Him, waiting, looking, hastening to the coming of the day of God.

*Thou art coming, O my Savior,
Thou art coming, O my King;
in Thy beauty all-resplendent,
in Thy glory all-transcendent;
Well may we rejoice and sing.
Coming on that certain Day,
long foretold but secret still,
In Thine own appointed way,
to fulfill Thy sovereign will.
Oh, the joy to see Thee reigning,
Thee, our own belov'd Lord!
every tongue Thy name confessing.
Worship, honor, glory, blessing;
Brought to Thee with glad accord.
Thee, our Master and our Friend,
vindicated and enthroned,
Unto earth's remotest end
glorified, adored, and owned!*

61. Rejoicing in Hope

*Rejoicing in hope.
—Romans 12:12*

The believer cannot always rejoice in earthly circumstances, but he may always rejoice in hope.

He is warranted to hope:⁴⁷
for eternal life;
for righteousness by faith, that
God may be magnified in his
body, by life or by death;
for the resurrection of the body,
and its reunion with the soul;
for the appearing of his beloved
Savior, and complete salvation
through Him.

The hope which is laid up for him in heaven—of which the gospel now informs him—is:
a weight of glory,
a crown of righteousness, and

⁴⁶ **importunate** – frequent, urgent.

⁴⁷ **warranted to hope** – given a sure expectation.

an eternal inheritance.
 [These] are held in reserve for him.
 In hope of these expectations he may rejoice.
 These are set before him to:
 excite desire,
 produce courage,
 prevent despondency, and
 fill with joy.
 They are freely given, plainly promised, and
 carefully preserved;
 therefore, we shall never be ashamed of
 our hope.
 Let us not yield to our gloomy feelings, or to
 distressing forebodings.
 But let us lift up our heads, rejoicing that
 we shall so soon be made partakers of our
 hope.
 Let us hope in God, and daily praise Him
 more and more; making use of hope as the
 anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast (Heb
 6:19).

*How happy are they whose heart is set free,
 The people who can be joyful in Thee!
 Their joy is to walk in the light of Thy face,
 Rejoicing, and talking of Jesus' great grace.
 Their daily delight shall be in Thy name;
 They shall, as their right, Thy righteousness
 claim.
 Thy righteousness wearing, and cleansed by
 Thy blood,
 Bold shall they appear in the presence of God.
 For Thou art their boast, their glory, and pow-
 er;
 And I also trust to see the glad hour:
 My soul's new creation, alive from the dead,
 The day of salvation that lifts up my head.*

62. Behold the Man

Behold the man!—John 19:5

Jesus Christ the Lord is presented before
 thee, crowned with thorns and scourged, His
 face so marred more than any man's.

His blood is flowing; His heart is breaking.
 He is a "man of sorrows" (Isa 53:3).
 Behold Him, then, for in this Man, in these
 circumstances, dwelt:
 all the fullness of the Godhead
 bodily;
 all the treasures of wisdom and
 knowledge.
 In Him the love of God centered and shone
 forth.
 He is the only foundation of His church's
 hopes,
 He is the only source of eternal salvation.
 He is thy Substitute, Surety,⁴⁸ and Redeemer.
 He is Jehovah's First Born,
 His only-begotten Son,
 the express⁴⁹ image of His Person.
 He is the holy, harmless, and undefiled Lamb
 of God, taking away the sin of the world.
 Behold Him, for He here discloses the depth
 of His love, and teaches thee patience,
 meekness, and resignation under insult,
 suffering, and disgrace.
 Oh, behold thy Lord Jesus!
 Behold, and learn!
 Behold, and love!
 Behold, and adore!

*Sweet the moments, rich in blessing,
 which before the cross I spend,
 Life, and health, and peace possessing
 from the sinner's dying Friend!
 Here I rest, in wonder viewing
 all my sins on Jesus laid,
 And a full redemption flowing
 from the sacrifice He made.
 Lord, in ceaseless contemplation
 fix my thankful heart on Thee!
 Till I taste Thy full salvation,
 and Thine unveiled glory see. ❧*

⁴⁸ **Surety** – one who enters into an agreement to undertake the responsibilities or debt of another.

⁴⁹ **express** – exact.