

The Works of the Holy Spirit

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1. The Works of the Holy Spirit as Recorded in the Old Testament

*The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him.
- John 14:17*

God has lately been sending showers of his Spirit upon many dry places of Scotland. "He has caused waters to run down like rivers." At such a time, therefore, it is specially needful for us to remember the words of the Lord. "Them that honor me I will honor." For how bitter would be our regret, and how awful our guilt, if we were to grieve him by neglect. Reader, may the Lord keep you from this sin, lest you should have to mourn it all your after days-bewailing the heavens over you as brass, and no souls converted, none of your friends awakened, love waxed cold among the saints, your own soul become like Pharaoh's ears of corn, "thin, and withered, and blasted with the east wind."

In order, therefore, to honor the Spirit, you must *know* his workings. It is written concerning him, "Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him" (John 14:17). Yet after all, how many even among believers are there who know him too little. Hence they give him but little honor. Oh, then come, and see what mighty wonders he has wrought in the earth.

Let us begin with his works as recorded in the Old Testament; and for the sake of distinctness, we shall divide these into *seven* periods.

First Period--The Creation

The Holy Spirit, as one of the persons of the glorious Godhead, created the heavens and the earth.

The sea, the sky, the earth, and even man himself, were his work. He removed the waters from the face of the solid earth, and gathered them into their beds. "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" (Gen. 1:3). He moved the vast unwieldy volume of the immense ocean, and put it in its place. Soon it became a calm expanse--a sea of glass in an unfallen world reposing in clear purity. Above this ocean he adorned the sky; "By his Spirit he garnished the heavens" (Job. 26:13). He put every planet and star in its orb and station; and it is he who upholds them there. He garnished the sky for man's sake. The beautiful clouds of sunset--"the spreadings and balancings of his clouds" (Job 36:29; 37:16)--the deep blue sky at noon, and the bright stars seen in the clear night, all were the work of the Spirit. This earth too was adorned by him, as even now this is his work; "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created, and thou renewest the face of the earth" (Ps. 104:30). It is he who, even in our fallen world, brings verdure over the earth when winter is past, drawing forth anew from the soil, in the season of spring, all that is nourishing, and all that is pleasant to the eye of man. And by this annual specimen of his work on earth, we may infer what was the glory of the unfallen creation, and what will be the glory of earth restored, when, by this same Spirit, "the glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon" (Isa. 35:2). He prepared man's dwelling--the heavens over his head shining with unfallen glory--the sea within his view reflecting the splendor of the sky, and itself full of wonders, while the earth scattered its wealth in profusion for his enjoyment. And when all things were thus ready, he created *man*; "the Spirit of God hath made me" (Job 33:44).

(1) Reader, were you ever well nigh despairing? Were you ever saying, that none cared for your troubled soul? Behold, the Holy Ghost! He has specially to do with the spirits of men! Behold his love to man! The interest felt in unfallen man by the Spirit, was not less than that felt by the Son and the Father. (2) Learn the beauty of holiness. For if the beauty of the unfallen creation in its *external* aspect was so perfect, infinitely more excellent will be that wrought in the *inner* man. For the external beauty was in a manner only the by-work of the Spirit; whereas, the adorning of the inner man is his peculiar operation. Judge by this, how glorious he will make the soul that receives him. (3) What a mighty creating Spirit is he! How easily, then, he could renew you, reader, if you are still unconverted. Conversion is creation-work; "*Create in me a clean heart*" (Ps. 51:10); and here is he who can accomplish it. Or, are you troubled? The Spirit who brought order out of confusion--making hills take their proper place, and seas move to their bed--heaving at his pleasure the unwieldy mass of deep waters--he it is who can bring you to rest. As he cleared the face of the sky, cleaving asunder the thick darkness, and showing "the body of heaven in its clearness," so he can dispel your clouds, and show you the glory of God in *the face of Jesus*.

Second Period--The Fall

We are sure that the Holy Spirit felt the awful ruin of man. He is "grieved" (Eph. 4:30) at each individual sin. Oh, then, how deep must have been his feeling when he saw the *floodgate of all sin* opened! And as he had been the agent in communicating to unfallen man the love of the Godhead, so now it grieved him to withdraw from his office.

But after all we find him not forsaking man. We find his regenerating and converting work made known the very day that Adam fell. In the promise that conveyed the glad tidings of the Redeemer, the work of the Holy Spirit was contained; "*I will put enmity between thee and the woman; and between thy seed and her seed.*" (Gen. 3:15). In this "enmity" to Satan, lies the whole principle of regeneration. We have here a statement of conversion, and that too, in its connection with the work of Christ. By means of the work of Christ, the Spirit works in the fallen man, love to God, and enmity to the devil and his seed.

(1) Thus the doctrine of regeneration was taught in Eden. It is an old truth, and so important, that it is found among the first principles of redemption. (2) There is need of the entrance of God, the Holy Ghost, to enable man to escape from Satan. Satan holds the sinner fast. Look at Satan's

undisputed dominion-hell! See how awfully fast every unsaved soul is secured! None escape from it; they have chains that never break--fettters that never snap-and a hand grasps them that none can unclasp but the Spirit of Christ! (3) The Holy Spirit, in delivering a soul, brings it to side completely with Christ and his cause. "I will put enmity." The man cannot any longer hesitate about his choice. He becomes decided. Instead of a lingering love to the world and Satan's tempting offers, his soul is in the state of "*enmity*" towards these instruments of his ruin.

Third Period--The Flood

The Holy Spirit had often entered into souls, and saved them by pointing to a promised Savior. He had breathed on Enoch the spirit of prophecy, that man might know more fully of a coming Savior. He preserved a record of his love to men, by keeping Enoch's words in the memory of the fathers, and at last inserting them for our use in the Epistle of Jude. But as the wickedness of man increased, his love began to be more strikingly seen; just as the brightness of a beacon-light is best seen when darkness has covered the sky. It is worthy of our notice, that at every new crisis the Spirit comes into full view. We shall see this verified in every after period, and it proves to us, that he was all along traversing the ways of God to man.

We find the Holy Spirit before the flood, "striving with men" (Gen. 6:3). The Holy One strove even with the giants that were on the earth in those days, and with monsters of iniquity! He strove, and they resisted during 120 years. So unwearied-so patient was his love! And it was he who raised up and qualified Noah to preach salvation, and enabled him all that long period to persevere amidst the mockery of the whole earth! For 1 Peter 3:19 tells us, that this same Holy Spirit, who afterwards showed his love to man, by quickening Jesus, was in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, sent by Jesus to enable Noah to testify to that wicked generation, who are now "spirits in prison," cast into hell, because they would not hear the call. The object of his "striving with men," was to lead them to righteousness, that they might be saved. For he foresaw the terrors of the flood, and the more awful terrors of hell, into which the flood would sweep them. He heard, though it was yet distant, their cry of woe, and he strove with them. He strove with old men and little children, young men and maidens; and yet they resisted him and perished.

1. Here is an awful *fact*; the Spirit *strives* with many whom he does not *convert*. How this should be so we are not told; for he could as easily overcome as strive. But the fact is beyond a doubt; and its very mystery makes it more tremendously impressive. If you read the Bible and are not converted, you resist the strivings of the Spirit; for Hebrews 3:7 shows you that he speaks in every verse. When you hear Christ preached, and are not moved, you are exactly as 1 Peter 3:19, represents the men before the flood. And Stephen declares, that opposers of the truth are in the act of *continual resistance* to the Holy Ghost. How awful! A silent contest, spirit against Spirit! The spirit of man against the Spirit of God.

2. Notice *the times* when he specially strives. We saw he did so under Noah's preaching; and he does so still. But his reason for special striving by very powerful ministers is, because a flood is coming on you. It may be an intimation of calamity near to our land, that he has raised up some to preach with special power, for he strives specially before any calamity comes. Reader, perhaps before you are to be overtaken by some sore trouble or wasting sickness, God is striving with your soul! That alarming passage which you last read, may be sent to arouse you now, because the billows of a flood are almost already wetting your feet.

3. Learn the object of all the Spirit's strivings. It is in his deep love to draw you to righteousness. No doubt he enabled Noah to persuade with great earnestness, and to show the place of safety-to describe the ark and its security, impenetrable by water, proof against the dashing billows. Just as now he enables his ministers-in prospect of the fiery deluge, when the gates (instead of "the

windows"), of heaven, shall be wide opened to let the flood pour along-to urge sinners to flee. He it is that enables them, for your sake, reader, to set forth the full provision made for sinners in Christ-to tell you that there is an ark ready, if you will only be *pleased with it*, and go in-a Savior ready, with whom the Father is well pleased, and with whom he wishes you to be satisfied, as he is himself. If you *believe* your danger, and that an *ark with an open door* is offered you, surely you will enter in.

4. Ministers learn that their strength lies, like Noah's, in being upheld by the Spirit. They are raised up by the Spirit to testify of Christ, the ark.

5. Behold the immensity of the Holy Spirit's love! He visits thousands upon thousands! Even as at Pentecost, in after days, he displayed his love by coming on some from all kindreds and people.

Fourth Period--First Centuries After the Flood

Earth was peopled again, and the Spirit did not forsake the place where he had striven before. The confusion of tongues at Babel was his work, as one of the persons of the Godhead, like the gift of tongues at Jerusalem. His love is herein seen, inasmuch as he thus took direct means to bring

down man's pride, breaking up their company, and in this way leading them to feel their weakness and folly. He wished to stem the torrent of sin. And then he exhibited his marvelous power, by setting apart individuals, and keeping them safe amidst an apostate generation. He formed such a character as Abraham, full of faith-like a lofty pillar erect on a desolate heath. He gave Joseph his holiness and discretion, so that Pharaoh said, "The Spirit of God is in him" (Gen. 41:38). It is probable, also, that about this time *job* was kept separate in a heathen land-a monument of the work of the Holy Spirit, in opposition to the "spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience." In him "the enmity" between Satan and the woman's seed was eminently displayed. And job knew the Spirit who preserved and sanctified him; for he often speaks of his works.

1. Believers, learn from this the immense power of the Spirit. You see he can keep a spark alive amidst the ocean Joseph in Egypt. As there is immense power manifested in regeneration, so also in the preservation of the regenerated; as you find spoken of in the New Testament, "The exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe" (Eph. 1:19). Never despond. If you are tried by friends, or "by iniquity at your heels, compassing you about" (Ps. 49:3), yet remember the power of the Holy Ghost as an Agent of the Godhead. It will glorify him the more to keep you safe.

2. Sinner, you cannot excuse yourself by saying that you are hedged in by insuperable barriers, that your situation makes it impossible for you to obey God. It may be you are tempted by being rich; or if poor, you are on that account tried with the prospect of temporal ruin if you are to be on God's side. Therefore you say, "There is a lion in the way" (Prov. 22:13). But the Holy Spirit is able to make you stand, and keep you from falling. The root of your hesitation is *a willingness to find it impossible*-a desire to be able to say, "I pray thee have me excused." If you doubt the Holy Spirit's power and willingness to keep you from falling, you make God a liar, and you love darkness rather than light.

Fifth Period--Israel in the Desert

In this period the Spirit, as Agent of the Godhead, manifests himself in a threefold manner. The first was, his leading Israel through the great wilderness. When any great thing was to be done for man, we always find the Spirit come into view. Now, one great end to be accomplished by separating Israel from other nations was the coming of the Redeemer. It was, therefore, a scheme that breathed love to the world. No wonder, then, that we find it written, "As a beast goeth down

into the valley, so *the Spirit* of the Lord caused him to rest" (Isa. 63:13). We find him counseling the people, and turning the heart of enemies (Isa. 63:11; Neh. 9:20). When their desert state was nearly ended, he put into the lips of Balaam some of the sweetest words of comfort and blessing that Israel ever heard.

(1) Learn then, Providences are under the direction of the Holy Spirit. He turns the heart of men—suggests, hinders, excites. A person that speaks to you on the road may be sent by him. A person's change of plan or purpose may be his direct act. And thus he may bring the answer of prayer. (2) Ministers get words from the Spirit, like Balaam. And this is a most encouraging truth, when connected with the preceding. The ministrations prepared for you (Acts 10:19), and your being led by him up to the temple, like Simeon (Luke 1:27), all will be arranged by Divine wisdom for your salvation. (3) Your sphere in life has been fixed by the Spirit. He *leads you in the desert*. He prevented people offering you a better situation, and he reconciles your mind to the place where you are—"he causes you to rest."

But there was a second way wherein the Holy Spirit, at this period manifested the love of the Godhead to man. While in the desert, the Tabernacle was set up, full of the types of Christ. And we read how the Holy Spirit filled Bezaleel and Aholiab; "I have filled them with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship" (Exod. 31:3). The object of the skill so imparted was, to enable them accurately and faithfully to form the various vessels and furniture, all which were to typify the Redeemer. As no man can know Christ except the Father send the Holy Spirit to teach him, so none could execute the patterns of heavenly things except by his guidance. And therefore, these two men, and as many besides as were engaged in the work, were filled by the Spirit: "in the heart of all the wise-hearted I have put wisdom" (Exod. 31:6). It was a day of Pentecost to the Old Testament church—"he gave gifts to men," that they might make known Christ. Learn from this: (1) The Spirit's deep concern in your salvation. He takes care to have the way pointed out clearly and accurately. (2) No one can come to a saving and correct acquaintance with Christ without the Holy Spirit (John 16:14). (3) Ministers are taught that they cannot set forth Christ to their people without the direct teaching of the Spirit. Without him they may show *a* Christ, but not the full, living Savior—some lineaments of his form will be wanting; something of his beauty hid.

But there was a third way, during this period, whereby the Holy Spirit wrought for men. He gave a type of himself. He taught them to erect a *Laver* of brass, opposite the altar. In this Laver was a type of the Holy One. Whatever regarding Christ was meant by the brass, the water typified the Spirit. It stood filled with pure crystal water; which, when the sun shone upon it, would attract the eye of every worshipper, like the stream, "clear as crystal, that proceedeth out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb" (Rev. 22:1). Israel was thus taught how beautiful is holiness, and that all purity comes from this full source, the Holy Spirit. Even after a man was cleansed from sin at the altar, he found himself requiring a purity that could be communicated only by God. The worshipper saw that being justified by the blood of atonement, he must forthwith look for sanctification from the Spirit. The work of Christ, and the work of the Spirit were held forth in equal clearness; and there was no possibility of passing into the Holy place without approaching both *Altar* and *Laver*.

But there is more to be noticed regarding the *Laver* as a type of the Spirit. We know that it was always present in the Tabernacle-courts, and that it was carried from place to place along with the other vessels of the sanctuary. But while an account is given of the manner in which these other vessels were carried by the Priests and Levites; there is no mention of the *Laver's* carriage. This is remarkable. It is carried by those who bear the vessels of the Lord; it is one of the most important of their vessels; without it no Priest could ever enter the Holy Place; yet no mention is made of its presence amid the rest of the holy furniture. How significant is this silence! The Holy Spirit in the camp of Israel, silently yet mightily present! Ever there, yet ever in calm silent majesty. It was He

who converted every subdued rebel in the camp-it was He who filled every man of wisdom with his gifts-it was He who clothed Eldad and Medad and the seventy elders with the spirit of prophecy; yet all in such a way as seemed to hide himself. Herein we trace the lineaments of the same person of the Godhead who appeared at Jordan choosing the dove as his emblem; and who, when the Father spoke from the excellent glory, saying, "This is my beloved Son," gave his testimony by resting on the person of Jesus, and in the stillness of divine majesty filling that temple with the fullness of God.

He taught the Old Testament saints (as he does all his saints still, that their resting-place was the work of Jesus, not the Spirit's work in them. His office has always been to lead the sinner to the work of the Savior. This is the same Holy Spirit of love and grace, who has ever been the Almighty agent in uniting the soul of the sinner to the person of Jesus, though unseen. "Our fellowship is with *the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.*" But the Spirit is there too; yea, it is He that gives our souls that very fellowship. "If a man love *me* he will keep my commandments, and my Father will love him; and *we* will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Is the Spirit not here? Is he not reconciled to the soul, to whom Jesus and the Father are reconciled? If he be, why is not He also in that dwelling? The answer is, He it is that brings in the Father and the Son. There could never be a doubt of the Spirit's entrance into a soul that had received Jesus; the only doubt that existed was-Would Jesus himself come, and would his Father? The Holy Spirit not only subdues the redeemed sinner's soul, and turns his eye forever to the Cross; but by the same quiet, holy ministration brings in the Father and the Son to his newborn soul. *The Laver* is ever among the sanctuary vessels; it is essential to every fully-performed act of any worshipper in the Holy Place; and yet it is unnamed at the time.

Once more. It was during this period that Scripture began to be written by holy men whom the Spirit inspired. The Pentateuch was given to Israel at this time.

Sixth Period-The Time of the judges

After Israel had reached the land of Promise, and set up their Tabernacle there, they soon forgot the Lord. They turned their eye away from the glorious mass of types whereby they might have been always kept looking to the coming Savior. As a consequence of their sin, the enemy came in as a flood. Often there seemed no hope of deliverance; often it had come to this extremity, that the Tabernacle and the Ark (the type and pledge of a coming Redeemer) as well as the very people from whom Christ was to come, were on the point of being swept away. Had this been permitted to take place, where would have been the hope of man?

But the love of the Spirit appeared again. It was he who raised up deliverers. "*The Spirit of the Lord* came upon Othniel, and he judged Israel, and went out to war" (Judg. 3:10). And so it is said of Gideon, "*The Spirit of the Lord* clothed Gideon"; and the like of many others (6:34).

Reader, be excited by this, (1) To pray for the raising up of instruments for the work of the Lord. We need them in church and state, and he is willing to send them, and often does it suddenly. In your prayer-meetings ask this special work of the Holy Spirit; for it is written, "When the enemy comes in as a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him" (Isa. 59:19). And we might have noticed, in the desert-time, that Moses no sooner sought help, because unable to bear all the people, than lo!, "the Spirit came upon seventy of the elders" (Num. 11:25). (2) If you want *courage* to confess Christ before men, the Spirit is he who gives it. He gave it to Gideon, who before shrunk from all trial, and was threshing wheat in a retired concealed spot, from fear of men. (3) If a day of trial is near, then our provision is in the Holy Spirit-"a Spirit of *power*"-able to prepare Christ's weakest saints, even if they be called to endure tortures and martyrdom.

Seventh Period-Time of the Kings

Though often grieved, the Holy Spirit, in wondrous love, continued to raise up deliverers, until the days of *Saul*. Israel had sinned in seeking a king, yet when *Saul* had been appointed, "the Spirit of the Lord came upon him" (1 Sam. 11:6; 9:9), to give the heart for his office. It was, however, only a gift to be used for others, it was not *grace* to himself. And farther, in his days, Samuel the prophet presided over those schools of the prophets where there was so much of the Holy Spirit, that many who mingled with them for a night became new men (1 Sam. 19:20-21). Memorable lessons were thus taught to the world, that is, *Gifts* are not the same thing as *grace*. A minister may edify his people, and yet be, like *Saul*, just a rod in the Spirit's hand to smite the rock, or an iron pipe through which pure refreshing waters flow. In our days this is a warning much needed. Public zeal, and our being made a blessing to others, is not *grace* in itself. It may often be *Saul's gift*. On the other hand, the schools of the prophets exhibited a work of the Spirit in reality, and they were the salt of the land. The *gifts* and the *graces* of the Spirit were displayed separately, perhaps on purpose to show how certain it is that they are not the same.

But soon after, *both* were united in the person of *David* (1 Sam. 16:1). During many years, he was tried in the furnace, and all that time, the Spirit was sanctifying the man for his future work. He was deepening his holiness, that it might be bright and steady amidst the cares of a kingdom. Having finished his preparatory work on *David*, he raised him to the throne, and suggested to his mind many schemes for the advancement of the glory of God. The *ark* was brought to mount Zion with great honor and triumph; and so *Christ in type* was thus brought eminently into view of all Israel. And then the Book of Psalms was dictated to *David* by the same Spirit (2 Sam. 23:2), a book where the name of Christ is as ointment poured forth, in his sufferings, and in his glory.

The same was repeated, but in a higher degree, in the days of Solomon. The Holy Spirit suggested the plan of the magnificent temple (1 Chron. 28:19), which being at last completed, the Savior in type was exhibited thereby in a glory never known before. The splendor was such that all ends of the earth came to see it. All this was the work of the Spirit "the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit" (1 Chron. 28:12)-who was taking the things of Christ, and showing them to the world. No doubt, many souls that came, attracted by the splendor of the temple, learned the way of salvation, and returned home glorifying God. *The Song of Songs*, written at the same time, set forth the glory of the Redeemer, as the Book of Psalms had done. And we find, as a consequence of all this, that both in the days of *David*, and of *Solomon*, there was a most extensive revival of true religion. These were times of refreshing. Indeed, there were never in Israel such happy times as when *Solomon's* temple was finished; as if to show the endless streams of blessedness that flow from a fully set forth Savior. And in these days of *Solomon*, the *Brasen Sea*, brimful of the purest water, was a significant type of the Spirit. It stood on twelve oxen of brass, and was adorned with flowers, lions, oxen, cherubim-apparently to set forth the truth, that in the days of the Prince of Peace, this earth shall be renewed, and delivered from the bondage of corruption, and filled with the Holy Spirit to its utmost bounds.

Learn here, (1) That a revival proceeds from the love and power of the Holy Spirit. He raises up instruments and gives the blessing. If a minister come among a people, and be blessed to them, it was the Spirit who sent him, and clothed him with power; and the people who would keep what they obtain must acknowledge the Spirit's love. (2) The Spirit quickens souls whether individually, or on a large scale, by bringing Christ fully into view. At the time when he was setting forth Christ before the whole nation in the temple, he was also carrying the same truth to private dwellings, and making it permanent there by means of the Psalms and Song of Songs.

Besides all this, the wonder-working Spirit showed in detail at that time many of his peculiar acts. He taught *David* that he alone is the author of *conversion*, "Create in me a clean heart," and of continuing *holiness*, "Uphold me by thy free Spirit" (Ps. 51:10, 12)-and of all discoveries of God, "Thy Spirit is good, lead me into the land of uprightness" (143:10). And, O reader, he showed that

he is traversing the earth in search for souls, "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit" (139:7); and that he will come and reside in souls that turn their eyes to the glorious Savior, "Turn ye at my reproof; behold I will pour my Spirit unto you" (Prov. 1:23). He is "Good," that is, he is "LOVE" (Ps. 143:10), even as the Father is said to be (1 John 4:8).

During the reign of the other kings of Judah, many books of Scripture were written for all ages; each a gift of the Holy Ghost to the children of men.

In the prophets he is always spoken of in connection with Christ's work. Isaiah was told that in future days he would rest on Jesus, to furnish him for his work. Three times is this declared (Isa. 11:1, 3; 42:1; 61:1, 3), because of his desire to fix our eye on the infinitely perfect work of Jesus. He wishes you, sinner, to rest there. When Christ did come, there was no spot on earth's surface whereon the Spirit would rest but the *person of Jesus*. He passed by the rich fields-the mines of gold-the wealthy cities-the ceiled palaces, and repaired to the desert, that he might rest on Jesus! And so while Christ's coming was still only foretold, the Spirit ever appears in connection with it. When the men of Israel lost sight of The Hope of their fathers, seventy years' captivity ensued till the Holy Spirit revealed to Ezekiel and Zechariah, that he would be the author of their deliverance, by turning them to the Redeemer. The remedy for Israel's desolation at this day will be the Spirit directing their eye to Jesus.

Thus, reader, the love and office and power of the Spirit were sounded forth in the full voice of prophecy, for ages and generations; and they have reached you. Behold! He strives to find entrance into that soul of yours. Will you resist the Holy Ghost? Or is he to come in and say of your soul,

*This in my rest, here will I stay,
For I do like it well?*

2. The Works of the Holy Spirit as Recorded in the New Testament

*There were seven lamps of fire, burning before the throne; which are the seven spirits of God
...sent forth into all the earth. - Rev. 4:5; 5:6*

READER, do you often consider *your* special privilege, and responsibility *now*, when there is more of the Spirit within reach of fallen man than before Christ's coming? The fact is stated in John 7:39, and the reason of

it also.

The Spirit would not have breathed at all upon fallen man, unless atonement had been offered for sin. The love of the Holy Spirit is holy love; it waits for a holy channel through which to flow. Such a channel was opened by the promise of a Redeemer in Eden, and the Spirit forthwith began his work of regenerating man. Abel, Enoch, Melchizedek, Abraham, and thousands more, were renewed and sanctified by him, long ere Jesus had died. But all was done *on the understanding* that Jesus was yet to die; the sins of those whom he sanctified were *reckoned* as suffered for, and the Lamb was *reckoned* slain from the beginning of the world. Still, keeping before the world the fact that the righteous God would never give up his demand for entire satisfaction, there was *only a part of the Spirit's fullness* given out, previous to the time when Christ actually came and paid the full ransom. The anxious world was kept waiting for the joyful cry, "It is finished!" "Because Jesus was not glorified, *the Holy Spirit was not yet given.*" When we see only the hands and feet of a man, we do not say we have seen *the man*; for we have not seen his face and form; so, says

the Evangelist, a right idea of what the *Spirit is*, was not yet given to man. But, as the time drew on towards Christ's actual death, more was given; and when the Savior's work was declared to be accepted in his ascension, the streams of the full Spirit poured down upon the earth. Like the seven streams of the river of Egypt, this copious flood came down; the one infinite Spirit emptying himself on the earth in seven streams (Rev. 1:4). Let us, then, draw your attention, reader, to some of the wonderful things recorded of him, as he came forth in this fuller manifestation.

1. His wonderful work on the soul of John the Baptist.

He entered the soul of the forerunner of the Lord, while yet an infant in the womb. John was thus sanctified from the womb; and the evidence of the Spirit's work appeared in him even then, inasmuch as a distinct intimation of the Savior's coming made the babe leap for joy.

Little children, see how the Holy Spirit may love you. Look at John the Baptist, and you can say no more it is too soon for the Spirit to love you, or too soon for you to need him. Look at John, and tell us, why *you* too should not be holy now? Look at this infant boy, filled with the Spirit, and tell us why you have not got him yet? Did you ever know that on the day that you were baptized, he showed willingness to come to you? Will *you* resist the Holy Ghost?

Parents, the Holy Spirit can sanctify souls in the womb: why are your children not thus sanctified? Some of you complain of your children's temper and conduct; but have you asked for them the Spirit, who showed goodwill to you in baptism? And have you taught your children that he did offer himself to them? Oh, for your own souls' sake, care for your children! Many pious parents are punished in the barrenness of their own souls for the carelessness of their families. Holiness in your seed would react upon yourselves. "Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost, when the babe leapt for joy at Mary's voice" (Luke 1:41), and "Zechariah was filled with the Holy Ghost and prophesied," when he recognized the work of God in his infant son (v. 67).

2. His wonderful work in the work of Christ.

Gabriel was sent to tell Mary that Immanuel was to be born of her. "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee" (v. 35). Mary's sinful nature was by him sanctified, that she might be a habitation for "The Child that was to be born to us." When Christ shall come and set up his throne on earth, earth shall be fully purified; so, when Mary was to receive the heir of that throne, she was fully prepared, and the child born of her was "The holy child Jesus," without spot or wrinkle of sin (Acts 4:30). What a moment was that wherein the Word became flesh! Reader, here is the "mystery of godliness!" The Spirit who at creation fashioned the unfallen earth and sky, prepared in that hour the human nature of Christ. The Father gives the word, and the Son responds to the Father, as he saw the Holy Spirit complete his work, "Lo! I come to do thy will, O God-a body hast thou prepared me!" (Heb. 10:5, 9) and forthwith *he is* on earth, in our nature, who was to be our sacrifice!

Learn here, (1) *The sovereign grace of the Holy Spirit*. His sovereignty is the same as that of the Father; he comes in free grace to whom he will. He is doing for man what he never did for fallen angels; he is giving his own nature to fallen man! O reader, may you be one of the vessels of mercy whom he fills! (2) *The Holy Spirit's anxiety that a complete Savior should be provided for man*. It was on this account he so prepared the person of Immanuel. The sacrifice chosen for us was from the first spotless, and therefore sure to be accepted whenever it should be offered. And when this our great sacrifice was shown in the temple soon after he came, the gracious Spirit led in Simeon to behold him, and filled his soul with peace by that sight (Luke 2:27).

3. His work during Christ's thirty years' retirement.

He continued to dwell in Christ's human nature, like the glory filling Solomon's temple. He daily breathed more and more wisdom into Christ's human soul, and brought out more and more grace into manifestation; rays of the indwelling glory were made from time to time to stream forth upon the surrounding darkness. "He increased in wisdom, and stature, and in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52). All this, too, while Nazareth was the place of his abode. During nearly thirty years, Jesus lived in Nazareth, a city noted for its wickedness; the Holy Spirit carried on the holiest work ever seen on earth in the midst of the vilest city. The contrast made the work more evident and marvelous. How powerful the holiness of God! O reader, *Christ's salvation is a holy salvation*, it leads to holiness, and the Spirit shows you the possibility of being holy even in the midst of an evil world, "godly in *this present world*" (Tit. 2:12). The Holy One of God emerges from polluted Nazareth. Are your neighbors evil? Are your friends ungodly? Are your parents enemies of God? Yet behold the Spirit's work in Nazareth, and be of good cheer.

4. His work at the baptism of Christ.

He came then to give his human nature all gifts for his office, and Isaiah's prophecy (61:1) was then fulfilled to the very eye of man. Anxious that nothing should be left undone for us, he fully anointed Jesus, of whom it is said, "He returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee" (Luke 4:14). Jordan, when it overflowed all its banks, would be but a feeble type of the abundance of the Spirit poured that day on Jesus; for he was poured out on him without measure (John 3:34).

And notice, reader, that the Spirit did this in a way that showed his intense desire for your salvation. Heaven opened—there was brightness above the brightness of the mid-day sun, and, while every eye was fixed on "the body of the heavens in its clearness," the Holy Ghost came down from the Father and rested on Jesus, "in a bodily form like a dove." He did the nearest thing to becoming visible, for he caused his presence to be marked by a "bodily form, like a dove." As at Pentecost tongues of fire rested on the disciples, so a bright form, like a dove, rested on Jesus as he stood in the streams of Jordan!

We see here, (1) *The Holy Spirit glorifying Christ in the sight of sinners.* He points him out to the notice of a careless world. He recommends him to you by spreading attractive glory round him. Oh, he longs to draw your attention to Jesus, that you may be forced to cry, "There is beauty in him that I should desire him."

(2) *We see the Spirit teaching anxious souls that it is Christ who brings peace to the sinner.* For he chose the form of a dove when he abode on Jesus, that so he might bring to our remembrance the feelings of God toward the world at the deluge. Noah's dove was the messenger of peace, bringing good tidings that the flood of wrath was assuaged. And so on Jordan's waters, the Spirit points to Jesus, "who is our peace," whose olive branch is the plant of renown.

And, (3) *We see the Spirit teaching us that Christ brings in a new creation.* He had never come in such visible energy since the day when he "moved on the face of the deep," but now he does, because the Creator is here, and a new creation begun.

5. His work during Christ's public ministry.

As soon as he had publicly anointed the Savior and fully furnished him, he led him to the wilderness to be tempted forty days of the devil (Luke 4:1; Matt. 4:1). The Spirit thus showed his own power, for he kept the slightest breath of evil from the human nature of him whom he upheld, although every form of sin, in every pleasant disguise, was successively presented. But his special intention in this case was to let us see that our ark was well able to withstand the storm; that it was waterproof and indestructible. He was anxious that we should know this truth,

and therein possess strong consolation (Heb. 2:18).

When our Redeemer was performing his miracles, he declared that he acted by "the Spirit of God" (Matt. 12:28). He said this when casting out devils, thereby teaching us that the Holy Spirit is Satan's grand opposer, and takes his place in the heart that Christ has cleansed. And when you see also how, being "full of the same Spirit," Jesus raised the dead, and healed diseases, remember that it may be through the direct operation of that Spirit "who made you" (Job 33:4), that health is breathed through your frame, and refreshing sleep made to restore your wearied body.

But never were the Spirit's power and love to man more manifest than at Christ's death. It was "by the eternal Spirit" (Heb. 9:14), that he offered himself to God without spot. The sacrifice was all put in order by him. And all was completed when for our sakes the Spirit caused the communications of love towards the beloved Son to run so low, that he cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!" In the same anxiety of love, how fully did he show himself in Jesus at the resurrection morning-"the Spirit of holiness" raising him from the grave and declaring him the Son of God with power (Rom. 1:4; Eph. 1:19).

6. Christ's discourses and promises concerning him.

We have seen the Spirit's operation throughout the various scenes of Christ's lifetime on earth; let us further see what Christ used to tell his disciples concerning Him.

When he first began to teach, he pointed to the Spirit "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me" (Luke 4:14, 18). And the first of his recorded conversations is that with Nicodemus wherein he fully declares that no man can enter the kingdom of heaven till he is born of that Spirit who was typified by the pure water under the Old Testament dispensation. Reader, Christ has seen all the souls that ever entered heaven, and he declares that not one has entered who was not first born again. To this truth he puts his seal, "Verily, verily" (John 3:3, 5, 11), three times in the course of that one conversation; and says with awful solemnity, "We speak what we do know, and testify what we have seen!" Reader, has the Spirit come to you? Are you new-born? Has he quickened you? Has he renewed your will? Has he ever come to you, like "fire," to burn up the stubble (Isa. 4:4)? Or as "the rain" softly entering your soul, while you read the Scriptures? Or as a "Quick two-edged sword," piercing you with deep convictions? And then descending as a dove, has he shown you peace after your many alarms? The time and manner of his coming it would be interesting to know; but apart from this the all-important question is, *Has he come?*

During his ministry, Christ spoke of him as the "Spirit who quickeneth" sinners that are dead in sin (John 6:63), and as the great gift he would bestow upon his children (Luke 11:13). Often he warned those around him against blaspheming him. On one of the most remarkable days of his ministry--the great day of the feast of tabernacles, he held forth the permanent possession of this gift as the grand effect of believing on the Savior (John 7:39). But when the time drew near that he must leave the world, he spoke of him more and more. How full of him are his discourses in John 14, 15, 16. He taught his disciples to lean on the Spirit as their guide into all truth; and told them that it would be he who should convince them of sin, fixing the sinner's gaze on the special sin of rejecting the Savior--and next, of righteousness, satisfying the sinner that it was to be found in the Redeemer, because after weaving that garment he had gone and shown it to the Father--and finally, convince them that judgment was given against Satan, the prince of this world, whose cause was ruined, the head of the serpent being crushed. He further told them that his office would specially be to take up the things that concerned the Savior and show them to souls; so that doubting, dark, anxious minds might be relieved by him when no minister or guide on earth could help them (see 1 Cor. 2:12). Already he had taught them that all their usefulness would depend on the measures they received of this Spirit, who would cause to flow out of them "rivers of living

water"; and they found it so in their after experience. (See Acts 4:31, 33, and the account of Pentecost.) When just about to ascend, he said, "Behold, I send the promise of my Father" (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8).

Reader, observe, (1) How our Lord, during all his ministry, led his disciples to the Spirit, even as the Spirit leads all souls to Christ. The Spirit leads all coming sinners to the *Altar*, and when there they have met Jesus, Jesus sends them to the Spirit as the water in the *Laver*. (2) The best gift that our ascended King could select for his beloved disciples, out of all the riches of heaven, and all its joys, was the gift of the Holy Ghost. Does it seem small in your eyes? (3) Put together all that Jesus said of this gift, and can you forbear to covet it? Reader, if you are a believer you have access to large supplies of this Spirit. For Luke 11:13 declares the Father's heart toward you, and John 16:7 gives you a resistless plea-"If I depart, I will send him!" Say then, "*He has departed-we* are waiting for our head, for he is in the heavens-therefore, Lord send the Comforter!" If you have not large supplies of the Spirit, it is as much your guilt as thirst was in the case of any weary and thirsty Israelite who, though he walked beside the stream from the smitten rock, yet drank only sparingly, because he was reluctant to stoop down.

7. His work-his full outpouring after Christ's death.

We have seen why he was not fully poured out till Christ was glorified. But in the ascension, Christ was fully glorified: his person being the sacrifice once offered, that sacrifice during forty days after the resurrection, was shone upon by the Father's glory, as its resplendent seal, and thereafter presented in heaven. There was now no hindrance to the Spirit's full outpouring; he therefore prepared to come down. Ten days he kept the disciples waiting at Jerusalem. Meanwhile he brought all his fullness to the person of the now glorified Immanuel, and made him the fountain out of which the living waters were to flow. The *Laver* in the heavenly temple was thus placed beside the *Altar*-so that it is plain, sinner, you cannot be sanctified otherwise than by approaching the Savior! Thus was fulfilled that ancient prophecy, "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, and *received gifts for men*" (Ps. 68:18). And in the visions which have been granted to the Church, the full Spirit, abiding in the person of Immanuel, has from time to time attracted the notice of those who have been witnesses. John saw the seven spirits in Christ's hand (Rev. 3:1), and at another time he saw the Lamb "with seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth to all the earth" (Rev. 5:6). And since that day, it has been usual to speak of the *Holy Spirit* in his relation to the church as "*The seven spirits*"; because he is poured forth from Jesus in *fullness*, of which a *sevenfold measure* was the symbol.

Our ascended High Priest had no sooner thus got the oil poured on his head, than it ran off even to the skirts of his garments-as typified in Aaron. Can you number the drops of dew? Or the copious rain? Or the drops of the sea? As little can any tell the dew, the rain, the living water, that has come down from him. He began at Pentecost to refresh his heritage; ever since, he has from time to time repeated such showers; and he mediates a shower more abundant still, when he will empty out the blessing promised by Joel (2:28), the first drops of which fell in the days of Peter, and the rest of which is to be sent in "*The times of refreshing*" (Acts 3:19).

The day of Pentecost taught that the gift of the Spirit is entirely in the hands of the Redeemer-none can be holy before coming to Christ; neither does the Spirit by whom men are born again, come to any from his hands. The Spirit's desire to save sinners of every kindred and people, is seen in bestowing the gift of tongues, and in doing so when men were present from every nation under heaven. The day of Pentecost teaches us, why there are few conversions amongst us. Through the fault both of ministers and people, there is little of the Holy Ghost amongst us. There is little of such preaching as that described by Peter, when he speaks of men who had preached *the Gospel with the Holy Ghost* sent down from heaven (1 Pet. 1:12)-and there is little of such prayer as Jude recommends, "praying in the Holy Ghost." But the day of Pentecost has taught us

to pray, and expect reviving showers. Reader, if Christ has the Spirit in his hand (Rev. 3:1), will you not look often up to him, and cry, "Open thine hand, and satisfy the wants of living souls!" The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit; and no man calleth Jesus Lord but by the Holy Ghost. We must receive him that we may know the things that are freely given us of God (See 1 Cor. 2:12, 14; 12:3).

It was after this, that *a regular ministry* began. There never had been such before. The Spirit used in former times to raise up instruments on particular occasions; but now he was more fully given, and in his great love instituted a standing ministry. This is recorded as his work on Christ's ascension (Eph. 4:11); and ministers are called "Ministers of the Spirit" (1 Cor. 3:6); and their office, "The Ministration of the Spirit"; and for their encouragement they are told that "the seven stars" are held in the same hand that holds the seven spirits. How full of gratitude ought you to be, reader, if you ever have been blessed in the house of God. All the profit you ever found under the ministry of any one, is a result of the *Spirit's* act in establishing this order of men. If ever you got light, or had conviction of sin, or were made joyful under the preaching of the word, it is all to the glory of the Spirit's love. Well may ministers themselves stand and adore. Their office is but the channel through which the living waters flow to others.

8. His great gift, the Holy Scriptures.

There are some particular instances of his power which we have omitted, such as that day when five thousand souls were saved (Acts 4:4); and that other when he showed such patient kindness in leading the Ethiopian to the truth, and then such mighty energy where he caught away Philip (Acts 8:39).

But now it was that he completed a revelation of the will of God to man. Long ere now he began to do this; but he never finished his work until the full completed work of Jesus was recorded. It was He who wrote the Old Testament, using the prophets as his instruments (2 Pet. 1:21), and so entirely guiding and inspiring the record that every thing and every word therein, small and great, has his authority (2 Tim. 3:16). From the day when the Book of Genesis was written, he was continually selecting events to be recorded, and matter for the use of the church. But he left the volume unfinished until all Christ's work was finished, and put in record in the gospels, and then he used apostles to write his will for coming ages. The whole word of God is now our perfect manual for all knowledge relative to the kingdom of God. He has thus given us a full river along whose banks we may walk (Ps. 1:2). Reader, remember, he uses this word as his instrument for conversion and sanctification. Let John 17:17, never be a day out of your memory: "*Sanctify them by thy truth; thy word is truth.*" Formerly, he converted and sanctified souls, by leading them to see Christ in the types of the temple; but now you are to "grow in grace" (2 Pet. 3:18) more directly, by growing "in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus."

9. His daily work in the saints below.

Here we shall merely point out the leading operations of the Spirit on the believer. He dwells in him and shall never leave him (John 14:16). Sometimes he is made to retire, by a believer's backsliding, into the deepest recess, and is scarcely felt; yet he never leaves a dwelling he has once come to possess. In the case of *Samson*, you see him in the solitary dungeon of Gaza, coming forth from his retirement and raising in that man's heart the cry, "O Lord God, remember me" (Judg. 16:28). In David's case, though retired far within for a year's space, at length he put forth his power, and the contrite prayer was heard, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me!" (Ps. 51:11).

Thus dwelling in his saints he calls them *his Temple* (1 Cor. 6:19); even their bodies are reckoned his temple; and he says of their souls, "I will dwell in them and will walk in them" (2 Cor. 6:16).

He it is that makes the walls of this temple strong (Eph. 3:16), and then fills it with himself (5:18). He cleanses it, as Christ cleansed the temple from buyers and sellers; "Ye mortify the deeds of the body through the Spirit" (Rom. 8:13). Upon the walls of this temple he pictures the glories of heaven, and gives clear manifestations of truth-as in old times, palms, and flowers, and cherubims adorned the temple walls to regale the sight of the worshipper. He is in them as the "seven lamps" mentioned in Rev. 4:5, showing them their way into the heaven of heavens; just as the seven-branched candlestick showed the priest his way into the holy place, and let him see what was there. Above all he keeps the Altar conspicuous in their view, "glorifying" Christ (John 16:14)-and giving "wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him" (Col. 1:9). Everything here is regulated according to the law of the holy God; everywhere this temple exhibits "long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Gal. 5:22). These are an "Earnest of the inheritance" (Eph. 1:14), firstfruits brought into this temple, along with "Love, joy, peace" (Gal. 5:22). Joy expresses itself in songs, in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs" (Col. 3:16)-such as were heard at Pentecost when they "eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, . praising God," and such as the prophet Isaiah foretold Christ was to give, when the anointing Spirit sent him to put on "the garment of praise" (61:3). If enemies assail or storms beat upon the walls, then especially are these songs heard, and this joy felt; they endure all things in the "comfort of the Holy Ghost," and are "filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 9:31; 13:52). Yet many many are the cries and groans (Rom. 8:26) that are heard from this temple; but they are groanings after more holiness. Sometimes, it is a cry for deliverance from the body of sin (v. 23); sometimes a cry for wisdom and understanding in the knowledge of Christ (Isa. 11:2; Eph. 1:17); sometimes for faith (2 Cor. 4:13), or love, or perseverance in retaining the truth to the end (2 Tim. 1:7, 14). Incense is kept continually burning on the golden altar in his temple, and the Spirit is he who keeps it burning; the Spirit himself raiseth the intercession within us. Christ's voice is heard in this temple through the Spirit. "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." Reader, remember this each Sabbath morning as you go up professedly as a worshipper to the house of God. Has he come to make you such a temple? Are his groans and cries ever heard within you?

10. His work on the saints at death, and onwards to the second coming of Christ.

The interests of Christ and the Holy Spirit are one and the same. The saints are therefore precious to him even as to the Redeemer. He fulfills to them on the bed of sickness the promise in Psalm 41:3, even as he sustained Jesus in his closing hours of suffering (Heb. 9:14). As soon as the hour of a believer's departure from the body arrives, he makes him perfect in holiness. The Son presents the believer arrayed in righteousness to the Father; the Father seals his well pleasedness, saying, "Blessed are the dead that die *in the Lord*," that is, in Jesus; and the Holy Spirit catches up the word, "From henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them" (Rev. 14:13). He rejoices to perfect the holiness of believers; although they go before the throne, *without their works*, in order that their justification may be seen to depend wholly on Christ.

As soon as they are in glory, he begins to breathe into them stronger desires than they ever had before for the coming of Christ. He tells us these thoughts of departed saints. Christ's Bride (that is, his church above), is stirred up by the Spirit to invite Christ to come speedily. "The Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come'" (Rev. 22:17); these holy souls that form the redeemed church above, are not complete till they get their resurrectionbodies; nor will they be fully satisfied till they get "The Grace that is to be brought unto them at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:13). The Spirit therefore, in his love to them and desire for their full blessedness, helps them to urge on the day of the Redeemer's second coming.

Reader, this is the last view given us of the Spirit in the word of God. And it shows the position in

which he wishes every saint to be standing. It shows us that the church above is ever crying to Jesus, "Come, Lord," and that the church below should do the same. "Let him that heareth say, Come!" But there is a word for the sinner too. The church below ("He that heareth"), has another duty besides seeking their own bliss and perfection by inviting Jesus to come quickly. They must stand and look on the unconverted world, and cry, "He that is athirst, let him come." We are to stand, with our eye upward on Jesus, but with our hand stretched out to you, bidding *you come quickly to that Savior* whom we are entreating to *come quickly to us*. The Spirit who knows your secret thoughts, and is ready to bear witness against you at the great day-he, he it is who stirs us up to cry to you most earnestly now, "O sinner, come and take the water of life freely." He places you within sight of the judgment seat, and then cries, "Come, and take." He shows you the fountain full to the very brim, and thereby would provoke your thirst, while he cries, "Come and take the water of life." He takes away the possibility of your saying that he does not address you, for he cries, "*Whosoever is athirst*"; and you are surely thirsty for joy and rest. He would make it impossible for you to invent any excuse even for hesitation, and therefore he cries, "*Whosoever will*." And lest any shadow of excuse should remain, he makes the word "Freely, freely," be the word that dies upon your ear. He takes up the testimony of the old Testament prophets (Isa. 55:1), and unites it to that of the Savior, uttered both on earth (John 7:37) and from heaven (Rev. 22:17), and entreats you to take and live forever. As if he were holding the living water in one of the golden urns of his heavenly temple to your very lips, he cries, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." O reader, were you ever nearer bliss than now?

Meanwhile the church continues longing for the day of Christ. For on that day when Christ is fully glorified with his own and his Father's glory, then shall his people receive of the Spirit in ample measures. The Spirit shall flow forth in immeasurable streams on every saint, "and the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord" (Hab. 2:14). What understandings of God shall we have then! What attainments in holiness! How deep our love! How loud our praise! While in fellowship with all saints, we comprehend what is the height and depth, and length and breadth, and know the love of Christ that passes knowledge, and are filled with all the fullness of God! Oh, then, let him that heareth join the Spirit and the Bride, crying, "Come, Lord Jesus."

And now, reader, we leave you, gathering up all we have said into a prayer, which, after what you have read will not seem unmeaning or unimportant. It is that which your minister breathes over you every Sabbath as you leave the house of God- "*The communion of the Holy Ghost be with you*" (2 Cor. 13:14). Amen. May he communicate to your soul the saving experience of all the truth into which he delighteth to lead those who are out of the way. To Him be Glory and Dominion (Rev. 1:4, 6).

3. The Love of the Spirit

Thy Spirit is good, lead me into the land of uprightness. -Ps. 143:10
The love of the Spirit. - Rom. 15:30

Nothing can be more necessary for a sinner's peace and holiness, than his fully knowing the character of that God with whom he has to do. The more perfectly we become acquainted with him, the more do we joy in him, and the more are we conformed to his likeness. In his word God has fully revealed his character. He has therein told us what he is. Especially in the living Word, that is, in Christ, do we learn the character of God. He is the perfect expression and manifestation of that character. But then, this character belongs equally to all the three persons in the Trinity. What is true of one is equally true to all. "God is holy," and this means that the Father is holy, the

Son in holy, the Spirit is holy. "God is light"; and this intimates that the Father is light, the Son is light, the Spirit is light. "God is love"; and this declares that the Father is love, the Son is love, the Spirit is love. We are accustomed to admit this of the Father and the Son; but we are less used to consider it as equally applicable to the Holy Spirit. Thus we have lost sight of the Spirit's love; a love as real, as true, as tender, as infinite, as gracious, as that of the Father and the Son.

We are apt to think of the Spirit as a mere influence, like the air we breathe, diffusing itself around, and operating upon us by a vague and indirect process of contact. So long as we do so, our ideas of the Spirit must be confused and unsatisfactory. Till we realize his *personality*, it is impossible that we can rightly acknowledge him in any of his divine perfections; more especially his *love*. A mere influence cannot be felt as a thing either loving or lovable. Hence, till the Spirit's personality is kept in view, his distinct and peculiar love cannot be rightly understood or realized; and the personality of the Spirit's love must no more be lost sight of, than the personality of the love of the Father, or the love of the Son.

Again, even when recognizing the Spirit as a person, we are apt to dwell exclusively on his power, or wisdom, or holiness, and thereby forget or overlook his *love*. It is true we can never magnify too mightily any of his divine excellencies, yet still we must not allow one to supplant another. We must not suffer the power or the holiness of the Spirit to withdraw our eyes from his *love*, a love which is as infinite and glorious, as his holiness or his power.

Again, when we acknowledge his grace and condescension in coming down into this fallen world to fulfill his errand of mercy, we are too prone to think of this merely as an act of obedience to the Father's will in sending him. When seen thus alone, it is the Father's love more than the Spirit's that is recognized. But let us remember that when he comes into this world, and into these souls of ours, it is not merely because sent by the Father and the Son, but because he *loves* to come. It is not merely because he is pledged in covenant to accomplish the work, but because he *loves* to do it. He works not merely because it is his office to convince, and comfort, and sanctify, but because he *loves* to do so. It is love that brings him down from heaven into a world like ours—free unbidden love, love to the lost, love as amazing and immeasurable as that of the Son of God, who, though he was rich, for our sakes became poor. The Father is said to have loved us with an everlasting love; so has the Spirit. The Son is said to have rejoiced in the habitable parts of the earth, and to have had his delights with the sons of men; and the same may be said of the Spirit. Every fact, or declaration, or promise, that proves the love of God, proves the love of the Spirit.

Again, we are apt to suppose, that because he is called emphatically *Holy Spirit*, therefore holiness is so peculiarly his attribute, that it is not proper to ascribe such peculiar love to him. But there is nothing in this characteristic of holiness to exclude the idea of love. Surely no one would say that because he is called the Holy Spirit, the Father or the Son is less holy than he? If love therefore be so perfectly consistent with holiness in them, it cannot be less so in him. There is such a thing as holy love to the unholy, and it would appear as if this love were strong and intense in proportion to the *holiness* of the being who loves. The Spirit's infinite holiness gives him such a view of the misery of an unholy soul, as makes him yearn with compassionate love over such. His infinite holiness makes him long to see them delivered from their sin, and made holy as he is holy. Holy love yearns over the unholy. Holy love longs to save the lost. Holy love strives to deliver the unholy from the awful misery of a sinful state, and to replace them in the blessedness of divine purity, and the perfect image of God.

Again, we may imagine that it is the work of Christ, as the sacrifice for sin, that has brought the Spirit down to us. Now, it is true, that had it not been for that work, the Holy Spirit could not have come down to dwell amid unholy beings. Had the work of Christ not satisfied Divine righteousness, and glorified the holiness of the Godhead, even when dealing with sinners, the Spirit never could have come down at all. Yet the work of Christ did not create or cause the

Spirit's love. There was love in his heart to sinners before, just as it was in the Father's, but then it was pent up; it could not flow out till this righteous way was opened, this holy channel prepared, through which it might flow freely down to us, unstrained and unobstructed. The Holy Spirit could have no dealings with an unholy soul, till the blood had been shed; still there was love in him before-love which led him joyfully to undertake his part in redeeming man, love which led him to prepare a body for the Son of God, on which our sins might be laid. The Father so loved the world as to give his Son. The Son so loved the world as to give himself. And the Spirit so loved the world as freely and gladly to come down into it, and there carry on his gracious work in the sinner's soul.

But let us consider some of the proofs of the Spirit's love. These are manifold. "If we would speak of them, they are more than can be numbered." How precious are his thoughts to us! "How great is his goodness, how great is his beauty!" Let us attend to a few of them. And may he be our gracious Teacher in unfolding the things concerning himself.

1. The Spirits love shows itself in his names.

He is called by many names, and set forth to us by many figures expressive of his tenderness and love. He is called "the good Spirit" (Neh. 9:20; Ps. 143:10), thereby declaring to us his lovingkindness and compassion. He is called the "Spirit of grace" (Heb. 10:29), to show us that he is merciful and gracious, full of the same free love to sinners as the Father and the Son. He is called the "Spirit of adoption" (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:5-6), because he imprints on us his own divine affections and sympathies, revealing to us the Father's mind and heart, creating in us all filial confidence, and teaching us to say, Abba, Father. He is called the "Spirit of liberty" (2 Cor. 3:17), because he undoes our heavy yoke, and breaks our grievous fetters, possessing our whole souls with the blessed consciousness of divine liberty, delivering us from the bondage of fear and sin, making us "free indeed." He is called "the Comforter" (John 14:16); "the helper of our infirmities" (Rom. 8:26), "the earnest of the inheritance" (Eph. 1:14), "the Spirit of love" (2 Tim. 1:7). Then, again, he is set forth to us under the figure of "rain and dew" (Ps. 68:9; Hos. 14:5), mild and refreshing; as the "oil of gladness" (Ps. 45:7), because of the overflowing joy which he imparts; as a dove (Matt. 3:16), because of his being so gentle, so loving, so peaceful, so tender, so easily wounded and grieved away. Such are some of the Spirit's names of love! They are poor indeed, and feeble to express the vast reality of deep love that is in his bosom. Yet they do give us sweet and precious glimpses of his tender love.

2. The Spirit's love shows itself in the Scriptures which he himself has written.

The word came to us not from man, neither by man, "but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." So that in these Scriptures it is especially the Spirit that speaks to us. It was he who wrote them. It is his language that they speak. It is his mind they breathe. It is his feelings that they embody. A man's writings show us his mind and heart: so do the Scriptures reveal to us the mind of the Holy Spirit. And what is the feeling that pervades them? It is love. What is their tone? It is gentleness and kindness. He who wrote them must have had a heart overflowing with love. No one can mistake the feeling which pervades the whole from beginning to end. They breathe the tenderest compassion throughout. Love to sinners shines out in every page, and pours itself along every line. All is holiness, yet all is love. The words are the words of truth and wisdom, yet they are the words of love. Hatred of sin is stamped everywhere, yet love to the sinner is as deeply engraven on every leaf. Every invitation is the expression of the Spirit's love. Every call is the call of the Spirit's love. Every word of grace is from the Spirit's love. Every word of comfort is from the Spirit's love. All the words in season for the weary are from the Spirit's love. It is he who saith, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." It is he who saith, "Ho every one that

thirsteth, come ye to the waters." It is he who saith, "Thou hast been weary of me, O Israel." It is he who saith, "Return, ye backsliding children." It is he who saith to the weak, "Be strong," to the sorrowful, "Rejoice," to the troubled, "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people." Oh, how full is all Scripture of the love of the Spirit! It breathes like sweet fragrance over every page. It is like ointment poured forth. Were we to read Scripture in this light, how much more sweetness might we find in it. How much more of winning attractive power should we discover in all its words. We have often wondered at their weight and wisdom, but this would teach us to wonder still more at their love. This would take away all seeming coldness or repetition. It would fill every word with a meaning of love unknown, unimagined before. We should thus get fuller access to the mind of the Spirit—a deeper insight into his gracious heart. We should learn not merely the grace contained in a promise, but we should be led more fully into the heart of the promiser. And we should thus see how the Spirit's love gives vent to itself in these sacred pages. The Father's love found its vent in his gift of the Son. The Son's love found vent to itself in the offering up of himself as our sin-bearer. But nowhere does the love of the Spirit get such full vent to itself as in the Scriptures which he has inspired. It is here that he pours forth all the treasures of his love; love to the lost, the guilty, the wanderer, the backslider, the rebel—love without measure and without changelove that is not regulated according to the worthiness of the object loved, or the amount of love expected in return, but love that embraces the unworthy, and those who requite nothing but hatred for love, enmity for friendship. "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17).

3. The Spirit's love shows itself in his anointing the Son of God for his work of love.

The "oil of gladness" with which he was anointed, was from the Spirit of love. It was by this loving Spirit that he was anointed to "preach the gospel to the poor" (Luke 4:18). It was by this loving Spirit that he was "sent to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord; to give beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness" (Isa. 61:1-3). It was by the anointing of this same Spirit that he was fitted for the gracious office to which he was appointed of the Father, as described to us in another passage of the same prophet. Speaking of him as his servant, his chosen one in whom his soul delighted, the Father says, "I have put my Spirit upon him." And what is the result? "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench." It was by the anointing of the same Spirit that he has "the tongue of the learned that he should know to speak a word in season to him that is weary." All the heavenly gifts and graces of the Redeemer's character are declared to be wrought in him by the Holy Spirit, with which he was filled "without measure." His especial fitness and fullness for his mighty work of love are ascribed to the indwelling of the Spirit of love. Thus was he fairer than the children of men; grace was poured into his lips (Ps. 45:2); and hence never man spake like him, and men wondered at "the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth." As it was by the coming down and overshadowing of the Holy Spirit, that he was formed in the womb, perfectly holy in soul and body, so it was by the indwelling of the same holy and loving Spirit that he was anointed for his work of love; and it was "through the eternal Spirit that he in love offered himself without spot to God" for us (Heb. 9:14). Thus the grace of Christ teaches us the grace of the Spirit. In the love of the Savior there shines forth the love of the Spirit.

Besides, what love to sinners is there manifested by the Spirit in his thus preparing the Son of God as the sacrifice for sin! It was love in the Father to send the Son—to consent that he should suffer so much for us. But is there not the same deep love in the Holy Spirit, to undertake such a work as that of preparing a lamb for the burnt-offering—binding the victim for the slaughter? What but infinite love is this? It was in one sense indeed a glorious work, for it was preparing a vessel for containing the full glory of Godhead in the form of a man. Yet it was an awful work to

prepare that well-beloved Son for bearing all the Divine wrath against sin-presenting him (if we may so speak), to the Father, to receive those vials of wrath which should have been poured out on us! What deep love is here!

And what condescending love to sinner to frame so many types and figures under the law, by which to show forth the Savior's character and work! It was by the Spirit that Bezaleel and Aholiab were fitted for making the various utensils of the tabernacle (Exod. 31:3). It was by the same Spirit that all the vessels of service were devised, and all the ceremonies ordained by which the fullness of a Savior's work was to be shown forth to sinners; by which the ignorant were to be taught the knowledge of redemption. What love is thus manifested in all the pains thus taken by the divine Spirit to leave nothing, however minute, untold, by which the sinner's eye might be directed to the Lamb of God!

And again, what love was it in the Spirit, to record in the Book of Psalms the tears and groans of the Son of God!-to preserve on record the hidden life, the secret feelings of the Man of sorrows, when bearing the Father's wrath for us! How painful is it for us to record the agonies of a beloved friend! We would rather forget them. Yet for love's sake we might be induced to record them for the benefit of others. So is it with the Spirit. For love's sake he has put the tears of the Son of God "into his bottle," and told us "all his wanderings" (Ps. 56:8). Had it not been for the Spirit's love in writing such a record as this, we should never have known the depths of that sorrow that was in the Redeemer's heart. What love then does the saddest word in all that book show forth, love not only of the Savior, but of the Spirit too!

And then, what love to testify of Christ and his finished work! This is his especial office now. He testifies of Christ. He glorifies Christ. He takes of the things of Christ, and shows them to us (John 16:13-14). And all this is not only out of his love to the Savior, but out of his love to the sinner. Not merely because he delights to see Jesus honored, but because he longs to see the sinner saved! How deep, how vast, how free must be this "love of the Spirit!"

4. The Spirit's love shows itself by his work in the hearts of sinners.

Now that the work of Jesus has been finished, he comes forth to do his office of love. And though he be the "holy one," he yet refuses not to work in the hearts of the unholy. He comes to us. He speaks to us. He strives with us. He draws us. He awakens us. He convinces us of sin. He quickens us. He opens our eyes. He leads us to the blood of sprinkling. Though he is resisted, grieved, vexed, quenched, he does not leave us, nor cease his efforts. For years he continues striving with the soul in his infinite love, unwilling to give it up, unwilling that it should perish. What hatred he meets with, yet he bears it all! What coldness and contempt he meets with, yet he bears it all! He would fain obtain entrance into the soul. He would fain deliver the captive one. And in seeking to accomplish this, he submits to every form of resistance, and enmity, and scorn. In his love he bears it all, rather than lose the sinner! And all this, though he be "the holy one," though his name is emphatically "the HOLY Spirit." Sinner, think what his love must be! Think what his long-suffering must be! To strive so earnestly and so long in seeking to win us to life! To cherish so fondly a serpent's brood! To deal graciously with souls so full of hatred! So condescendingly, so patiently to continue his strivings, notwithstanding all our perversity and stubbornness! So graciously to seek to draw our hearts to the love of God, teaching us to love, who by nature know only how to hate! "Herein is love, not that we loved Him but that he loved us."

5. The Spirit's love shows itself by his work in the hearts of saints.

It is not less marvelous in the latter than in the former. True, he has won the soul. He has found entrance, and taken up his abode in it. Yet still, how much has he to bear! How much has he still

to encounter of resistance, and coldness, and unbelief, which are not the less grievous because the heart in which they are manifested is one which he can call his own. No coldness, however, can chill his love; no unbelief can make him cease his workings. He meets with daily repulses, yet he ceases not. So unchangeable, so unquenchable is his love. Truly "many waters cannot quench it, neither can the floods drown it." Think what he does for saints. He leads them into all truth (John 16:13). He sheds the love of God abroad in their hearts (Rom. 5:5). He enables them to persevere (2 Tim 1:14). He mortifies corruption in them (Rom. 8:13). He fills them with joy (1 Thess. 1:6). He reveals the things of Christ (John 16:14). He helps their infirmities in prayer (Rom. 8:26). In the discharge of this last duty he is spoken of as the intercessor. He intercedes within, just as Christ intercedes without. He stands at our side to prompt us, to suggest our prayers, to draw forth our desires. Yea, he comes into us; he takes possession of our heart; he identifies himself entirely with us, and thus he mingles his voice with ours, his cries with ours. He makes our organs of feeling and speech the instrument for expressing his own desires, making his prayers to seem as ours—seconding and enforcing our feeble petitions with his mighty cries. And often when we are praying in our poor imperfect way, in wandering and weakness, he comes in and lifts us up, and kindles the flame within. Then it is as if we were overpowered with the intensity of our longings, our whole soul goes up in vehement intercessions, till human language gives way beneath the pressure, and nought remains but the unutterable groan. How vast his love, thus to put forth such power in us, in spite of all our continued resistance, and unbelief, and sin!

Let us learn then to love him in return for this love of his, so marvelous, so free. Surely he has claims upon our love, for having loved so much. So long-suffering, so loving, so gentle! Let us no more grieve him, no more disappoint him. Let us allow him to take us by the hand and lead us onward, whithersoever he will. He will show us the path of life. He will be our strength in weakness, our light in darkness, our joy in sorrow, our comforter in the day of trouble. Let us not thrust away his hand, or meet his love with coldness. Whom have we on earth as our guide in the Savior's absence, until he come again, but the Spirit the Comforter? "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30).

Let anxious souls lay these things to heart. To them the doctrine of the Spirit's love ought to be unspeakably precious. He who is working in them is love. He who is convincing them of sin is love. He who is seeking to draw them to God is love. It is a hand of power that is at work in them, but it is also a hand of love. This physician is as loving as he is skillful. Whence then so many doubts, so many hard thoughts of God? Will the Father, who so loved us as to give his Son for us, turn his ear away from us? Will the Son, who so loved us as to die for us, cast us out? Will that loving Spirit, who has so long been striving with us, and so long seeking to draw us to God, will he overlook our suit, or deal unkindly with us now? How can they who know his name fail to put their trust in him? How can they who understand his love suspect his willingness to bless? Did we but know the full character of that God with whom we have to do, the Father as love, the Son as love, the Spirit as love, should not our doubting cease? You mourn over an impenitent heart. Does the Spirit not love to soften it? You complain of inward deadness and insensibility. Does he not love to make you feel? You cry out because of unbelief. Does he not love to deliver you from that evil heart of unbelief? You tell us of the power the world has over you. Does he not love to make you spiritually minded, to set your affections on things above? You complain of your ignorance. Does he not love to teach you? You say you realize so little of the glory of Christ and his righteousness. Does he not love to remove the veil from your eyes, to show you the glory of the Savior, to unfold to you, in all its infinite dimensions and spotless purity, the robe of his perfect righteousness? You mourn because you have so little of his indwelling life and power, quickening and sanctifying you. Does he not love to come in all his fullness; at the same time showing you, that it is not his own work in you, but the Redeemer's work for you, that is your peace and hope. You complain that you have so little of childlike confidence and love towards your heavenly Father. Does he not love to pour that love into you, enlarging your straitened souls,

unloosing your stammering tongue, and teaching you with childlike lip and heart to say, Abba, Father.

You tell us of your doubts and fears; and you tell us moreover that these arise, not from any suspicion of God's willingness to save you, but from want of evidence as to your own progress in the divine life. Now in opposition to this we assure you that your doubts do arise from not understanding the *grace* of God. Did you but know the meaning of grace, your fears would cease. And it is this that the Spirit in his love is seeking to teach you. He wants to show you that there is such a thing as *free love* to sinners. And for this purpose he is seeking to strip you of every plea for anything good about you. His object is to teach you that there is not one single thought in you, but what God condemns. Then he shows you that grace takes for granted that you are utterly ruined, and that if it did not do so, it would not be grace at all. If it supposed that there was any good thing in you, it would not be grace. If it supposed that before it could reach your case, some good thing must be wrought in you by God, it would not be grace. If it supposed that God did not meet you on the spot where you are, but asked you to make some advances towards him ere you could be assured of his mercy, it would not be grace at all. It is the especial work of the Spirit to make the sinner understand what free grace really is, and it is in teaching this that he meets the strongest resistance from man. It is on this point he finds the sinner most unteachable. He can believe almost anything sooner than grace. He discredits God's most solemn and explicit assurances of his free love. He insists on qualifying himself for receiving God's love, and till he has ascertained that he is properly qualified, he persists in doubting, nay, calls it presumption to do otherwise. He makes a merit of his unbelief, and calls it humility. He refuses to go *boldly* to a throne of grace till he has more of the Spirit's witness within himself, to entitle him to do so. How sad, how awful thus to frustrate the grace of God! How perverse and wicked to turn the Spirit's work within you into an instrument for frustrating that grace! The Spirit's object is to show you the free love of God; and you say that you must wait till you are conscious of that work in you, ere you are entitled to believe that love. The Spirit's object is to show you that grace meets you where you are; and yet you say you are waiting till you are conscious of making advances towards that grace, before you can believe it. The Spirit's object is to teach you that grace presupposes nothing but what is *bad* in you; yet you say you are waiting for some evidence of good before you will believe it. How dishonoring to the grace of God is this! How insulting to the Holy Spirit is this! What perversity and unteachableness does this manifest in you! Yet what deep love does it display in him, still to go on in his loving work of teaching you the free grace of God. He sees how prone you are to disbelieve this, and therefore he strives to engrave it upon you. He sees how prone you are to seek for something good in yourselves before you will believe it possible that God can be gracious to you; and therefore he strives to show you that there is no good thing about you, that grace takes this for granted, and that if you could discern anything good in you, you would not be a fit object for grace at all. He sees how prone you are to suspect God, to think evil and hard thoughts of God; and hence his object is to lead you to *think well of him*, to banish your hard thoughts of him, and to teach you all the freeness and richness of his grace. Such is the Spirit's teaching. Such is the Spirit's love. Blessed teaching! Gracious love! Can the most disquieted spirit refuse consolation after this? Where is there room for doubting? Is it not excluded? And excluded by the same law that excludes works and introduces grace in the matter of acceptance with God.

Let careless sinners tremble. "My Spirit shall not always strive." What if he should soon cease to strive with you? What if he should turn away from you who have so often turned away from him? What if he should leave you alone in your impenitence? Then what a wilderness, what a hell would your soul become! It would be soon ripe for the devouring fire, like thorns dry and ready for the burning. Satan would come in and occupy it all, seizing on you as an easy prey. You strive to erase from your conscience, and banish from your memory the convictions and anxieties which he is daily stirring within you. What if you should never have another conviction, another desire

awakened within you, but be left to reap what you have sown? The Spirit might well leave you. You have done nothing but grieved him all the days of your life. You have requited his love with hatred. You are doing so still. You cannot bear his workings within you. You try to shake them all off; might he not well leave you to perish in your sins?

QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT! You quench him in many ways-you quench him with your unbelief-you quench him with the world-you quench him with your folly-you quench him with your lusts-you quench him with your idle company. How awful! You quench your only light! You strive to put it out, and in doing so to make your destruction sure. For without it how can you find your way to heaven? Oh! Beware of "doing despite to the Spirit of grace." Beware of disbelieving his testimony to the Savior; beware of denying his love; beware of resisting his power!

QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT! For if you quench him, then what remains for you here but darkness; and what remains for you hereafter but the blackness of darkness forever?

4. Night, Daybreak, and Clear Day

Awake thou that sleepest. - Eph. 5:14
Let us put on the armor of light. - Rom. 13:12

Reader, are you one of "*the people who sit in darkness*"? And do you love the darkness, because your deeds are evil? Has a ray-even one ray, from the glory of God, in the face of Jesus, ever gladdened your soul? Come and let us reason together. Perhaps you do not know *whether you have passed from darkness into light*? Come, then, and be not afraid to examine and decide.

1. *If you are addicted to gross sins, you are a child of darkness*, and therefore a child of the devil, and an heir of hell. If you practice any thing which you would not for the world that others saw you do, you are a child of darkness, for you feel a desire that these doings of yours may be *hid in night*.

2. *You are a child of darkness if you do not perceive how the world lieth in wickedness*. If the world is very pleasant to you; if its frolics, its gaieties, its dance, its song, are sweet to your taste, then, alas?, all is night with you. If you are never grieved at observing forgetfulness of God in the world's business; if you are never made uneasy when reading the profane and ungodly attacks made in public newspapers on the cause of God; if you never feel shocked in hearing the oaths and seeing the covetousness of a market-day, or a fair; if your heart was never made sad by the thought, that these multitudes are on the way to hell, then "*the darkness has blinded your eyes*."

3. *You are a child of night if you reckon all points of doctrine very much alike*. There are some doctrines which are essential to salvation. Thus it is essential to salvation to know your lost state as a sinner, and to lean on Christ Jesus alone. But if you see no greater importance in these truths than in a correct moral walk, and think that men may be safe if only they be sincere, you are *a child of darkness*. The equalizing gloom of darkness rests on you, for, like a man at midnight, you cannot distinguish the relative importance of the objects around you.

4. *If you do not work for God, you are a child of darkness*: for you are sleeping in inactivity; and "*they that sleep, sleep in the night*." Do you ever deny yourself for God? Do you give up this or that pleasure to prevent your mind being distracted or unfitted for his service? Do you rise a little earlier to obtain time for prayer, when otherwise you would be deprived of it? Do you redeem

time? Do you visit the sick, send the gospel to the heathen, speak of spiritual realities to your friends, and all *for his sake*? If not, then you are not a child of light.

5. *If you let convictions slip, you are a child of darkness*; for you act as sleepy men do when roused during night. They awake at the loud knock, rub their eyes, move themselves, then fall back into their sweet slumber, and wish to be left undisturbed. You say like Felix, "Go thy way for this time"; and Felix was truly a child of the night, though awakened at the moment by Paul's loud appeal.

6. *Though you love believers, and approve of their holy life, yet still you may be of the night*. Perhaps you are one of many in our land who love their pious parents and friends, but do not love their *piety*. You respect good people, for they are kind. But in all this, you are not loving *Christ in them*. You like to see the stars shining in the dark night, but you do not yourself seek to shine with the light which they possess.

7. *You are a child of darkness, if you do not see that Christ is the chief object presented to the sinner*. A man during night may see meteors, falling stars, many flashes of light, yet all this proves the more that it is not day. He admires these, because all is darkness round; were it day time, they would all be unseen in the flood of glorious light from the sun. And thus it may be with you; you may have had your convictions of sin, and your flashes of joyful hope; yet unless your soul has seen and felt Jesus and his finished work to be the source of all a sinner's hope-his *SUN*-you are still in night. Whatever discoveries you have made in Scripture; whatever errors you have escaped from; however many sins you have given up; whatever sacrifices you have made; all this proves nothing regarding *daylight* in your soul, if Christ the Sun have not filled it with his surpassing glories.

8. *If you have not seen your vileness, and the filth of your garments of unrighteousness, you are a child of night*. An Ethiopian cannot see his own or his neighbor's blackness, if all is dark about him; and it is even thus with the sinner. If he sees not that his own corruption, and his fancied robe of righteousness are loathsome before God; if he think proudly of himself, have a good opinion of his heart, and trust that there is at least something worth in his deeds, he is in gross darkness.

9. Once more. *He is a child of midnight who is unalarmed at sin*. He is like a man in the depth of sound slumber; there may be death at hand, a sword may be hanging over his sleeping form; the earthquake or the fire may be leveling his dwelling, still he is *unconscious*. *O unconscious sinner*, you are a child of hell! The less you feel your sin, the more evidence you give of being asleep; and "they that sleep, sleep in the night." Awake, thou that sleepest! Perhaps not the rising sun, but the lurid glare of hell, may give thee warning that thy time of rest is gone!

Come, then, and inquire how it is that *day* begins to take the place of *night*. Be not deceived! Remember the Son of man cometh as a thief in the night, and the surprise and remorse of the sinner overtaken in his darkness then, will never, never end! There are souls now passed into light, who were once as dark as you. There are sinners now become children of the day who once were as you. *Are you* beginning to desire a change? Like the shipwrecked crew (Act 27:29), are you wishing for day? Look around and cry, even in the midst of your gloom, "*Let the day break!*" There is a dayspring from on high that visits souls, and guides their feet into the way of peace (Luke 1:79).

Let us see a man on whom the light is dawning.

1. *It is near the daybreak with a sinner, when his conscience is awakened to feel sin*. His sleep is done. He cannot rest quietly in sin any more. Perhaps, like Peter, his conscience was awakened by the cock-crowing--by some recollection of impressive warnings which he despised at the time, or

it may have been some providence, some Jonah-storm, that sounded in his soul, "What meanest thou, O sleeper! Arise, call upon thy God." Or it may have been a minister's voice proclaiming the Lord's call, "Awake, thou that sleepest!" (Eph. 5:14). But remember, reader, this awakening is not itself the dawn of day, though it generally precedes it. For there are cases where convictions are strong and long continued, and yet the convinced sinner remains a child of darkness. Rest not, then, in mere convictions. They are hopeful appearances; but go on and see if there be other signs besides.

2. *It seems to be near the dawn with a sinner, when his past days look like a dream, or a vision by night.* Now, his pleasures, company, songs, and even his lawful business, seem trifling and utter vanity, compared with the new realities that are opening on his view. His past enjoyment in them he reckons "as when a hungry man dreameth, and behold he eateth; but he awaketh and his soul is empty" (Isa. 29:8); their folly, their rapid flight, above all, their debasing power, makes the man feel, "What fruit had ye then of those things of which ye are now ashamed?" (Rom. 6:21).

3. *New objects begin to appear, and former things assume a new aspect.* He sees the preciousness of his soul; the holiness and justice of God; the disgusting features of sin. As yet the greatest truths may be indistinctly perceived by him, as at early dawn when the morning is still gray, even hills and stately forests are dimly seen. Yet there is a beginning; the *world* seems far less attractive than before; its pits and marshes, wherein so many fall, are seen and dreaded. God, as revealed in his word, through the cross of Christ, begins to engage his whole soul. The people who know God become the objects of his love (Ps. 16:3), as in the case of John Bunyan, when just emerging from the shades of night "How lovely now was every one in mine eyes, that I thought to be converted men and women; they shone, they walked like a people that carried the broad seal of heaven about them."

4. *He is expecting light from above.* He does not expect that the light that is to show him the way to the Father's open arms will come from himself-no; he believes that it shines into the heart by command of him who at first said, "Let there be light" (2 Cor. 4:6). This Dayspring is from above (Luke 1:78). Is it, reader, your convictions, and repentance, that give you comfort, and make you imagine that you are a child of light? Then, it is not yet dawn with you; for it must be *Christ*, the Dayspring, that gives true peace. If your feelings are the grounds of your hope, instead of the Savior alone, beware lest you be satisfying yourself with the sun's reflected rays. If your holy life, as you fancy it to be, is the ground of your hope, you are preferring the beautiful scenery which the sun paints with his brightness, to the Sun himself. But a soul that is really advancing on to the full day is satisfied with nothing short of that ray from the face of Jesus which fell on the face of ransomed Abel, and faithful Abraham, and all the saved (Rev. 22:4-5). He might possibly kindle a torch for himself, but he knows that this would drop out of his hand when he came to pass through the dark valley. He will be satisfied with nothing but what the Holy God himself will be satisfied with. The light that the Father sheds on Immanuel's face is the light he seeks for.

5. *There is a gradual increase of light.* There is no going back; no returning to the world. Impressions are not effaced; truths are not forgotten; anxiety does not decay. A soul really led by the Spirit out of darkness can no more go back than can the sun once risen. Difficulty after difficulty is cleared away; cloud after cloud breaks up. The soul now feels an increasing anxiety for Christ, and sees more than ever that the reason why his wants are unsatisfied is his imperfect acquaintance with the work of Jesus. He can now distinguish between *justification* and *sanctification*: he sees that he has to do with the former first of all, and that a sinner must be washed with clean water before the Spirit will abide in him.

6. *The Sun appears through the cloud.* The full work of Christ appears to him to be the very remedy he needed for his soul. He sees *the Sun of righteousness*, and all is day. He lets that glorious Sun pour its light over his uncomely soul; and, lo!, he is now "altogether lovely." Mists

still linger, but they are gradually dissolving; dark clouds float at times over his sky, but at such times he keeps looking to the quarter whence he knows light will break forth again. He obtains assurance of his salvation. As in the case of the natural sun, if the eye be in the line of the ray of light, then of course the shining ray will be perceived-so, he gives a steady, direct look to the Sun of righteousness, and feels that his free beams are shed even over his own vile soul.

It is now *CLEAR DAY*. Even the shadows of the dawn have passed away. He lives, expecting another rising of this same Sun in sevenfold brightness, when grace shall be changed into glory. He is searching much into God's character and ways day after day; but all his discoveries are dim compared with those that he looks for at his Lord's Second Coming. "To you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise" (Mal. 4:2). Yet, strange as it may seem to the world, the child of light is not gay, nor does he feel any tendency to levity in his joy. The reason is this; the bright sunshine he enjoys in *the face of God; and he stands ever in his presence*. The rays of favor are all from sovereign grace! He is humbled, therefore, under a sense of the enormous load of benefit conferred upon him; the weight of grace and glory bends down his soul. Holy awe regulates his communion with God, while, at the same moment, he possesses the joyful confidence of a child. He has reverence, like the seraphim, while he has a joy that sometimes springs up almost as high as theirs; and it is in such a moment of mingled reverence and rapture that he fully realizes heaven.

And many times, his God and Father deepens this awe and reverence, by giving him personal afflictions to bear. The child of light is despised by the world, that he may learn to bathe yet more in the fountain of life alone; and that, when one earthly comfort after another withers, he may take all his light from the Sun that never sets. At other times, the Holy Spirit leads him to such awful views of his remaining corruption, and such deep insight into the mystery of sin, as would confound and crush any soul whose confidence was not fixed on Jesus *alone*, and on Jesus *to the uttermost*. Or, it may be, he is oppressed with anguish, not through fear of his own condemnation or suspicion of his personal safety, but by what he sees around him; the contempt poured upon his God, and the hastening perdition of unconverted souls. Like his Master, he feels, "The reproach wherewith they have reproached thee is fallen upon me!" and, like David, he looks into the pit, and cries, "O Absalom, my son, my son!" He has hours of painful wrestling with his God in their behalf; his bitterest hours on earth are the hours wherein these sorrows because of his God, and because of perishing men, rush into his soul! Indeed, his joy would never return, were it not that he sees in Calvary how his God has been glorified to a degree that swallows up all the contempt of men and devils; and how, when Jesus comes again, his glory will burst forth even from hell, and hallelujahs ascend to his name even over the smoke of the everlasting burnings. At present it is a painful blessedness he lives in, the very joy of his Father's face often creating new sources of anguish: but then he knows that thus he is to be refined as gold. And instead of these trying moments causing him to doubt his Father's love, they rather tend to assure him of it the more; for his Father lays these burdens on him just because he has first given him the *joy of the Lord* as the *strength* in which they are to be borne.

O sinner, child of darkness, and of the devil, and of hell, come and be a *child of light*! Will you choose to lie with fallen angels in the blackness of darkness forever? Will you love darkness, until it become your only portion? Will you indulge your dark deeds, secret sins, black desires hidden in the heart, and black clouds of anger, sabbath-breaking, uncleanness, pride, covetousness, envy, evil-speaking, discontent, selfishness? Oh, come, and be a *child of light*! Let the Sun shine on you; let his beams burst into that dark cave of your heart! This is God coming, in the person of Jesus, into the view of his creatures, like the sun after the gloom of night. It is God coming into the sight of his fallen and hell-deserving creatures! It is God coming in an aspect that invites you, and speaks holy love to you! For he comes to show you, how he may now be "just while he justifieth the ungodly." The various rays of his attributes are combined to form this

"great light" that shines on those who sat in the valley and shadow of death. Shall it shine on you? Or have you made up your mind to "sleep on and take your rest," to love darkness now, and dwell in darkness forever to be a sinner now, and a companion of devils hereafter? Is there nothing terrible in hell-the devouring fire, the everlasting burnings? Is there nothing bitter in "the dregs of the cup of trembling," the vials in which is filled up the wrath of God? Is there nothing sweet in the light of heaven-the glory which God hath prepared for them that love him? Is there nothing desirable in the joy of the Lord-the peace that passeth all understanding-the rest that remaineth for the people of God? Is guilt better than pardon? Is wrath better than love? Is death better than life? Is damnation better than eternal blessedness! Are the burning flames as pleasant as the cool waters of the fountain of life? Is the lake of fire and brimstone as safe and peaceful as "the sea of glass like unto crystal," on which the redeemed are standing in triumph? Is your father the devil (John 8:44), who deceiveth the whole world, more to be regarded than the word of him who is the faithful and true Witness? Lie down, then, in thy shame, and let thy confusion cover thee! "Walk in the light of thy fire, and in the sparks that thou hast kindled" (Isa. 50:11). But soon a bright gleam of glory, seen afar, from the children of the light and of the day, shall tell thee what they have received from the Sun of Righteousness, and what thou hast lost forever! "Yet a little while the light is with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you, for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light believe in the light, that ye may be the children of the light" (John 12:35-36).

5. The Lord's Supper

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? - 1 Cor. 10:16

Take, eat; this is my body... Drink ye all of it. - Matt. 26:26-27

The king hath brought me into his chamber- we will be glad and rejoice in thee; we will remember thy love more than wine. - Song of Sol. 1:4

Let a man examine himself... If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. - 1 Cor. 11:28, 31

The Lord's table is spread for the Lord's people, and for them alone. The real followers of the Lamb are the only acceptable guests, whom the Master of the feast brings into his banqueting house, and over whom he stretches the banner of his love. It is a family-festival, and the family-table is spread for the members of the family alone. No stranger may partake of this household-meal, nor intermeddle with the joy of its members. It is a feast for the disciples of the Lord; it is bread for the children; it is pasture for the flock. To each disciple, to each child, to each sheep, it is open; for them it is prepared, but for none else. It is not a table for the world, but for the church.

There is indeed a table to which the world's famished children are invited-the table spread by WISDOM (Prov. 9:1-6) for the needy sons of men. To this *all* are welcome, according to the words of the proclamation "whoso is simple, let him turn in hither, as for him that wanteth understanding, come eat of my bread and drink of the wine which I have mingled." It was at this table that the weary prodigal sat down to eat the fatted calf, when the glad father sung over him the song of full-hearted joy and love: "This my son was dead and is alive again, he was lost and is found." Weary sons of men, weary wanderers from your Father's house, your Father's longing eye is upon you in the wilderness, and your Father's loving voice calls upon each one of you to return

to the family mansion and partake of the family feast! In this case the invitation is to all. It takes in each inhabitant of this wretched world in its universal call, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life FREELY."

But this is not the same as the table of the Lord. This latter is for the church, not for the world. No one has any right to sit down at the familyboard, save a member of the family—one who has been "born again of the incorruptible seed" (1 Pet. 1:23), and has by adoption been taken from the family of the first, into that of the second Adam who is the Lord from heaven. The one table is spread for each weary sinner throughout this alienated world; the other is for those who have come out of the world and have been made sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty.

Sinner! There is nothing between you and the Savior. Go to him as you are. But there is something between you and the table. You must first come to the Savior before you can come to his feast of remembrance. He only can admit you. None are welcome save those whom He welcomes. And He has prepared this feast for those whom He calls *his sister, his spouse, his bride, his love, his dove, his undefiled* (Song of Sol. 5:2). These are acceptable and welcome. All others are forbidden and excluded. "Wherefore let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup; for he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body" (1 Cor. 11:28-29).

Let us briefly consider the nature of this ordinance, that we may see our Lord's design in instituting it, and understand better the character of those for whom it is prepared.

First: *The Lord's Supper is a memorial of Christ.* In instituting it He said, "Do this in remembrance of me." And again, "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come" (Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24-26). From these words it is plain that the great design of this ordinance is to be a *memorial* of Christ; to preserve in memory Himself, his sufferings, his work, his death, until he come again, with all his saints, and then there shall be no need of any such memorial, for we shall see him as He is, we shall see him face to face, without the intervention of emblem or sign. "For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now we know in part, but then shall we know even as we are known" (1 Cor. 13:12). Meanwhile, visible memorials are needed and visible memorials are therefore given.

A memorial implies Christ's *wish* to be remembered by us. He loves to be kept in memory by his saints. He is grieved at the thought of being forgotten by those whom he loves; "For love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel (or greedy, grasping) as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire which hath a most vehement flame" (Song of Sol. 8:6). God himself mourns over Israel's forgetfulness, "my people have forgotten me; thou hast been weary of me, O Israel." Thus Christ feels. And, moreover, he has a human heart and human sensibilities, like our own. He loves to be remembered by us. And because he does so, he instituted this feast of remembrance in the night in which he was betrayed. A memorial also implies our need of something to keep our Lord in remembrance. We are prone to forget him. Our love is feeble, even at the strongest; our hearts are cold, even at the warmest; our memories are treacherous, even when we would fain keep a suffering Lord most constantly before our eyes. Hence, for our sakes, He has instituted this; that we might not be allowed to give way to forgetfulness, but have something set before us which may ever remind us of himself and his love. In this fallen world there is little to remind us of Him. His name is forgotten among the children of men. His own world has ceased to remember Him. He is a stranger here. There are few who think of Him or speak of Him one to another. The memorials which he has left should, in such circumstances, be especially prized by us. His word is one memorial; His Sabbath is another; His Sacraments are a third. And this, particularly, of the Supper, is a special pledge and token of his love. Let us joy when it is said, not only let us go up to the house of God, but, Do this in remembrance of Me.

The Lord's Supper is thus a full and express remembrance of Jesus. It is a memorial of the Man of

Sorrows. It is a memorial of him who was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, upon whom the chastisement of our peace was laid, and by whose stripes we are healed. It is a memorial of the crucified One. It is a monument of bleeding, dying love. It proclaims the Lamb that was slain. It sets before us his bruised broken body-his shed and sprinkled blood-his face marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men. Its simple common elements speak of Him who was meek and lowly, as well as of Him who poured out his soul unto death. In all its parts it speaks of Jesus-of Jesus alone-of none but Jesus-Immanuel, God with us--Messiah the anointed One-the Beloved of the Father's soul! It reminds us of his incarnation-his life-his humiliation-his agony-his cross-his death-his grave. It takes us back to the upper chamber in Jerusalem-to the passover table-to Kedron--to Gethsemane--to Gabbatha--to Pilate's hall--to Calvary-to Joseph's tomb. It brings to mind the gracious words of him who spake as never man spake, and into whose lips grace divine was poured (Luke 4:22; John 7:46; Ps. 45:2). It says to us, Behold your king-behold the man-behold the Lamb of God-behold my servant the Branch! It brings to mind the mighty deeds of him who did all things well. It tells us of the grace of him who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor. It calls especially to mind the decease which he accomplished at Jerusalem-the glorious work whereby he finished transgression, made an end of sin, brought in everlasting righteousness, and made reconciliation for iniquity (Dan. 9:24). The voice that proclaimed from the cross, "It is finished!" still proclaims the same from the communion table by the bread and wine. These symbols tell us that the way to God is open now, and the access free-that the blood has been shed--the sacrifice offered up and accepted-the veil rent-and liberty secured, even for the guiltiest to draw near with perfect confidence to God. They preach the gospel, the glad tidings of great joy which are to us and to all people. All that Jesus did for us is represented in them. All the blessings of the new covenant are set forth to us. That table tells us of a full Savior and a full salvation; a full Redeemer and a full redemption. A full Savior, a free gospel, and a finished righteousness, are set before our eyes. There, truly, Jesus is "all in all." No name is heard but that of Jesus. The symbols speak of Jesus. The service breathes of Jesus. The praise is all of Jesus. The words are all of Jesus. And it seems as if the still voice of Jesus himself were heard in the silence of that solemn scene. Truly the Lord's Supper is the memorial of Jesus.

In going to his table, then, is it to *remember* Him? Is this our object, our purpose, our delight? Do we prize that bread and wine, not because of anything they are in themselves, but because they are memorials of Jesus? *Is* it our joy to be thus reminded of a dying Lord?

If, indeed, we do come to *remember* him, then it is plain we must first have *known* him, for we cannot remember a person we have never known. To come to his table, then, is to say, *I know* Jesus: I know who he is, and what he is, and what he is to me. In knowing him, I have found salvation and eternal life, and therefore I come to remember him whom I know so well. He is no stranger to me, and, therefore, these memorials of him are precious in mine eyes.

How can any one come to *remember* a Savior whom he does not *know*? What a contradiction to take into his hands the memorials of an unknown Redeemer! Besides, these emblems are not simply the memorials of the Savior himself, but of the blessings which the Savior brings. And how is it possible to remember blessings if we have not previously tasted them? How can we take into our hands the memorials of pardon, if we have never found that pardon? How can we receive the memorials of eternal life, if we have never obtained that life at all? How can we handle these hallowed pledges of the coming kingdom and prepared glory, if we have not obtained the good and assured hope of that promised inheritance? That bread and wine look back to a Savior known, and to salvation found by the soul; and, how strange, how sinful, for any one to partake of them, if he does not know that Savior which they point to, and has not found that salvation which they proclaim. Surely this, of itself, might settle the question as to who should come to the table of the Lord.

Second: *The Lord's Supper is a SEAL of the blessings of Christ.* It seals these to us, as with Christ's own seal. It puts them into our hands, and says to each believing communicant, *All these are thine.* In it Christ says to the soul, I am thine; all my blessings are thine; all that I have is thine. He takes the bread and wine; he gives them to us; He stretches out his hand and puts them into our hands, saying, These are thine, and here is my signature-my royal seal; take it, handle it, taste it, and doubt no more. Blessed pledges!, can I ever doubt again? I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine.

These symbols attest the *reality* and truth of all things connected with Jesus. As surely as that bread and wine are seen, touched, and tasted by you, so surely did Jesus die and rise again-so surely was he delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification-so surely was his body broken, and his blood shed for us-so surely is his flesh meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed. Nothing can be more real to you than these symbols which are in your hands; so nothing can be more real, more certain, more true, than these *facts* concerning Jesus. Both are true and real beyond the possibility of doubt. And it is the infinite certainty of these facts thus sealed to us that is the sure foundation of our peace and hope. For eighteen centuries that bread has been passing from hand to hand, and that cup from lip to lip, in unbroken succession; and thus we are at once carried back to the time when Jesus gave the first to his disciples, as he ate the last Passover with them, before he suffered.

But, besides this, the Lord's Supper is a seal of the different blessings which are hidden in Jesus for us. These are endless, for it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell. But let us recount a few of them.

1. *It is the seal of pardon.* It says to us, "Thy sins, which are many, are forgiven thee." "As far as the east is from the west, so far have I removed all thy transgressions from thee." "Thy sins and iniquities will I remember no more." It seals to us a complete and perfect forgiveness through the blood shed for many, for the remission of sin.

2. *It is a seal of eternal life.* It says to us, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." "I have given my flesh for the life of the world; he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." It is the voice of Jesus saying, I am the life of thy soul. Thy life is hid with me in God, and when I, who am thy life, shall appear, then shalt thou also appear with me in glory.

3. *It is a seal of adoption.* It says, Thou art a son, and I give thee the children's bread, and put into thy hands the pledges of a reconciled Father's love. Because thou art a son, I feed thee thus on the finest of the wheat. I have taken out of thy hands the world's husks, and have given thee angel's food to be the pledge of thy sonship.

4. *It is a seal of union with Christ.* Being one with him, we are admitted to the same table at which he sits, to share of the same feast of which he partakes; and that feast is none other than his own body and blood. One with him, we meet together, sit together, feast together. One with him, we feed upon his own broken body, that thus the same spiritual life that is in him may flow through us, and circulate through all the members of his one body.

5. *It is the seal of our union with the saints.* Being one with him, we are one with each other in him, and this feast is especially the symbol and pledge of this blessed unity among the members of his body. As all the different crumbs or morsels, however many, form but one loaf, so all the different saints, though innumerable, form yet but one body. "We though many, are one bread (or loaf), and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread" (loaf). What an emblem and seal of unity is this!

6. *It is a seal of love.* It is Christ sealing his love to us-setting us a seal upon his heart-as a seal upon his arm, by reason of the love that is stronger than death, and mightier than the grave. It is

his own voice saying, "*I love thee*" ; and we, in receiving it, respond, "Yea, Lord, and thou who knowest all things knowest that I love thee." It is the seal of mutual love-the pledge of mutual and unchanging constancy.

7. *It is a seal of the inheritance.* This is yet to be revealed, in the day when Jesus shall come to set up his kingdom, and place us on his throne. But, meanwhile, He gives us this seal and pledge of that coming inheritance, and bids us, at the same time, look forward to his glorious advent.

8. *It is the seal of Christ's second coming.* We are to show his death till He come. And thus, in that very ordinance which commemorates his first coming, we are taught to look forward to his second. These emblems say to us, in his name, "Just as surely as I came the first time, to have my body broken and my blood shed for you, so surely shall I come the second time, to be glorified in my saints, and admired in all them that believe."

In short, it is the seal of what Christ has purchased for us, whether past, present, or to come. It sets forth to us "grace and peace from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come." It is the seal of the New Covenant. It is the seal of all the promises, which are thus strikingly set before us as all yea and amen in Christ Jesus. It gives us a special and personal confirmation of them all. It is the broad seal of heaven, attached to all that God has said and promised. It says, in our case, and to our hearts, "The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my longing-kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed."

Third: *The Lord's Supper applies and conveys the blessings of Christ.* It is more than a sign; it is more than a seal; it is a real communication of spiritual blessings to believing souls. By it "we are made partakers of Christ's body and blood, with all their benefits, to our spiritual nourishment and growth in grace." Christ's body and blood are the two sources of blessing. His body, broken for us, is the storehouse in which all manner of food for the soul is treasured up. His blood, shed for us, is the fountain whence living waters flow to us, and out of which comes the "clean water" which is sprinkled upon us to wash away our sins. Both of these are *at all times* open and free. In believing we at all times are nourished, refreshed, and cleansed. But in the Lord's Supper we receive fuller measures of blessing. The symbols of bread and wine are the channels through which God conveys to us the new covenant blessings. He makes use of them for pouring into believing souls all the blessings which flow from the broken body and shed blood of the Lord. "In the Supper, rightly used, Christ Jesus is so joined to us that he becometh very nourishment and food to our souls" (Old Scotch Confession of Faith). The elements are to us what the hem of his garment was to the woman who had the issue of blood. When we partake of them believingly, virtue comes out of them, to feed, to strengthen, to heal, to cleanse, to refresh, to nourish the soul unto life eternal. All that is in Christ, faith draws out of these symbols, and thus they become "a feast of fat things" to the soul. Out of them we draw new and more vigorous life-spiritual, heavenly, everlasting life. At this table we especially find Christ to be the bread of life, and we feed upon him as such. Here all our graces are nourished and strengthened. The fruits of the Spirit are ripened in us. We "grow in grace," and are brought into nearer resemblance of our Lord himself. Sin is mortified; the flesh is crucified with its affections and lusts. The old man receives a deadly blow. The union between Christ and the soul is strengthened; and in all their parts the members of the body are drawn closer to their living head. The union between the saints is here cemented and confirmed. Here the bonds of love are gently yet firmly twined about believing souls, and we learn to love one another with a pure heart fervently, as one holy family, one blessed brotherhood. It is here we partake together of the "hidden manna," and the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God. It is here we are fed with the finest of the wheat. It is here we drink the new wine of the kingdom, and are anointed with fresh oil. We feast with Jesus in the upper room. We lean upon his bosom like the beloved disciple. We sing with him the hymn he sang ere he crossed the Kedron. We go with him to Gethsemane, and with him we kneel, and agonize, and pray. We stand in Pilate's hall, and hear the voice which says, "Behold the man!"

We take our place by the foot of the cross, and are sprinkled with the drops of the crimson shower. We are brought close to his very side, and from his precious wounds we drink in salvation, receiving into our souls the healing virtue that flows from his hands, his feet, his side.

Thus we see that the Lord's Supper is intended to be to us a full storehouse-an overflowing fountain of spiritual blessings. It is designed to furnish us with an abundant supply for our manifold wants. Let us mention in order a few particulars concerning these:

1. *It strengthens our faith.* For it holds up the glorious gospel of the blessed God to us in the most striking and impressive of all ways, namely, by outward signs. And also, it puts the seal and pledge of all blessings into our hands and lips.

2. *It makes plain the truth to our minds.* For by embodying invisible truth in visible signs, it renders it far more clear and easy to be understood. It illustrates the whole truth concerning Christ. It shows how free, how rich, how sufficient, how suitable is his salvation; yet, like the common food of life, both absolutely necessary, and within the reach of all.

3. *It nourishes the soul.* Here we find how true are Christ's words, "My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed" (John 6:55). Here we eat angels' food; we feed upon the bread of heaven. How can we be but nourished?

4. *It pours new life into the soul.* Here we not merely have life, but we have it more abundantly. Life pours into us from the fountain of life. We mount up with wings as eagles, we run and are not weary, we walk and are not faint.

5. *It ripens our graces.* We here bask in the rays of the Sun of Righteousness. The fruits of the Spirit ripen apace; love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance (Gal. 5:22-23).

6. *It kills sin.* Here we are taught to "reckon ourselves dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 6:11). We feel as if nailed to the same cross-buried in the same grave, rising, ascending, sitting with him at the right hand of God.

7. *It kindles our love.* It is truly a feast of love. It speaks wholly of love. The time when it was instituted-the facts which it commemorates, the feeling which dictated the institution-every thing in it, breathes of love. It tells us of the love of Jesus, Immanuel, God with us-love as *real* as the symbols which we touch and eat-love as *personal* to us as these. How fitted to kindle love-to warm the coldest bosom-to soften the hardest heart-to thaw the most frozen soul! How can we but love when seated at the feast of love-receiving the emblems of love-listening to the words and tones of love?

8. *It unites us to one another, and separates us from the world.* It is at once an ordinance of union and separation-union with Jesus and his people, separation from an ungodly world. It is the badge of discipleship. It marks us out from the world. It is a banner of defiance raised against the world. Like Noah, the preacher of righteousness, "we condemn the world." We confess that we are strangers and pilgrims on the earth; without a rest or a home on earth, but looking for a rest and a home beyond it, when pilgrim days are over, and the perils of the wilderness are exchanged for the plenty of our Father's peaceful home; without a city here, but waiting for the new Jerusalem, that cometh down out of heaven from God; without honor or authority here, but expecting to reign with Christ forever.

9. *It gives new ardor to our hopes.* It looks back to the first, and forward to the second coming of the Lord. It points to future glory. It carries us forward to the inheritance-the kingdom-the crown-the restitution of all things-the rest that remaineth for the people of God-the bridal day-the marriage-supper of the Lamb. We sit here as at our eastern window to watch the first rays of coming day; to see star after star fading from the heavens as the dawn approaches, and the sun

prepares to rise-"the sun of a morning without clouds," bringing in the splendor of the everlasting day. We seem to hear the voice which sounded over the lonely rocks of Patmos in the ears of John; "He that testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly." And with him we eagerly echo back the joyful words, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

But who are to come to this table, and who are not to come? It concerns us much to settle this. It was to his disciples that Jesus gave this bread and wine, and therefore none but *disciples* are to come. It is to remember Jesus that we come, and therefore we must first *know* Jesus; for unless we know him we cannot remember him. It is to have our souls nourished that we come, therefore they must first have been made *alive*, that is, we must be *born again*. We come to get the seal of forgiveness and adoption; therefore we must have been *forgiven* and *adopted* before we can come. We come to declare our love to Jesus; therefore we must first have learned to *love* him. The feast is for the followers of the Lamb, not for the followers of the world. It is for saints, not for the unholy and unconverted. It is not for the profane, or the prayerless, or the formalist, or the self-righteous. It is not for the drunkard, or the unclean, or the swearer, or the Sabbath-breaker, or the Sabbath-walker, or the Sabbath visitor, or those who only attend the house of God once a year, or who buy and sell on the Sabbath. It is not for the lovers of gaiety and pleasure-for the frequenters of the ball room, or the theater, or the card table, or the race course. All such, if they come, "eat and drink damnation to themselves." What have men to do at the table of the Lord who never shed one tear for sin-who never had an anxious hour about their souls--who never sought God, nor prized the Savior? What fellowship hath Christ with Belial? Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devil; ye cannot be a partaker of the Lord's table, and the table of the devil. Let *unconverted souls* stay away; or rather let them come *immediately* to Christ, and then without delay come also to his table. Come to Jesus, and then come to the feast-none more welcome than you.

How are we to come? Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. If we judge ourselves we should not be judged (1 Cor. 11:28, 31). Let us wash our hands in innocency (in the blood of the innocent one, the spotless Lamb of God), and so let us compass the altar of the Lord (Ps. 26:6). Let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth (1 Cor. 5:8). *I* counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear, and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve that thou mayest see (Rev. 3:18).

A few questions on the Lord's Supper.

1. By what names is the Lord's Supper known?

It is called the sacrament, because it is an holy ordinance. It is called the Lord's Supper, because instituted by, and in memory of, the Lord Jesus. It is called the breaking of bread, because of the bread there broken. It is called the communion, because therein we are made partakers of Christ's body and blood, and have fellowship with him and with the saints. It is called the Eucharist, because Christ gave thanks, and it is an ordinance of thanksgiving. It is called the feast (1 Cor. 5:8), because Christ our passover is sacrificed for us, and we feed upon him.

2. What do the broken bread and the poured out wine set forth to us?

They are memorials of Christ bruised, bleeding, dying for us; and do also set forth his body and blood as the whole food of our souls.

3. Are they mere signs?

No, truly; they also "seal and apply" to us all the blessings of Christ. They are efficacious channels for conveying these to believing souls; but to unbelieving souls they can be no channels of blessing.

4. Is it not enough that we look at the symbols?

No, truly; we must eat and drink of them; thereby signifying our partaking of Christ spiritually by faith-our receiving him into our souls just as we receive the bread and wine into our bodies. Eating and drinking in faith draws out special blessings, just as the woman's touching the hem of Christ's garment in faith drew out special blessings to her. The mere act of eating and drinking can obtain for us no blessing, if not done by us believingly.

5. Who ought to go to this table?

Living souls; for dead souls cannot eat and drink. Hungry and thirsty souls; for otherwise what would a feast be? Loving souls; for without love, how can we compass the table of love? Believing souls; for without faith we cannot feed on Christ. Regenerate souls; for none but they have a right to the children's bread. in short, Christ's disciples-Christ's people; those whom he calls saints, beloved ones, his sheep, his members, his branches, his bride. None else.

6. To what does the Lord's Supper point forward?

To the second coming of the Lord, in glory and majesty, to set up his kingdom, and sit down with his people at the marriage supper of the Lamb. It is in looking forward to that day that He says,

*"I WILL NOT DRINK HENCEFORTH OF THIS FRUIT OF THE VINE UNTIL THAT DAY
WHEN I DRINK IT NEW WITH YOU IN MY FATHER'S KINGDOM" (Matt. 26:29).*

These articles were taken from the book Kelso Tracts.