The Christians Secret of a Happy Life

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**THE CHRISTIAN'S SECRET OF A HAPPY LIFE**

**By Hannah Whitall Smith**

**As Published by Christian Witness Co.**

**"One of the most inspiring and influential books we have ever read."**

**--Dale Evans and Roy Rogers**

**"IS YOUR LIFE ALL YOU WANT IT TO BE? Hannah Whitall Smith--Quaker,**

**rebel, realist--faced life as she found it, and she found it good.**

**She took her Bible promises literally, tested them, and found them**

**true as tested steel. She stepped out of conjecture into certainty,**

**and the shadows disappeared. Here she reveals the secret--how to**

**make unhappiness and uncertainty give way to serenity and confidence**

**in every day of your life."--from the Spire edition.**

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**Preface**

**This is not a theological book. I frankly confess I have not been**

**trained in theological schools, and do not understand their methods nor**

**their terms. But the Lord has taught me experimentally and practically**

**certain lessons out of his Word, which have greatly helped me in my**

**Christian life, and have made it a very happy one. And I want to tell**

**my secret, in the best way I can, in order that some others may be**

**helped into a happy life also.**

**I do not seek to change the theological views of a single individual. I**

**dare say most of my readers know far more about theology than I do**

**myself, and perhaps may discover abundance of what will seem to be**

**theological mistakes. But let me ask that these may be overlooked, and**

**that my reader will try, instead, to get at the experimental point of**

**that which I have tried to say, and if that is practical and helpful,**

**forgive the blundering way in which it is expressed. I have tried to**

**reach the absolute truth which lies at the foundation of all "creeds"**

**and "views," and to bring the soul into those personal relations with**

**God which must exist alike in every form of religion, let the**

**expression of them differ as they may.**

**I have committed my book to the Lord, and have asked Him to counteract**

**all in it that is wrong, and to let only that which is true find**

**entrance into any heart. It is sent out in tender sympathy and yearning**

**love for all the struggling, weary ones in the Church of Christ, and**

**its message goes right from my heart to theirs. I have given the best I**

**have, and could do no more. May the blessed Holy Spirit use it to teach**

**some of my readers the true secret of a happy life!**

**HANNAH WHITALL SMITH, GERMANTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA.**

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**Chapter 1**

**INTRODUCTORY**

**GOD'S SIDE AND MAN'S SIDE**

**In introducing this subject of the life and walk of faith, I desire, at**

**the very outset, to clear away one misunderstanding which very commonly**

**arises in reference to the teaching of it, and which effectually**

**hinders a clear apprehension of such teaching. This misunderstanding**

**comes from the fact that the two sides of the subject are rarely kept**

**in view at the same time. People see distinctly the way in which one**

**side is presented, and, dwelling exclusively upon this, without even a**

**thought of any other, it is no wonder that distorted views of the whole**

**matter are the legitimate consequence.**

**Now there are two very decided and distinct sides to this subject, and,**

**like all other subjects, it cannot be fully understood unless both of**

**these sides are kept constantly in view. I refer, of course, to God's**

**side and man's side; or, in other words, to God's part in the work of**

**sanctification, and man's part. These are very distinct and even**

**contrastive, but are not contradictory; though, to a cursory observer,**

**they sometimes look so.**

**This was very strikingly illustrated to me not long ago. There were two**

**teachers of this higher Christian life holding meetings in the same**

**place, at alternate hours. One spoke only of God's part in the work,**

**and the other dwelt exclusively upon man's part. They were both in**

**perfect sympathy with one another, and realized fully that they were**

**each teaching different sides of the same great truth; and this also**

**was understood by a large proportion of their hearers. But with some of**

**the hearers it was different, and one lady said to me, in the greatest**

**perplexity, "I cannot understand it at all. Here are two preachers**

**undertaking to teach just the same truth, and yet to me they seem**

**flatly to contradict one another." And I felt at the time that she**

**expressed a puzzle which really causes a great deal of difficulty in**

**the minds of many honest inquirers after this truth.**

**Suppose two friends go to see some celebrated building, and return home**

**to describe it. One has seen only the north side, and the other only**

**the south. The first says, "The building was built in such a manner,**

**and has such and such stories and ornaments." "Oh, no!" says the other,**

**interrupting him, "you are altogether mistaken; I saw the building, and**

**it was built in quite a different manner, and its ornaments and stories**

**were so and so." A lively dispute would probably follow upon the truth**

**of the respective descriptions, until the two friends discover that**

**they have been describing different sides of the building, and then all**

**is reconciled at once.**

**I would like to state as clearly as I can what I judge to be the two**

**distinct sides in this matter; and to show how the looking at one**

**without seeing the other, will be sure to create wrong impressions and**

**views of the truth.**

**To state it in brief, I would just say that man's part is to trust and**

**God's part is to work; and it can be seen at a glance how contrastive**

**these two parts are, and yet not necessarily contradictory. I mean**

**this. There is a certain work to be accomplished. We are to be**

**delivered from the power of sin, and are to be made perfect in every**

**good work to do the will of God. "Beholding as in a glass the glory of**

**the Lord," we are to be actually "changed into the same image from**

**glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." We are to be**

**transformed by the renewing of our minds, that we may prove what is**

**that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. A real work is to be**

**wrought in us and upon us. Besetting sins are to be conquered. Evil**

**habits are to be overcome. Wrong dispositions and feelings are to be**

**rooted out, and holy tempers and emotions are to be begotten. A**

**positive transformation is to take place. So at least the Bible**

**teaches. Now somebody must do this. Either we must do it for ourselves,**

**or another must do it for us. We have most of us tried to do it for**

**ourselves at first, and have grievously failed; then we discover from**

**the Scriptures and from our own experience that it is a work we are**

**utterly unable to do for ourselves, but that the Lord Jesus Christ has**

**come on purpose to do it, and that He will do it for all who put**

**themselves wholly into His hand, and trust Him to do it. Now under**

**these circumstances, what is the part of the believer, and what is the**

**part of the Lord? Plainly the believer can do nothing but trust; while**

**the Lord, in whom he trusts, actually does the work intrusted to Him.**

**Trusting and doing are certainly contrastive things, and often**

**contradictory; but are they contradictory in this case? Manifestly not,**

**because it is two different parties that are concerned. If we should**

**say of one party in a transaction that he trusted his case to another,**

**and yet attended to it himself, we should state a contradiction and an**

**impossibility. But when we say of two parties in a transaction that one**

**trusts the other to do something, and that that other goes to work and**

**does it, we are making a statement that is perfectly simple and**

**harmonious. When we say, therefore, that in this higher life, man's**

**part is to trust, and that God does the thing intrusted to Him, we do**

**not surely present any very difficult or puzzling problem.**

**The preacher who is speaking on man's part in this matter cannot speak**

**of anything but surrender and trust, because this is positively all the**

**man can do. We all agree about this. And yet such preachers are**

**constantly criticised as though, in saying this, they had meant to**

**imply there was no other part, and that therefore nothing but trusting**

**is done. And the cry goes out that this doctrine of faith does away**

**with all realities, that souls are just told to trust, and that is the**

**end of it, and they sit down thenceforward in a sort of religious**

**easy-chair, dreaming away a life fruitless of any actual results. All**

**this misapprehension arises, of course, from the fact that either the**

**preacher has neglected to state, or the hearer has failed to hear, the**

**other side of the matter; which is, that when we trust, the Lord works,**

**and that a great deal is done, not by us, but by Him. Actual results**

**are reached by our trusting, because our Lord undertakes the thing**

**trusted to Him, and accomplishes it. We do not do anything, but He does**

**it; and it is all the more effectually done because of this. The puzzle**

**as to the preaching of faith disappears entirely as soon as this is**

**clearly seen.**

**On the other hand, the preacher who dwells on God's side of the**

**question is criticised on a totally different ground. He does not speak**

**of trust, for the Lord's part is not to trust, but to work. The Lord**

**does the thing intrusted to Him. He disciplines and trains the soul by**

**inward exercises and outward providences. He brings to bear all the**

**resources of His wisdom and love upon the refining and purifying of**

**that soul. He makes everything in the life and circumstances of such a**

**one subservient to the one great purpose of making him grow in grace,**

**and of conforming him, day by day and hour by hour, to the image of**

**Christ. He carries him through a process of transformation, longer or**

**shorter, as his peculiar case may require, making actual and**

**experimental the results for which the soul has trusted. We have dared,**

**for instance, according to the command in Rom. 6:11, by faith to reckon**

**ourselves "dead unto sin." The Lord makes this a reality, and leads us**

**to victory over self, by the daily and hourly discipline of His**

**providences. Our reckoning is available only because God thus makes it**

**real. And yet the preacher who dwells upon this practical side of the**

**matter, and tells of God's processes for making faith's reckonings**

**experimental realities, is accused of contradicting the preaching of**

**faith altogether, and of declaring only a process of gradual**

**sanctification by works, and of setting before the soul an impossible**

**and hopeless task.**

**Now, sanctification is both a sudden step of faith, and also a gradual**

**process of works. It is a step as far as we are concerned; it is a**

**process as to God's part. By a step of faith we get into Christ; by a**

**process we are made to grow up unto Him in all things. By a step of**

**faith we put ourselves into the hands of the Divine Potter; by a**

**gradual process He makes us into a vessel unto His own honor, meet for**

**His use, and prepared to every good work.**

**To illustrate all this: suppose I were to be describing to a person,**

**who was entirely ignorant of the subject, the way in which a lump of**

**clay is made into a beautiful vessel. I tell him first the part of the**

**clay in the matter, and all I can say about this is, that the clay is**

**put into the potter's hands, and then lies passive there, submitting**

**itself to all the turnings and overturnings of the potter's hands upon**

**it. There is really nothing else to be said about the clay's part. But**

**could my hearer argue from this that nothing else is done, because I**

**say that this is all the clay can do? If he is an intelligent hearer,**

**he will not dream of doing so, but will say, "I understand. This is**

**what the clay must do; but what must the potter do?" "Ah," I answer,**

**"now we come to the important part. The potter takes the clay thus**

**abandoned to his working, and begins to mould and fashion it according**

**to his own will. He kneads and works it, he tears it apart and presses**

**it together again, he wets it and then suffers it to dry. Sometimes he**

**works at it for hours together, sometimes he lays it aside for days and**

**does not touch it. And then, when by all these processes he has made it**

**perfectly pliable in his hands, he proceeds to make it up into the**

**vessel he has purposed. He turns it upon the wheel, planes it and**

**smooths it, and dries it in the sun, bakes it in the oven, and finally**

**turns it out of his workshop, a vessel to his honor and fit for his**

**use."**

**Will my hearer be likely now to say that I am contradicting myself;**

**that a little while ago I had said the clay had nothing to do but lie**

**passive in the potter's hands, and that now I am putting upon it a**

**great work which it is not able to perform; and that to make itself**

**into such a vessel is an impossible and hopeless undertaking? Surely**

**not. For he will see that, while before I was speaking of the clay's**

**part in the matter, I am now speaking of the potter's part, and that**

**these two are necessarily contrastive, but not in the least**

**contradictory, and that the clay is not expected to do the potter's**

**work, but only to yield itself up to his working.**

**Nothing, it seems to me, could be clearer than the perfect harmony**

**between these two apparently contradictory sorts of teaching on this**

**subject. What can be said about man's part in this great work, but that**

**he must continually surrender himself and continually trust?**

**But when we come to God's side of the question, what is there that may**

**not be said as to the manifold and wonderful ways in which He**

**accomplishes the work intrusted to Him? It is here that the growing**

**comes in. The lump of clay would never grow into a beautiful vessel if**

**it stayed in the clay-pit for thousands of years. But once put into the**

**hands of a skilful potter, and, under his fashioning, it grows rapidly**

**into a vessel to his honor. And so the soul, abandoned to the working**

**of the Heavenly Potter, is changed rapidly from glory to glory into the**

**image of the Lord by His Spirit.**

**Having, therefore, taken the step of faith by which you have put**

**yourself wholly and absolutely into His hands, you must now expect Him**

**to begin to work. His way of accomplishing that which you have**

**intrusted to Him may be different from your way. But He knows, and you**

**must be satisfied.**

**I knew a lady who had entered into this life of faith with a great**

**outpouring of the Spirit, and a wonderful flood of light and joy. She**

**supposed, of course, this was a preparation for some great service, and**

**expected to be put forth immediately into the Lord's harvest field.**

**Instead of this, almost at once her husband lost all his money, and she**

**was shut up in her own house, to attend to all sorts of domestic**

**duties, with no time or strength left for any Gospel work at all. She**

**accepted the discipline, and yielded herself up as heartily to sweep,**

**and dust, and bake, and sew, as she would have done to preach, or pray**

**or write for the Lord. And the result was that through this very**

**training He made her into a vessel "meet for the Master's use, and**

**prepared unto every good work."**

**Another lady, who had entered this life of faith under similar**

**circumstances of wondrous blessing, and who also expected to be sent**

**out to do some great work, was shut up with two peevish invalid nieces,**

**to nurse, and humor, and amuse them all day long. Unlike the first**

**lady, this one did not accept the training, but chafed and fretted, and**

**finally rebelled, lost all her blessing, and went back into a state of**

**sad coldness and misery. She had understood her part of trusting to**

**begin with, but not understanding the divine process of accomplishing**

**that for which she had trusted, she took herself out of the hands of**

**the Heavenly Potter, and the vessel was marred on the wheel.**

**I believe many a vessel has been similarly marred by a want of**

**understanding these things. The maturity of Christian experience cannot**

**be reached in a moment, but is the result of the work of God's Holy**

**Spirit, who, by His energizing and transforming power, causes us to**

**grow up into Christ in all things. And we cannot hope to reach this**

**maturity in any other way than by yielding ourselves up utterly and**

**willingly to His mighty working. But the sanctification the Scriptures**

**urge as a present experience upon all believers does not consist in**

**maturity of growth, but in purity of heart, and this may be as complete**

**in the babe in Christ as in the veteran believer.**

**The lump of clay, from the moment it comes under the transforming hand**

**of the potter, is, during each day and each hour of the process, just**

**what the potter wants it to be at that hour or on that day, and**

**therefore pleases him. But it is very far from being matured into the**

**vessel he intends in the future to make it.**

**The little babe may be all that a babe could be, or ought to be, and**

**may therefore perfectly please its mother, and yet it is very far from**

**being what that mother would wish it to be when the years of maturity**

**shall come.**

**The apple in June is a perfect apple for June. It is the best apple**

**that June can produce. But it is very different from the apple in**

**October, which is a perfected apple.**

**God's works are perfect in every stage of their growth. Man's works are**

**never perfect until they are in every respect complete.**

**All that we claim then in this life of sanctification is, that by a**

**step of faith we put ourselves into the hands of the Lord, for Him to**

**work in us all the good pleasure of His will; and that by a continuous**

**exercise of faith we keep ourselves there. This is our part in the**

**matter. And when we do it, and while we do it, we are, in the Scripture**

**sense, truly pleasing to God, although it may require years of training**

**and discipline to mature us into a vessel that shall be in all respects**

**to His honor, and fitted to every good work.**

**Our part is the trusting, it is His to accomplish the results. And when**

**we do our part, He never fails to do His, for no one ever trusted in**

**the Lord and was confounded. Do not be afraid, then, that if you trust,**

**or tell others to trust, the matter will end there. Trust is only the**

**beginning and the continual foundation; when we trust, the Lord works,**

**and His work is the important part of the whole matter. And this**

**explains that apparent paradox which puzzles so many. They say, "In one**

**breath you tell us to do nothing but trust, and in the next you tell us**

**to do impossible things. How can you reconcile such contradictory**

**statements?" They are to be reconciled just as we reconcile the**

**statements concerning a saw in a carpenter's shop, when we say at one**

**moment that the saw has sawn asunder a log, and the next moment declare**

**that the carpenter has done it. The saw is the instrument used, the**

**power that uses it is the carpenter's. And so we, yielding ourselves**

**unto God, and our members as instruments of righteousness unto Him,**

**find that He works in us to will and to do of His good pleasure; and we**

**can say with Paul, "I labored; yet not I, but the grace of God which**

**was with me." For we are to be His workmanship, not our own. (Eph.**

**2:10.) And in fact, when we come to look at it, only God, who created**

**us at first, can re-create us, for He alone understands the "work of**

**His own hands." All efforts after self-creating, result in the marring**

**of the vessel, and no soul can ever reach its highest fulfillment**

**except through the working of Him who "worketh all things after the**

**counsel of His own will."**

**In this book I shall of course dwell mostly upon man's side in the**

**matter, as I am writing for man, and in the hope of teaching believers**

**how to fulfil their part of the great work. But I wish it to be**

**distinctly understood all through, that unless I believed with all my**

**heart in God's effectual working on His side, not one word of this book**

**would ever have been written.**

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**Chapter 2**

**THE SCRIPTURALNESS OF THIS LIFE**

**When I approach this subject of the true Christian life, that life**

**which is hid with Christ in God, so many thoughts struggle for**

**utterance that I am almost speechless. Where shall I begin? What is the**

**most important thing to say? How shall I make people read and believe?**

**The subject is so glorious, and human words seem so powerless! But**

**something I am impelled to say. The secret must be told. For it is one**

**concerning that victory which overcometh the world, that promised**

**deliverance from all our enemies, for which every child of God longs**

**and prays, but which seems so often and so generally to elude their**

**grasp. May God grant me so to tell it, that every believer to whom this**

**book shall come, may have his eyes opened to see the truth as it is in**

**Jesus, and may be enabled to enter into possession of this glorious**

**life for himself.**

**For sure I am that every converted soul longs for victory and rest, and**

**nearly every one feels instinctively, at times, that they are his**

**birthright. Can you not remember, some of you, the shout of triumph**

**your souls gave when you first became acquainted with the Lord Jesus,**

**and had a glimpse of His mighty saving power? How sure you were of**

**victory then! How easy it seemed, to be more than conquerors, through**

**Him that loved you. Under the leadership of a Captain who had never**

**been foiled in battle, how could you dream of defeat? And yet, to many**

**of you, how different has been your real experience. The victories have**

**been but few and fleeting, the defeats many and disastrous. You have**

**not lived as you feel children of God ought to live. There has been a**

**resting in a clear understanding of doctrinal truth, without pressing**

**after the power and life thereof. There has been a rejoicing in the**

**knowledge of things testified of in the Scriptures, without a living**

**realization of the things themselves, consciously felt in the soul.**

**Christ is believed in, talked about, and served, but He is not known as**

**the soul's actual and very life, abiding there forever, and revealing**

**Himself there continually in His beauty. You have found Jesus as your**

**Saviour and your Master, and you have tried to serve Him and advance**

**the cause of His kingdom. You have carefully studied the Holy**

**Scriptures and have gathered much precious truth therefrom, which you**

**have endeavored faithfully to practise.**

**But notwithstanding all your knowledge and all your activities in the**

**service of the Lord, your souls are secretly starving, and you cry out**

**again and again for that bread and water of life which you saw promised**

**in the Scriptures to all believers. In the very depths of your hearts**

**you know that your experience is not a Scriptural experience; that, as**

**an old writer says, your religion is "but a talk to what the early**

**Christians enjoyed, possessed, and lived in." And your souls have sunk**

**within you, as day after day, and year after year, your early visions**

**of triumph have seemed to grow more and more dim, and you have been**

**forced to settle down to the conviction that the best you can expect**

**from your religion is a life of alternate failure and victory; one hour**

**sinning, and the next repenting; and beginning again, only to fail**

**again, and again to repent.**

**But is this all? Had the Lord Jesus only this in His mind when He laid**

**down His precious life to deliver you from your sore and cruel bondage**

**to sin? Did He propose to Himself only this partial deliverance? Did He**

**intend to leave you thus struggling along under a weary consciousness**

**of defeat and discouragement? Did He fear that a continuous victory**

**would dishonor Him, and bring reproach on His name? When all those**

**declarations were made concerning His coming, and the work He was to**

**accomplish, did they mean only this that you have experienced? Was**

**there a hidden reserve in each promise that was meant to deprive it of**

**its complete fulfillment? Did "delivering us out of the hands of our**

**enemies" mean only a few of them? Did "enabling us always to triumph"**

**mean only sometimes; or being "more than conquerors through Him that**

**love us" mean constant defeat and failure? No, no, a thousand times no!**

**God is able to save unto the uttermost, and He means to do it. His**

**promise, confirmed by His oath, was that "He would grant unto us, that**

**we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve Him**

**without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of**

**our life." It is a mighty work to do, but our Deliverer is able to do**

**it. He came to destroy the works of the devil, and dare we dream for a**

**moment that He is not able or not willing to accomplish His own**

**purposes?**

**In the very outset, then, settle down on this one thing, that the Lord**

**is able to save you fully, now, in this life, from the power and**

**dominion of sin, and to deliver you altogether out of the hands of your**

**enemies. If you do not think He is, search your Bible, and collect**

**together every announcement or declaration concerning the purposes and**

**object of His death on the cross. You will be astonished to find how**

**full they are. Everywhere and always His work is said to be, to deliver**

**us from our sins, from our bondage, from our defilement; and not a hint**

**is given anywhere, that this deliverance was to be only the limited and**

**partial one with which the Church so continually tries to be satisfied.**

**Let me give you a few texts on this subject. When the angel of the Lord**

**appeared unto Joseph in a dream, and announced the coming birth of the**

**Saviour, he said, "And thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall**

**save His people from their sins."**

**When Zacharias was "filled with the Holy Ghost" at the birth of his**

**son, and "prophesied," he declared that God had visited His people in**

**order to fulfil the promise and the oath He had made them, which**

**promise was, "That He would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out**

**of the hands of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, in holiness**

**and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life."**

**When Peter was preaching in the porch of the Temple to the wondering**

**Jews, he said, "Unto you first, God, having raised up His Son Jesus,**

**sent Him to bless you in turning away every one of you from his**

**iniquities."**

**When Paul was telling out to the Ephesian church the wondrous truth**

**that Christ had loved them so much as to give Himself for them, he went**

**on to declare, that His purpose in thus doing was, "that He might**

**sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water by the word, that He**

**might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or**

**wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without**

**blemish."**

**When Paul was seeking to instruct Titus, his own son after the common**

**faith, concerning the grace of God, he declared that the object of that**

**grace was to teach us "that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we**

**should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world"; and**

**adds, as the reason of this, that Christ "gave Himself for us that He**

**might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify us unto Himself a**

**peculiar people, zealous of good works."**

**When Peter was urging upon the Christians, to whom he was writing, a**

**holy and Christ-like walk, he tells them that "even hereunto were ye**

**called because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that**

**ye should follow His steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in**

**His mouth"; and adds, "who His own self bare our sins in His own body**

**on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto**

**righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed."**

**When Paul was contrasting in the Ephesians the walk suitable for a**

**Christian, with the walk of an unbeliever, he sets before them the**

**truth in Jesus as being this, "that ye put off concerning the former**

**conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful**

**lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on**

**the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true**

**holiness."**

**And when, in Romans 6, he was answering forever the question as to**

**continuing in sin, and showing how utterly foreign it was to the whole**

**spirit and aim of the salvation of Jesus, he brings up the fact of our**

**judicial death and resurrection with Christ as an unanswerable argument**

**for our practical deliverance from it, and says, "God forbid. How shall**

**we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not that so**

**many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His**

**death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death; that**

**like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father,**

**even so we also should walk in newness of life." And adds, "Knowing**

**this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin**

**might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."**

**Dear Christians, will you receive the testimony of Scripture on this**

**matter? The same questions that troubled the Church in Paul's day are**

**troubling it now: first, "Shall we continue in sin that grace may**

**abound?" And second, "Do we then make void the law through faith?"**

**Shall not our answer to these be Paul's emphatic "God forbid"; and his**

**triumphant assertions that instead of making it void "we establish the**

**law"; and that "what the law could not do, in that it was weak through**

**the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and**

**for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law**

**might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the**

**Spirit"?**

**Can we suppose for a moment that the holy God, who hates sin in the**

**sinner, is willing to tolerate it in the Christian, and that He has**

**even arranged the plan of salvation in such a way as to make it**

**impossible for those who are saved from the guilt of sin to find**

**deliverance from its power?**

**As Dr. Chalmers well says, "Sin is that scandal which must be rooted**

**out from the great spiritual household over which the Divinity rejoices**

**. . . Strange administration, indeed, for sin to be so hateful to God**

**as to lay all who had incurred it under death, and yet when readmitted**

**into life that sin should be permitted; and that what was before the**

**object of destroying vengeance, should now become the object of an**

**upheld and protected toleration. Now that the penalty is taken off,**

**think you that it is possible the unchangeable God has so given up His**

**antipathy to sin, as that man, ruined and redeemed man, may now**

**perseveringly indulge under the new arrangement in that which under the**

**old destroyed him? Does not the God who loved righteousness and hated**

**iniquity six thousand years ago, bear the same love to righteousness**

**and hatred to iniquity still? . . . I now breathe the air of**

**loving-kindness from Heaven, and can walk before God in peace and**

**graciousness; shall I again attempt the incompatible alliance of two**

**principles so adverse as that of an approving God and a persevering**

**sinner? How shall we, recovered from so awful a catastrophe, continue**

**that which first involved us in it? The cross of Christ, by the same**

**mighty and decisive stroke wherewith it moved the curse of sin away**

**from us, also surely moves away the power and the love of it from over**

**us."**

**And not Dr. Chalmers only, but many other holy men of his generation**

**and of our own, as well as of generations long past, have united in**

**declaring that the redemption accomplished for us by our Lord Jesus**

**Christ on the cross at Calvary is a redemption from the power of sin as**

**well as from its guilt, and that He is able to save to the uttermost**

**all who come unto God by Him.**

**A quaint old divine of the seventeenth century says: "There is nothing**

**so contrary to God as sin, and God will not suffer sin always to rule**

**his masterpiece, man. When we consider the infiniteness of God's power**

**for destroying that which is contrary to Him, who can believe that the**

**devil must always stand and prevail? I believe it is inconsistent and**

**disagreeable with true faith for people to be Christians, and yet to**

**believe that Christ, the eternal Son of God, to whom all power in**

**heaven and earth is given, will suffer sin and the devil to have**

**dominion over them.**

**"But you will say no man by all the power he hath can redeem himself,**

**and no man can live without sin. We will say, Amen, to it. But if men**

**tell us, that when God's power comes to help us and to redeem us out of**

**sin, that it cannot be effected, then this doctrine we cannot away**

**with; nor I hope you neither.**

**"Would you approve of it, if I should tell you that God puts forth His**

**power to do such a thing, but the devil hinders Him? That it is**

**impossible for God to do it because the devil does not like it? That it**

**is impossible that any one should be free from sin because the devil**

**hath got such a power in them that God cannot cast him out? This is**

**lamentable doctrine, yet hath not this been preached? It doth in plain**

**terms say, though God doth interpose His power, it is impossible,**

**because the devil hath so rooted sin in the nature of man. Is not man**

**God's creature, and cannot He new make him, and cast sin out of him? If**

**you say sin is deeply rooted in man, I say so, too, yet not so deeply**

**rooted but Christ Jesus hath entered so deeply into the root of the**

**nature of man that He hath received power to destroy the devil and his**

**works, and to recover and redeem man into righteousness and holiness.**

**Or else it is false that `He is able to save to the uttermost all that**

**come unto God by Him.' We must throw away the Bible, if we say that it**

**is impossible for God to deliver man out of sin.**

**"We know," he continues, "when our friends are in captivity, as in**

**Turkey, or elsewhere, we pay our money for their redemption; but we**

**will not pay our money if they be kept in their fetters still. Would**

**not any one think himself cheated to pay so much money for their**

**redemption, and the bargain be made so that he shall be said to be**

**redeemed, and be called a redeemed captive, but he must wear his**

**fetters still? How long? As long as he hath a day to live.**

**"This is for bodies, but now I am speaking of souls. Christ must be**

**made to me redemption, and rescue me from captivity. Am I a prisoner**

**any where? Yes, verily, verily, he that committeth sin, saith Christ,**

**he is a servant of sin, he is a slave of sin. If thou hast sinned, thou**

**art a slave, a captive that must be redeemed out of captivity. Who will**

**pay a price for me? I am poor; I have nothing; I cannot redeem myself;**

**who will pay a price for me? There is One come who hath paid a price**

**for me. That is well; that is good news, then I hope I shall come out**

**of my captivity. What is His name, is He called a Redeemer? So, then, I**

**do expect the benefit of my redemption, and that I shall go out of my**

**captivity. No, say they, you must abide in sin as long as you live.**

**What! must we never be delivered? Must this crooked heart and perverse**

**will always remain? Must I be a believer, and yet have no faith that**

**reacheth to sanctification and holy living? Is there no mastery to be**

**had, no getting victory over sin? Must it prevail over me as long as I**

**live? What sort of a Redeemer, then, is this, or what benefit have I in**

**this life, of my redemption?"**

**Similar extracts might be quoted from Marshall, Romaine, and many**

**others, to show that this doctrine is no new one in the Church, however**

**much it may have been lost sight of by the present generation of**

**believers. It is the same old story that has filled with songs of**

**triumph the daily lives of many saints of God throughout all ages; and**

**is now afresh being sounded forth to the unspeakable joy of weary and**

**burdened souls.**

**Do not reject it, then, dear reader, until you have prayerfully**

**searched the Scriptures to see whether these things be indeed so. Ask**

**God to open the eyes of your understanding by His Spirit, that you may**

**"know what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who**

**believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought**

**in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own**

**right hand in the heavenly places." And when you have begun to have**

**some faint glimpses of this power, learn to look away utterly from your**

**own weakness, and, putting your case into His hands, trust Him to**

**deliver you.**

**In Psalms 8:6, we are told that God made man to "have dominion over the**

**works of His hand." The fulfillment of this is declared in 2 Cor. 2,**

**where the apostle cries, "Thanks be unto God which always causeth us to**

**triumph in Christ." If the maker of a machine should declare that he**

**had made it to accomplish a certain purpose, and if upon trial it**

**should be found incapable of accomplishing that purpose, we would all**

**say of that maker that he was a fraud.**

**Surely then we will not dare to think that it is impossible for the**

**creature whom God has made, to accomplish the declared object for which**

**he was created. Especially when the Scriptures are so full of the**

**assertions that Christ has made it possible.**

**The only thing that can hinder is the creature's own failure to work in**

**harmony with the plans of his Creator, and if this want of harmony can**

**be removed, then God can work. Christ came to bring about an atonement**

**between God and man, which should make it possible for God thus to work**

**in man to will and to do of His good pleasure. Therefore we may be of**

**good courage; for the work Christ has undertaken He is surely able and**

**willing to perform. Let us then "walk in the steps of that faith of our**

**father Abraham," who "staggered not at the promise of God through**

**unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; being fully**

**persuaded that what He had promised, He was able also to perform."**

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**Chapter 3**

**THE LIFE DEFINED**

**In my last chapter I tried to settle the question as to the**

**scripturalness of the experience sometimes called the Higher Christian**

**Life, but which to my own mind is best described in the words, the**

**"life hid with Christ in God." I shall now, therefore, consider it as a**

**settled point that the Scriptures do set before the believer in the**

**Lord Jesus a life of abiding rest and of continual victory, which is**

**very far beyond the ordinary line of Christian experience; and that in**

**the Bible we have presented to us a Saviour able to save us from the**

**power of our sins, as really as He saves us from their guilt.**

**The point to be next considered is, as to what this hidden life**

**consists in, and how it differs from every other sort of Christian**

**experience.**

**And as to this, it is simply letting the Lord carry our burdens and**

**manage our affairs for us, instead of trying to do it ourselves.**

**Most Christians are like a man who was toiling along the road, bending**

**under a heavy burden, when a wagon overtook him, and the driver kindly**

**offered to help him on his journey. He joyfully accepted the offer, but**

**when seated, continued to bend beneath his burden, which he still kept**

**on his shoulders. "Why do you not lay down your burden?" asked the**

**kind-hearted driver. "Oh!" replied the man, "I feel that it is almost**

**too much to ask you to carry me, and I could not think of letting you**

**carry my burden too." And so Christians, who have given themselves into**

**the care and keeping of the Lord Jesus, still continue to bend beneath**

**the weight of their burden, and often go weary and heavy-laden**

**throughout the whole length of their journey.**

**When I speak of burdens, I mean everything that troubles us, whether**

**spiritual or temporal.**

**I mean, first of all, ourselves. The greatest burden we have to carry**

**in life is self. The most difficult thing we have to manage is self.**

**Our own daily living, our frames and feelings, our especial weaknesses**

**and temptations, and our peculiar temperaments, our inward affairs of**

**every kind, these are the things that perplex and worry us more than**

**anything else, and that bring us oftenest into bondage and darkness. In**

**laying off your burdens, therefore, the first one you must get rid of**

**is yourself. You must hand yourself and all your inward experiences,**

**your temptations, your temperament, your frames and feelings, all over**

**into the care and keeping of your God, and leave them there. He made**

**you, and therefore He understands you and knows how to manage you, and**

**you must trust Him to do it. Say to Him, "Here, Lord, I abandon myself**

**to thee. I have tried in every way I could think of to manage myself,**

**and to make myself what I know I ought to be, but have always failed.**

**Now I give it up to thee. Do thou take entire possession of me. Work in**

**me all the good pleasure of thy will. Mould and fashion me into such a**

**vessel as seemeth good to thee. I leave myself in thy hands, and I**

**believe thou wilt, according to thy promise, make me into a vessel unto**

**thine honor, `sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared**

**unto every good work.'" And here you must rest, trusting yourself thus**

**to Him continually and absolutely.**

**Next, you must lay off every other burden,--your health, your**

**reputation, your Christian work, your houses, your children, your**

**business, your servants; everything, in short, that concerns you,**

**whether inward or outward.**

**Christians always commit the keeping of their souls for eternity to the**

**Lord, because they know, without a shadow of a doubt, that they cannot**

**keep these themselves. But the things of this present life they take**

**into their own keeping, and try to carry on their own shoulders, with**

**the perhaps unconfessed feeling that it is a great deal to ask of the**

**Lord to carry them, and that they cannot think of asking Him to carry**

**their burdens too.**

**I knew a Christian lady who had a very heavy temporal burden. It took**

**away her sleep and her appetite, and there was danger of her health**

**breaking down under it. One day, when it seemed especially heavy, she**

**noticed lying on the table near her a little tract called "Hannah's**

**Faith." Attracted by the title, she picked it up and began to read it,**

**little knowing, however, that it was to create a revolution in her**

**whole experience. The story was of a poor woman who had been carried**

**triumphantly through a life of unusual sorrow. She was giving the**

**history of her life to a kind visitor on one occasion, and at the close**

**the visitor said, feelingly, "O Hannah, I do not see how you could bear**

**so much sorrow!" "I did not bear it," was the quick reply; "the Lord**

**bore it for me." "Yes," said the visitor "that is the right way. You**

**must take your troubles to the Lord." "Yes," replied Hannah, "but we**

**must do more than that; we must leave them there. Most people," she**

**continued, "take their burdens to Him, but they bring them away with**

**them again, and are just as worried and unhappy as ever. But I take**

**mine, and I leave them with Him, and come away and forget them. And if**

**the worry comes back, I take it to Him again; I do this over and over,**

**until at last I just forget that I have any worries, and am at perfect**

**rest."**

**My friend was very much struck with this plan and resolved to try it.**

**The circumstances of her life she could not alter, but she took them to**

**the Lord, and handed them over into His management; and then she**

**believed that He took it, and she left all the responsibility and the**

**worry and anxiety with Him. As often as the anxieties returned she took**

**them back; and the result was that, although the circumstances remained**

**unchanged, her soul was kept in perfect peace in the midst of them. She**

**felt that she had found out a blessed secret, and from that time she**

**tried never again to carry her own burdens, nor to manage anything for**

**herself.**

**And the secret she found so effectual in her outward affairs, she found**

**to be still more effectual in her inward ones, which were in truth even**

**more utterly unmanageable. She abandoned her whole self to the Lord,**

**with all that she was and all that she had, and, believing that He took**

**that which she had committed to Him, she ceased to fret and worry, and**

**her life became all sunshine in the gladness of belonging to Him. And**

**this was the Higher Christian Life! It was a very simple secret she**

**found out. Only this, that it was possible to obey God's commandment**

**contained in those words, "Be careful for nothing, but in everything by**

**prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made**

**known unto God"; and that, in obeying it, the result would inevitably**

**be, according to the promise, that the "peace of God which passeth all**

**understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."**

**There are many other things to be said about this life hid with Christ**

**in God, many details as to what the Lord Jesus does for those who thus**

**abandon themselves to Him. But the gist of the whole matter is here**

**stated, and the soul that has got hold of this secret has found the key**

**that will unlock the whole treasure-house of God.**

**And now I do trust that I have made you hunger for this blessed life.**

**Would you not like to get rid of your burdens? Do you not long to hand**

**over the management of your unmanageable self into the hands of One who**

**is able to manage you? Are you not tired and weary, and does not the**

**rest I speak of look sweet to you?**

**Do you recollect the delicious sense of rest with which you have**

**sometimes gone to bed at night, after a day of great exertion and**

**weariness? How delightful was the sensation of relaxing every muscle,**

**and letting your body go in a perfect abandonment of ease and comfort.**

**The strain of the day had ceased for a few hours at least, and the work**

**of the day had been thrown off. You no longer had to hold up an aching**

**head or a weary back. You trusted yourself to the bed in an absolute**

**confidence, and it held you up, without effort, or strain, or even**

**thought on your part. You rested.**

**But suppose you had doubted the strength or the stability of your bed,**

**and had dreaded each moment to find it giving away beneath you and**

**landing you on the floor; could you have rested then? Would not every**

**muscle have been strained in a fruitless effort to hold yourself up,**

**and would not the weariness have been greater than not to have gone to**

**bed at all?**

**Let this analogy teach you what it means to rest in the Lord. Let your**

**souls lie down upon His sweet will, as your bodies lie down in your**

**beds at night. Relax every strain and lay off every burden. Let**

**yourselves go in perfect abandonment of ease and comfort, sure that**

**when He holds you up you are perfectly safe.**

**Your part is simply to rest. His part is to sustain you, and He cannot**

**fail.**

**Or take another analogy, which our Lord Himself has abundantly**

**sanctioned, that of the child-life. For "Jesus called a little child**

**unto Him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto**

**you, Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not**

**enter the kingdom of Heaven."**

**Now, what are the characteristics of a little child and how does he**

**live? He lives by faith, and his chiefest characteristic is**

**thoughtlessness. His life is one long trust from year's end to year's**

**end. He trusts his parents, he trusts his caretakers, he trusts his**

**teachers, he even trusts people often who are utterly unworthy of**

**trust, because of the confidingness of his nature. And his trust is**

**abundantly answered. He provides nothing for himself, and yet**

**everything is provided. He takes no thought for the morrow, and forms**

**no plans, and yet all his life is planned out for him, and he finds his**

**paths made ready, opening out to him as he comes to them day by day,**

**and hour by hour. He goes in and out of his father's house with an**

**unspeakable ease and abandonment, enjoying all the good things it**

**contains, without having spent a penny in procuring them. Pestilence**

**may walk through the streets of his city, but he regards it not. Famine**

**and fire and war may rage around him, but under his father's tender**

**care he abides in utter unconcern and perfect rest. He lives in the**

**present moment, and receives his life without question as it comes to**

**him day by day from his father's hands.**

**I was visiting once in a wealthy house, where there was one only**

**adopted child, upon whom was lavished all the love and tenderness and**

**care that human hearts could bestow or human means procure. And as I**

**watched that child running in and out day by day, free and**

**light-hearted, with the happy carelessness of childhood, I thought what**

**a picture it was of our wonderful position as children in the house of**

**our Heavenly Father. And I said to myself, "If nothing could so grieve**

**and wound the loving hearts around her, as to see this little child**

**beginning to be worried or anxious about herself in any way, about**

**whether her food and clothes would be provided for her, or how she was**

**to get her education or her future support, how much more must the**

**great, loving heart of our God and Father be grieved and wounded at**

**seeing His children taking so much anxious care and thought!" And I**

**understood why it was that our Lord had said to us so emphatically,**

**"Take no thought for yourselves."**

**Who is the best cared for in every household? Is it not the little**

**children? And does not the least of all, the helpless baby, receive the**

**largest share? As a late writer has said, the baby "toils not, neither**

**does he spin; and yet he is fed, and clothed, and loved, and rejoiced**

**in," and none so much as he.**

**This life of faith, then, about which I am writing, consists in just**

**this; being a child in the Father's house. And when this is said,**

**enough is said to transform every weary, burdened life into one of**

**blessedness and rest.**

**Let the ways of childish confidence and freedom from care, which so**

**please you and win your hearts in your own little ones, teach you what**

**should be your ways with God; and leaving yourselves in His hands,**

**learn to be literally "careful for nothing"; and you shall find it to**

**be a fact that "the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall**

**keep (as in a garrison) your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."**

**Notice the word "nothing" in the above passage, as covering all**

**possible grounds for anxiety, both inward and outward. We are**

**continually tempted to think it is our duty to be anxious about some**

**things. Perhaps our thought will be, "Oh, yes, it is quite right to**

**give up all anxiety in a general way; and in spiritual matters of**

**course anxiety is wrong; but there are things about which it would be a**

**sin not to be anxious; about our children, for instance, or those we**

**love, or about our church affairs and the cause of truth, or about our**

**business matters. It would show a great want of right feeling not to be**

**anxious about such things as these." Or else our thoughts take the**

**other tack, and we say to ourselves, "Yes, it is quite right to commit**

**our loved ones and all our outward affairs to the Lord, but when it**

**comes to our inward lives, our religious experiences, our temptations,**

**our besetting sins, our growth in grace, and all such things, these we**

**ought to be anxious about; for if we are not, they will be sure to be**

**neglected."**

**To such suggestions, and to all similar ones, the answer is found in**

**our text,--**

**"In NOTHING be anxious."**

**In Matt. 6:25-34, our Lord illustrates this being without anxiety, by**

**telling us to behold the fowls of the air and the lilies of the field,**

**as examples of the sort of life He would have us live. As the birds**

**rejoice in the care of their God and are fed, and as the lilies grow in**

**His sunlight, so must we, without anxiety, and without fear. Let the**

**sparrows speak to us:--**

**"I am only tiny sparrow,**

**A bird of low degree;**

**My life is of little value,**

**But the dear Lord cares for me.**

**"I have no barn nor storehouse,**

**I neither sow nor reap;**

**God gives me a sparrow's portion,**

**But never a seed to keep.**

**"I know there are many sparrows;**

**All over the world they are found;**

**But our heavenly Father knoweth**

**When one of us falls to the ground.**

**"Though small, we are never forgotten;**

**Though weak, we are never afraid;**

**For we know the dear Lord keepeth**

**The life of the creatures he made.**

**"I fly through the thickest forest,**

**I light on many a spray;**

**I have no chart nor compass,**

**But I never lose my way.**

**"And I fold my wing at twilight**

**Wherever I happen to be;**

**For the Father is always watching,**

**And no harm will come to me.**

**"I am only a little sparrow,**

**A bird of low degree,**

**But I know the Father loves me;**

**Have you less faith than we?"**

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**Chapter 4**

**HOW TO ENTER IN**

**Having tried to settle the question as to the scripturalness of the**

**experience of this life of full trust, and having also shown a little**

**of what it is; the next point is as to how it is to be reached and**

**realized.**

**And first, I would say that this blessed life must not be looked upon**

**in any sense as an attainment but as an obtainment. We cannot earn it,**

**we cannot climb up to it, we cannot win it; we can do nothing but ask**

**for it and receive it. It is the gift of God in Christ Jesus. And where**

**a thing is a gift, the only course left for the receiver is to take it**

**and thank the giver. We never say of a gift, "See to what I have**

**attained," and boast of our skill and wisdom in having attained it; but**

**we say, "See what has been given me," and boast of the love and wealth**

**and generosity of the giver. And everything in our salvation is a gift.**

**From beginning to end, God is the giver and we are the receivers; and**

**it is not to those who do great things, but to those who "receive**

**abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness," that the richest**

**promises are made.**

**In order, therefore, to enter into a realized experience of this**

**interior life, the soul must be in a receptive attitude, fully**

**recognizing the fact that it is to be God's gift in Christ Jesus, and**

**that it cannot be gained by any efforts or works of our own. This will**

**simplify the matter exceedingly; and the only thing left to be**

**considered then will be to discover upon whom God bestows this gift,**

**and how they are to receive it. And to this I would answer in short,**

**that He bestows it only upon the fully consecrated soul, and that it is**

**to be received by faith.**

**Consecration is the first thing. Not in any legal sense, not in order**

**to purchase or deserve the blessing, but to remove the difficulties out**

**of the way and make it possible for God to bestow it. In order for a**

**lump of clay to be made into a beautiful vessel, it must be entirely**

**abandoned to the potter, and must lie passive in his hands. And in**

**order for a soul to be made into a vessel unto God's honor, "sanctified**

**and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work," it**

**must be entirely abandoned to Him, and must lie passive in His hands.**

**This is manifest at the first glance.**

**I was once trying to explain to a physician, who had charge of a large**

**hospital, what consecration meant, and its necessity, but he seemed**

**unable to understand. At last I said to him, "Suppose, in going your**

**rounds among your patients, you should meet with one man who entreated**

**you earnestly to take his case under your especial care in order to**

**cure him, but who should at the same time refuse to tell you all the**

**symptoms, or to take all your prescribed remedies; and should say to**

**you, `I am quite willing to follow your directions as to certain**

**things, because they commend themselves to my mind as good, but in**

**other matters I prefer judging for myself and following my own**

**directions.' What would you do in such a case?" I asked. "Do!" he**

**replied with indignation,--"do! I would soon leave such a man as that**

**to his own care. For of course," he added, "I could do nothing for him,**

**unless he would put his whole case into my hands without any reserves,**

**and would obey my directions implicitly." "It is necessary then," I**

**said, "for doctors to be obeyed, if they are to have any chance to cure**

**their patients?" "Implicitly obeyed!" was his emphatic reply. "And that**

**is consecration," I continued. "God must have the whole case put into**

**His hands without any reserves, and His directions must be implicitly**

**followed." "I see it," he exclaimed,--"I see it! And I will do it. God**

**shall have His own way with me from henceforth."**

**Perhaps to some minds the word "abandonment" might express this idea**

**better. But whatever word we use, we mean an entire surrender of the**

**whole being to God; spirit, soul, and body placed under His absolute**

**control, for Him to do with us just what He pleases. We mean that the**

**language of our soul, under all circumstances, and in view of every**

**act, is to be, "Thy will be done." We mean the giving up of all liberty**

**of choice. We mean a life of inevitable obedience.**

**To a soul ignorant of God, this may look hard. But to those who know**

**Him, it is the happiest and most restful of lives. He is our Father,**

**and He loves us, and He knows just what is best, and therefore, of**

**course, His will is the very most blessed thing that can come to us**

**under all circumstances. I do not understand how it is that Satan has**

**succeeded in blinding the eyes of the Church to this fact. But it**

**really would seem as if God's own children were more afraid of His will**

**than of anything else in life; His lovely, lovable will, which only**

**means loving-kindnesses and tender mercies, and blessings unspeakable**

**to their souls. I wish I could only show to every one the unfathomable**

**sweetness of the will of God. Heaven is a place of infinite bliss**

**because His will is perfectly done there, and our lives share in this**

**bliss just in proportion as His will is perfectly done in them. He**

**loves us, and the will of love is always blessing for its loved one.**

**Some of us know what it is to love, and we know that could we only have**

**our way, our beloved ones would be overwhelmed with blessings. All that**

**is good, and sweet, and lovely in life would be poured out upon them**

**from our lavish hands, had we but the power to carry out our will for**

**them. And if this is the way of love with us, how much more must it be**

**so with our God, who is love itself. Could we but for one moment get a**

**glimpse into the mighty depths of His love, our hearts would spring out**

**to meet His will, and embrace it as our richest treasure; and we would**

**abandon ourselves to it with an enthusiasm of gratitude and joy, that**

**such a wondrous privilege could be ours.**

**A great many Christians actually seem to think that all their Father in**

**heaven wants is a chance to make them miserable, and to take away all**

**their blessings, and they imagine, poor souls, that if they hold on to**

**things in their own will, they can hinder Him from doing this. I am**

**ashamed to write the words, and yet we must face a fact which is making**

**wretched hundreds of lives.**

**A Christian lady who had this feeling, was once expressing to a friend**

**how impossible she found it to say, "Thy will be done," and how afraid**

**she should be to do it. She was the mother of one only little boy, who**

**was the heir to a great fortune, and the idol of her heart. After she**

**had stated her difficulties fully, her friend said, "Suppose your**

**little Charley should come running to you tomorrow and say, `Mother, I**

**have made up my mind to let you have your own way with me from this**

**time forward. I am always going to obey you, and I want you to do just**

**whatever you think best with me. I know you love me, and I am going to**

**trust myself to your love.' How would you feel towards him? Would you**

**say to yourself, `Ah, now I shall have a chance to make Charley**

**miserable. I will take away all his pleasures, and fill his life with**

**every hard and disagreeable thing I can find. I will compel him to do**

**just the things that are the most difficult for him to do, and will**

**give him all sorts of impossible commands." "Oh, no, no, no!" exclaimed**

**the indignant mother. "You know I would not. You know I would hug him**

**to my heart and cover him with kisses, and would hasten to fill his**

**life with all that was sweetest and best." "And are you more tender and**

**more loving than God?" asked her friend. "Ah, no," was the reply, "I**

**see my mistake, and I will not be afraid of saying `Thy will be done,'**

**to my Heavenly Father, any more than I would want my Charley to be**

**afraid of saying it to me."**

**Better and sweeter than health, or friends, or money, or fame, or ease,**

**or prosperity, is the adorable will of our God. It gilds the darkest**

**hours with a divine halo, and sheds brightest sunshine on the gloomiest**

**paths. He always reigns who has made it his kingdom; and nothing can go**

**amiss to him. Surely, then, it is nothing but a glorious privilege that**

**is opening before you when I tell you that the first step you must take**

**in order to enter into the life hid with Christ in God, is that of**

**entire consecration. I cannot have you look at it as a hard and stern**

**demand. You must do it gladly, thankfully, enthusiastically. You must**

**go in on what I call the privilege side of consecration; and I can**

**assure you, from a blessed experience, that you will find it the**

**happiest place you have ever entered yet.**

**Faith is the next thing. Faith is an absolutely necessary element in**

**the reception of any gift; for let our friends give a thing to us ever**

**so fully, it is not really ours until we believe it has been given and**

**claim it as our own. Above all, this is true in gifts which are purely**

**mental or spiritual. Love may be lavished upon us by another without**

**stint or measure, but until we believe that we are loved, it never**

**really becomes ours.**

**I suppose most Christians understand this principle in reference to the**

**matter of their forgiveness. They know that the forgiveness of sins**

**through Jesus might have been preached to them forever, but it would**

**never have become theirs consciously until they believed this**

**preaching, and claimed the forgiveness as their own. But when it comes**

**to living the Christian life, they lose sight of this principle, and**

**think that, having been saved by faith, they are now to live by works**

**and efforts; and instead of continuing to receive, they are now to**

**begin to do. This makes our declaration that the life hid with Christ**

**in God is to be entered by faith, seem perfectly unintelligible to**

**them. And yet it is plainly declared, that "as we have received Christ**

**Jesus the Lord, so we are to walk in Him." We received Him by faith,**

**and by faith alone; therefore we are to walk in Him by faith, and by**

**faith alone. And the faith by which we enter into this hidden life is**

**just the same as the faith by which we were translated out of the**

**kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son, only it lays**

**hold of a different thing. Then we believed that Jesus was our Saviour**

**from the guilt of sin, and according to our faith it was unto us. Now**

**we must believe that He is our Saviour from the power of sin, and**

**according to our faith it shall be unto us. Then we trusted Him for our**

**justification, and it became ours; now we must trust Him for our**

**sanctification, and it shall become ours also. Then we took Him as a**

**Saviour in the future from the penalties of our sins; now we must take**

**Him as a Saviour in the present from the bondage of our sins. Then He**

**was our Redeemer, now He is to be our Life. Then He lifted us out of**

**the pit, now He is to seat us in heavenly places with Himself.**

**I mean all this of course experimentally and practically. Theologically**

**and judicially I know that every believer has everything the minute he**

**is converted. But experimentally nothing is his until by faith he**

**claims it. "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon,**

**that have I given unto you." God "hath blessed us with all spiritual**

**blessings in heavenly places in Christ," but until we set the foot of**

**faith upon them they do not practically become ours. "According to our**

**faith," is always the limit and the rule.**

**But this faith of which I am speaking must be a present faith. No faith**

**that is exercised in the future tense amounts to anything. A man may**

**believe forever that his sins will be forgiven at some future time, and**

**he will never find peace. He has to come to the now belief, and say by**

**faith, "My sins are now forgiven," before he can live the new life.**

**And, similarly, no faith which looks for a future deliverance from the**

**power of sin, will ever lead a soul into the life we are describing.**

**The enemy delights in this future faith, for he knows it is powerless**

**to accomplish any practical results. But he trembles and flees when the**

**soul of the believer dares to claim a present deliverance, and to**

**reckon itself now to be free from his power.**

**To sum up, then: in order to enter into this blessed interior life of**

**rest and triumph, you have two steps to take: first, entire**

**abandonment; and second, absolute faith. No matter what may be the**

**complications of your peculiar experience, no matter what your**

**difficulties or your surroundings or your associations, these two**

**steps, definitely taken and unwaveringly persevered in, will certainly**

**bring you out sooner or later into the green pastures and still waters**

**of this higher Christian life. You may be sure of this. And if you will**

**let every other consideration go, and simply devote your attention to**

**these two points, and be very clear and definite about them, your**

**progress will be rapid and your soul will reach its desired haven far**

**sooner than now you can think possible.**

**Shall I repeat the steps, that there may be no mistake? You are a child**

**of God, and long to please Him. You love your precious Saviour, and are**

**sick and weary of the sin that grieves Him. You long to be delivered**

**from its power. Everything you have hitherto tried has failed to**

**deliver you, and now in your despair you are asking if it can indeed**

**be, as these happy people say, that the Lord is able and willing to**

**deliver you. Surely you know in your very soul that He is; that to save**

**you out of the hand of all your enemies is in fact just the very thing**

**He came to do. Then trust Him. Commit your case to Him in an absolute**

**abandonment, and believe that He undertakes it; and at once, knowing**

**what He is and what He has said, claim that He does even now fully**

**save. Just as you believed at first that He delivered you from the**

**guilt of sin because He said so, believe now that He delivers you from**

**the power of sin because He says so. Let your faith now lay hold of a**

**new power in Christ. You have trusted Him as your dying Saviour, now**

**trust Him as your living Saviour. Just as much as He came to deliver**

**you from future punishment, did He also come to deliver you from**

**present bondage. Just as truly as He came to bear your sins for you,**

**has He come to live His life in you. You are as utterly powerless in**

**the one case as in the other. You could as easily have got yourself rid**

**of your own sins, as you could now accomplish for yourself practical**

**righteousness. Christ, and Christ only, must do both for you, and your**

**part in both cases is simply to give the thing to Him to do, and then**

**believe that He does it.**

**A lady, now very eminent in this life of trust, when she was seeking in**

**great darkness and perplexity to enter in, said to the friend who was**

**trying to help her, "You all say, `Abandon yourself, and trust, abandon**

**yourself, and trust,' but I do not know how. I wish you would just do**

**it out loud, so that I may see how you do it."**

**Shall I do it out loud for you?**

**"Lord Jesus, I believe that Thou art able and willing to deliver me**

**from all the care, and unrest and bondage of my Christian life. I**

**believe thou didst die to set me free, not only in the future, but now**

**and here. I believe thou art stronger than Satan, and that thou canst**

**keep me, even me, in my extreme of weakness, from falling into his**

**snares or yielding obedience to his commands. And, Lord, I am going to**

**trust thee to keep me. I have tried keeping myself, and have failed,**

**and failed most grievously. I am absolutely helpless; so now I will**

**trust thee. I will give myself to thee; I keep back no reserves. Body,**

**soul, and spirit, I present myself to thee, a worthless lump of clay,**

**to be made into anything thy love and thy wisdom shall choose. And now,**

**I am thine. I believe thou dost accept that which I present to thee; I**

**believe that this poor, weak, foolish heart has been taken possession**

**of by thee, and thou hast even at this very moment begun to work in me**

**to will and to do of thy good pleasure. I trust thee utterly, and I**

**trust thee now!"**

**Are you afraid to take this step? Does it seem too sudden, too much**

**like a leap in the dark? Do you not know that the steps of faith always**

**"fall on the seeming void, but find the rock beneath"? A man, having to**

**descend a well by a rope, found, to his horror, when he was a great way**

**down, that it was too short. He had reached the end, and yet was, he**

**estimated, about thirty feet from the bottom of the well. He knew not**

**what to do. He had not the strength or skill to climb up the rope, and**

**to let go was to be dashed to pieces. His arms began to fail, and at**

**last he decided that as he could not hold on much longer, he might as**

**well let go and meet his fate at once. He resigned himself to**

**destruction, and loosened his grasp. He fell! To the bottom of the well**

**it was--just three inches!**

**If ever your feet are to touch the "rock beneath," you must let go of**

**every holding-place and drop into God; for there is no other way. And**

**to do it now may save you months and even years of strain and**

**weariness.**

**In all the old castles of England there used to be a place called the**

**keep. It was always the strongest and best protected place in the**

**castle, and in it were hidden all who were weak and helpless and unable**

**to defend themselves in times of danger. Had you been a timid, helpless**

**woman in such a castle during a time of siege, would it have seemed to**

**you a leap in the dark to have hidden yourself there? Would you have**

**been afraid to do it? And shall we be afraid to hide ourselves in the**

**keeping power of our Divine Keeper, who neither slumbers nor sleeps,**

**and who has promised to preserve our going out and our coming in, from**

**this time forth and even forever more?**

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**Chapter 5**

**DIFFICULTIES CONCERNING CONSECRATION**

**It is very important that Christians should not be ignorant of the**

**devices of the enemy; for he stands ready to oppose every onward step**

**of the soul's progress. And especially is he busy when he sees a**

**believer awakened to a hunger and thirst after righteousness, and**

**seeking to reach out to apprehend all the fulness that is in the Lord**

**Jesus Christ for him.**

**One of the first difficulties he throws in the way of such a one is**

**concerning consecration. The seeker after holiness is told that he must**

**consecrate himself; and he endeavors to do so. But at once he meets**

**with a difficulty. He has done it, as he thinks, and yet does not feel**

**differently from before; nothing seems changed, as he has been led to**

**expect it would be, and he is completely baffled, and asks the question**

**almost despairingly, "How am I to know when I am consecrated?"**

**The one grand temptation which has met such a soul at this juncture is**

**the temptation which never fails to assert itself on every possible**

**occasion, and generally with marked success, and that is in reference**

**to feeling. The soul cannot believe it is consecrated until it feels**

**that it is; and because it does not feel that God has taken it in hand,**

**it cannot believe that He has. As usual, it puts feeling first and**

**faith second. Now, God's invariable rule is faith first and feeling**

**second, in everything; and it is striving against the inevitable when**

**we seek to make it different.**

**The way to meet this temptation, then, in reference to consecration, is**

**simply to take God's side in the matter, and to put faith before**

**feeling. Give yourself to the Lord definitely and fully, according to**

**your present light, asking the Holy Spirit to show you all that is**

**contrary to God, either in your heart or life. If He shows you**

**anything, give it to the Lord immediately, and say in reference to it,**

**"Thy will be done." If He shows you nothing, then you must believe that**

**there is nothing, and must conclude that you have given Him all. Then**

**you must believe that He takes you. You positively must not wait to**

**feel either that you have given yourself or that He has taken you. You**

**must simply believe it, and reckon it to be the case.**

**If you were to give an estate to a friend, you would have to give it,**

**and he would have to receive it by faith. An estate is not a thing that**

**can be picked up and handed over to another; the gift of it and its**

**reception are altogether a mental transaction and therefore one of**

**faith. Now, if you should give an estate one day to a friend, and then**

**should go away and wonder whether you really had given it, and whether**

**he had actually taken it and considered it his own, and should feel it**

**necessary to go the next day and renew the gift; and if on the third**

**day you should still feel a similar uncertainty about it, and should**

**again go and renew the gift, and on the fourth day go through a like**

**process, and so on, day after day for months and years, what would your**

**friend think, and what at last would be the condition of your own mind**

**in reference to it? Your friend certainly would begin to doubt whether**

**you ever had intended to give it to him at all; and you yourself would**

**be in such hopeless perplexity about it, that you would not know**

**whether the estate was yours, or his, or whose it was.**

**Now, is not this very much the way in which you have been acting**

**towards God in this matter of consecration? You have given yourself to**

**Him over and over daily, perhaps for months, but you have invariably**

**come away from your seasons of consecration wondering whether you**

**really have given yourself after all, and whether He has taken you; and**

**because you have not felt any differently, you have concluded at last,**

**after many painful tossings, that the thing has not been done. Do you**

**know, dear believer, that this sort of perplexity will last forever,**

**unless you cut it short by faith? You must come to the point of**

**reckoning the matter to be an accomplished and settled thing, and**

**leaving it there, before you can possibly expect any change of feeling**

**what ever.**

**The very law of offerings to the Lord settles this as a primary fact,**

**that everything which is given to Him becomes by that very act**

**something holy, set apart from all other things, and cannot without**

**sacrilege be put to any other uses. "Notwithstanding, no devoted thing**

**that a man shall devote unto the Lord of all that he hath, both of man**

**and beast, and of the field of his possession, shall be sold or**

**redeemed: every devoted thing is most holy unto the Lord." Having once**

**given it to the Lord, the devoted thing henceforth was reckoned by all**

**Israel as being the Lord's, and no one dared to stretch forth a hand to**

**retake it. The giver might have made his offering very grudgingly and**

**half-heartedly, but having made it, the matter was taken out of his**

**hands altogether, and the devoted thing by God's own law became "most**

**holy unto the Lord."**

**It was not the intention of the giver that made it holy, but the**

**holiness of the receiver. "The altar sanctifies the gift." And an**

**offering once laid upon the altar, from that moment belonged to the**

**Lord. I can imagine an offerer who had deposited a gift, beginning to**

**search his heart as to his sincerity and honesty in doing it, and**

**coming back to the priest to say that he was afraid after all he had**

**not given it right, or had not been perfectly sincere in giving it. I**

**feel sure that the priest would have silenced him at once with saying,**

**"As to how you gave your offering, or what were your motives in giving**

**it, I do not know. The facts are that you did give it, and that it is**

**the Lord's, for every devoted thing is most holy unto Him. It is too**

**late to recall the transaction now." And not only the priest but all**

**Israel would have been aghast at the man who, having once given his**

**offering, should have reached out his hand to take it back. And yet,**

**day after day, earnest-hearted Christians, who would have shuddered at**

**such an act of sacrilege on the part of a Jew, are guilty in their own**

**experience of a similar act, by giving themselves to the Lord in solemn**

**consecration, and then through unbelief taking back that which they**

**have given.**

**Because God is not visibly present to the eye, it is difficult to feel**

**that a transaction with Him is real. I suppose if, when we made our**

**acts of consecration, we could actually see Him present with us, we**

**should feel it to be a very real thing, and would realize that we had**

**given our word to Him and could not dare to take it back, no matter how**

**much we might wish to do so. Such a transaction would have to us the**

**binding power that a spoken promise to an earthly friend always has to**

**a man of honor. And what we need is to see that God's presence is a**

**certain fact always, and that every act of our soul is done right**

**before Him, and that a word spoken in prayer is as really spoken to**

**Him, as if our eyes could see Him and our hands could touch Him. Then**

**we shall cease to have such vague conceptions of our relations with**

**Him, and shall feel the binding force of every word we say in His**

**presence.**

**I know some will say here, "Ah, yes; but if He would only speak to me,**

**and say that He took me when I gave myself to Him, I would have no**

**trouble then in believing it." No, of course you would not; but He does**

**not generally say this until the soul has first proved its loyalty by**

**believing what He has already said. It is he that believeth who has the**

**witness, not he that doubteth. And by His very command to us to present**

**ourselves to Him a living sacrifice, He has pledged Himself to receive**

**us. I cannot conceive of an honorable man asking another to give him a**

**thing which, after all, he was doubtful about taking; still less can I**

**conceive of a loving parent acting so towards a darling child. "My son,**

**give me thy heart," is a sure warrant for knowing that the moment the**

**heart is given, it will be taken by the One who has commanded the gift.**

**We may, nay we must, feel the utmost confidence then that when we**

**surrender ourselves to the Lord, according to His own command, He does**

**then and there receive us, and from that moment we are His. A real**

**transaction has taken place, which cannot be violated without dishonor**

**on our part, and which we know will not be violated by Him.**

**In Deut. 26:17, 18, 19, we see God's way of working under these**

**circumstances:--**

**"Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in His**

**ways and to keep His statutes, and His commandments, and His judgments,**

**and to hearken unto His voice; and the Lord hath avouched thee this day**

**to be His peculiar people, as He hath promised thee, and that thou**

**shouldst keep all His commandments; . . . and that thou mayest be an**

**holy people unto the Lord, as He hath spoken."**

**When we avouch the Lord to be our God, and that we will walk in His**

**ways and keep His commandments, He avouches us to be His, and that we**

**shall keep all His commandments. And from that moment He takes**

**possession of us. This has always been His principle of working, and it**

**continues to be so. "Every devoted thing is most holy to the Lord."**

**This seems to me so plain as scarcely to admit of a question.**

**But if the soul still feels in doubt or difficulty, let me refer you to**

**a New Testament declaration which approaches the subject from a**

**different side, but which settles it, I think, quite as definitely. It**

**is in 1 John 5:14, 15, and reads: "And this is the confidence that we**

**have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth**

**us; and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we**

**have the petitions that we desired of Him." Is it according to His will**

**that you should be entirely consecrated to Him? There can be, of**

**course, but one answer to this, for He has commanded it. Is it not also**

**according to His will that He should work in you to will and to do of**

**His good pleasure? This question also can have but one answer, for He**

**has declared it to be His purpose. You know, then, that these things**

**are according to His will, therefore on God's own word you are obliged**

**to know that He hears you; and knowing this much, you are compelled to**

**go further and know that you have the petitions that you have desired**

**of Him. That you have, I say, not will have, or may have, but have now**

**in actual possession. It is thus that we "obtain promises" by faith. It**

**is thus that we have "access by faith" into the grace that is given us**

**in our Lord Jesus Christ. It is thus, and thus only, that we come to**

**know our hearts are "purified by faith," and are enabled to live by**

**faith, to stand by faith, to walk by faith.**

**I desire to make this subject so plain and practical that no one need**

**have any further difficulty about it, and therefore I will repeat again**

**just what must be the acts of your soul in order to bring you out of**

**this difficulty about consecration.**

**I suppose that you have trusted the Lord Jesus for the forgiveness of**

**your sins, and know something of what it is to belong to the family of**

**God, and to be made an heir of God through faith in Christ. And now you**

**feel springing up in your soul the longing to be conformed to the image**

**of your Lord. In order for this, you know there must be an entire**

**surrender of yourself to Him, that He may work in you all the good**

**pleasure of His will; and you have tried over and over to do it, but**

**hitherto without any apparent success.**

**At this point it is that I desire to help you. What you must do now is**

**to come once more to Him in a surrender of your whole self to His will,**

**as complete as you know how to make it. You must ask Him to reveal to**

**you by His Spirit any hidden rebellion; and if He reveals nothing, then**

**you must believe that there is nothing, and that the surrender is**

**complete. This must, then, be considered a settled matter. You have**

**abandoned yourself to the Lord, and from henceforth you do not in any**

**sense belong to yourself; you must never even so much as listen to a**

**suggestion to the contrary. If the temptation comes to wonder whether**

**you really have completely surrendered yourself, meet it with an**

**assertion that you have. Do not even argue the matter. Repel any such**

**idea instantly and with decision. You meant it then, you mean it now,**

**you have really done it. Your emotions may clamor against the**

**surrender, but your will must hold firm. It is your purpose God looks**

**at, not your feelings about that purpose, and your purpose, or will, is**

**therefore the only thing you need attend to.**

**The surrender, then, having been made, never to be questioned or**

**recalled, the next point is to believe that God takes that which you**

**have surrendered, and to reckon that it is His. Not that it will be at**

**some future time, but is now; and that He has begun to work in you to**

**will, and to do, of His good pleasure. And here you must rest. There is**

**nothing more for you to do, for you are the Lord's now, absolutely and**

**entirely in His hands, and He has undertaken the whole care and**

**management and forming of you; and will, according to His word, "work**

**in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ."**

**But you must hold steadily here. If you begin to question your**

**surrender, or God's acceptance of it, then your wavering faith will**

**produce a wavering experience, and He cannot work. But while you trust**

**He works, and the result of His working always is to change you into**

**the image of Christ, from glory to glory, by His mighty Spirit.**

**Do you, then, now at this moment surrender yourself wholly to Him? You**

**answer, Yes. Then, my dear friend, begin at once to reckon that you are**

**His; that He has taken you, and that He is working in you to will and**

**to do of His good pleasure. And keep on reckoning this. You will find**

**it a great help to put your reckoning into words, and to say over and**

**over to yourself and to your God, "Lord, I am thine; I do yield myself**

**up to thee entirely, and I believe that thou dost take me. I leave**

**myself with thee. Work in me all the good pleasure of thy will, and I**

**will only lie still in thy hands, and trust thee."**

**Make this a daily definite act of your will, and many times a day recur**

**to it, as being your continual attitude before Him. Confess it to**

**yourself. Confess it to your God. Confess it to your friends. Avouch**

**the Lord to be your God continually and unwaveringly, and declare your**

**purpose of walking in His ways and keeping His statutes; and you will**

**find in practical experience that He has avouched you to be His**

**peculiar people and that you shall keep all His commandments, and that**

**you will be "an holy people unto the Lord, as He hath spoken."**

**A few simple rules may be found helpful here. I would advise the use of**

**them in daily times of devotion, making them the definite test and**

**attitude of the soul, until the light shines clearly on this matter.**

**I. Express in definite words your faith in Christ as your Saviour; and**

**acknowledge definitely that you believe He has reconciled you to God;**

**according to 2 Cor. 5:18, 19.**

**II. Definitely acknowledge God as your Father, and yourself as His**

**redeemed and forgiven child; according to Gal. 5:6.**

**III. Definitely surrender yourself to be all the Lord's, body, soul,**

**and spirit; and to obey Him in everything where His will is made known;**

**according to Rom. 12:12.**

**IV. Believe and continue to believe, against all seemings, that God**

**takes possession of that which you thus abandon to Him, and that He**

**will henceforth work in you to will and to do of His good pleasure,**

**unless you consciously frustrate His grace; according to 2 Cor. 6:17,**

**18, and Phil. 2:13.**

**V. Pay no attention to your feelings as a test of your relations with**

**God, but simply attend to the state of your will and of your faith. And**

**count all these steps you are now taking as settled, though the enemy**

**may make it seem otherwise. Heb. 10:22, 23.**

**VI. Never, under any circumstances, give way for one single moment to**

**doubt or discouragement. Remember, that all discouragement is from the**

**devil, and refuse to admit it; according to John 14:1, 27.**

**VII. Cultivate the habit of expressing your faith in definite words,**

**and repeat often, "I am all the Lord's and He is working in me now to**

**will and to do of His good pleasure; according to Heb. 13:21.**

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**Chapter 6**

**DIFFICULTIES CONCERNING FAITH**

**The next step after consecration, in the soul's progress out of the**

**wilderness of Christian experience, into the land that floweth with**

**milk and honey, is that of faith. And here, as in the first step, the**

**enemy is very skilful in making difficulties and interposing obstacles.**

**The child of God, having had his eyes opened to see the fulness there**

**is in Jesus for him, and having been made to long to appropriate that**

**fulness to himself, is met with the assertion on the part of every**

**teacher to whom he applies, that this fulness is only to be received by**

**faith. But the subject of faith is involved in such a hopeless mystery**

**in his mind, that this assertion, instead of throwing light upon the**

**way of entrance, only seems to make it more difficult and involved than**

**ever.**

**"Of course it is to be by faith," he says, "for I know that everything**

**in the Christian life is by faith. But then, that is just what makes it**

**so hard, for I have no faith, and I do not even know what it is, nor**

**how to get it." And, baffled at the very outset by this insuperable**

**difficulty, he is plunged into darkness, and almost despair.**

**This trouble all arises from the fact that the subject of faith is very**

**generally misunderstood; for in reality faith is the plainest and most**

**simple thing in the world, and the most easy of attainment.**

**Your idea of faith, I suppose, has been something like this. You have**

**looked upon it as in some way a sort of thing, either a religious**

**exercise of soul, or an inward gracious disposition of heart; something**

**tangible, in fact, which, when you have got, you can look at and**

**rejoice over, and use as a passport to God's favor, or a coin with**

**which to purchase His gifts. And you have been praying for faith,**

**expecting all the while to get something like this, and never having**

**received any such thing, you are insisting upon it that you have no**

**faith. Now faith, in fact, is not in the least this sort of thing. It**

**is nothing at all tangible. It is simply believing God, and, like**

**sight, it is nothing apart from its object. You might as well shut your**

**eyes and look inside to see whether you have sight, as to look inside**

**to discover whether you have faith. You see something, and thus know**

**that you have sight; you believe something, and thus know that you have**

**faith. For, as sight is only seeing, so faith is only believing. And as**

**the only necessary thing about seeing is, that you see the thing as it**

**is, so the only necessary thing about believing is, that you believe**

**the thing as it is. The virtue does not lie in your believing, but in**

**the thing you believe. If you believe the truth you are saved; if you**

**believe a lie you are lost. The believing in both cases is the same;**

**the things believed in are exactly opposite, and it is this which makes**

**the mighty difference. Your salvation comes, not because your faith**

**saves you, but because it links you on to the Saviour who saves; and**

**your believing is really nothing but the link.**

**I do beg of you to recognize, then, the extreme simplicity of faith;**

**that it is nothing more nor less than just believing God when He says**

**He either has done something for us, or will do it; and then trusting**

**Him to do it. It is so simple that it is hard to explain. If any one**

**asks me what it means to trust another to do a piece of work for me, I**

**can only answer that it means letting that other one do it, and feeling**

**it perfectly unnecessary for me to do it myself. Every one of us has**

**trusted very important pieces of work to others in this way, and has**

**felt perfect rest in thus trusting, because of the confidence we have**

**had in those who have undertaken to do it. How constantly do mothers**

**trust their most precious infants to the care of nurses, and feel no**

**shadow of anxiety? How continually we are all of us trusting our health**

**and our lives, without a thought of fear, to cooks and coachmen, engine**

**drivers, railway conductors, and all sorts of paid servants, who have**

**us completely at their mercy, and could plunge us into misery or death**

**in a moment, if they chose to do so, or even if they failed in the**

**necessary carefulness? All this we do, and make no fuss about it. Upon**

**the slightest acquaintance, often, we thus put our trust in people,**

**requiring only the general knowledge of human nature, and the common**

**rules of human intercourse; and we never feel as if we were doing**

**anything in the least remarkable.**

**You have done all this yourself, dear reader, and are doing it**

**continually. You would not be able to live in this world and go through**

**the customary routine of life a single day, if you could not trust your**

**fellow-men. And it never enters into your head to say you cannot.**

**But yet you do not hesitate to say, continually, that you cannot trust**

**your God!**

**I wish you would just now try to imagine yourself acting in your human**

**relations as you do in your spiritual relations. Suppose you should**

**begin tomorrow with the notion in your head that you could not trust**

**anybody, because you had no faith. When you sat down to breakfast you**

**would say, "I cannot eat anything on this table, for I have no faith,**

**and I cannot believe the cook has not put poison in the coffee, or that**

**the butcher has not sent home diseased meat." So you would go starving**

**away. Then when you went out to your daily avocations, you would say,**

**"I cannot ride in the railway train, for I have no faith, and therefore**

**I cannot trust the engineer, nor the conductor, nor the builders of the**

**carriages, nor the managers of the road." So you would be compelled to**

**walk everywhere, and grow unutterably weary in the effort, besides**

**being actually unable to reach many of the places you could have**

**reached in the train. Then, when your friends met you with any**

**statements, or your business agent with any accounts, you would say, "I**

**am very sorry that I cannot believe you, but I have no faith, and never**

**can believe anybody." If you opened a newspaper you would be forced to**

**lay it down again, saying, "I really cannot believe a word this paper**

**says, for I have no faith; I do not believe there is any such person as**

**the queen, for I never saw her; nor any such country as Ireland, for I**

**was never there. And I have no faith, so of course I cannot believe**

**anything that I have not actually felt and touched myself. It is a**

**great trial, but I cannot help it, for I have no faith."**

**Just picture such a day as this, and see how disastrous it would be to**

**yourself, and what utter folly it would appear to any one who should**

**watch you through the whole of it. Realize how your friends would feel**

**insulted, and how your servants would refuse to serve you another day.**

**And then ask yourself the question, if this want of faith in your**

**fellow-men would be so dreadful, and such utter folly, what must it be**

**when you tell God that you have no power to trust Him nor to believe**

**His word; that "it is a great trial, but you cannot help it, for you**

**have no faith"?**

**Is it possible that you can trust your fellow-men and cannot trust your**

**God? That you can receive the "witness of men," and cannot receive the**

**"witness of God"? That you can believe man's records, and cannot**

**believe God's record? That you can commit your dearest earthly**

**interests to your weak, failing fellow-creatures without a fear, and**

**are afraid to commit your spiritual interests to the blessed Saviour**

**who shed His blood for the very purpose of saving you, and who is**

**declared to be "able to save you to the uttermost"?**

**Surely, surely, dear believer, you, whose very name of believer implies**

**that you can believe, will never again dare to excuse yourself on the**

**plea of having no faith. For when you say this, you mean of course that**

**you have no faith in God, since you are not asked to have faith in**

**yourself, and you would be in a very wrong condition of soul if you**

**had. Let me beg of you then, when you think or say these things, always**

**to complete the sentence and say, "I have no faith in God, I cannot**

**believe God"; and this I am sure will soon become so dreadful to you,**

**that you will not dare to continue it.**

**But you say, I cannot believe without the Holy Spirit. Very well; will**

**you conclude that your want of faith is because of the failure of the**

**blessed Spirit to do His work? For if it is, then surely you are not to**

**blame, and need feel no condemnation; and all exhortations to you to**

**believe are useless.**

**But, no! Do you not see that, in taking up this position, that you have**

**no faith and cannot believe, you are not only "making God a liar," but**

**you are also manifesting an utter want of confidence in the Holy**

**Spirit? For He is always ready to help our infirmities. We never have**

**to wait for Him, He is always waiting for us. And I for my part have**

**such absolute confidence in the blessed Holy Ghost, and in His being**

**always ready to do his work, that I dare to say to every one of you,**

**that you can believe now, at this very moment, and that if you do not,**

**it is not the Spirit's fault, but your own.**

**Put your will then over on to the believing side. Say, "Lord I will**

**believe, I do believe," and continue to say it. Insist upon believing,**

**in the face of every suggestion of doubt with which you may be tempted.**

**Out of your very unbelief, throw yourself headlong on to the word and**

**promises of God, and dare to abandon yourself to the keeping and saving**

**power of the Lord Jesus. If you have ever trusted a precious interest**

**in the hands of any earthly friend, I conjure you, trust yourself now**

**and all your spiritual interests in the hands of your Heavenly Friend,**

**and never, never, NEVER allow yourself to doubt again.**

**And remember, there are two things which are more utterly incompatible**

**than even oil and water, and these two are trust and worry. Would you**

**call it trust, if you should give something into the hands of a friend**

**to attend to for you, and then should spend your nights and days in**

**anxious thought and worry as to whether it would be rightly and**

**successfully done? And can you call it trust, when you have given the**

**saving and keeping of your soul into the hands of the Lord, if day**

**after day and night after night you are spending hours of anxious**

**thought and questionings about the matter? When a believer really**

**trusts anything, he ceases to worry about that thing which he has**

**trusted. And when he worries, it is a plain proof that he does not**

**trust. Tested by this rule how little real trust there is in the Church**

**of Christ! No wonder our Lord asked the pathetic question, "When the**

**Son of Man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?" He will find**

**plenty of activity, a great deal of earnestness, and doubtless many**

**consecrated hearts; but shall he find faith, the one thing He values**

**more than all the rest? It is a solemn question, and I would that every**

**Christian heart would ponder it well. But may the time past of our**

**lives suffice us to have shared in the unbelief of the world; and let**

**us every one, who know our blessed Lord and His unspeakable**

**trustworthiness, set to our seal that He is true, by our generous**

**abandonment of trust in Him.**

**I remember, very early in my Christian life, having every tender and**

**loyal impulse within me stirred to its depths by an appeal I met with**

**in a volume of old sermons to all who loved the Lord Jesus, that they**

**should show to others how worthy He was of being trusted, by the**

**steadfastness of their own faith in Him. And I remember my soul cried**

**out with an eager longing that I might be called to walk in paths so**

**dark, that an utter abandonment of trust might be my blessed and**

**glorious privilege.**

**"Ye have not passed this way heretofore," it may be; but today it is**

**your happy privilege to prove, as never before, your loyal confidence**

**in the Lord by starting out with Him on a life and walk of faith, lived**

**moment by moment in absolute and childlike trust in Him.**

**You have trusted Him in a few things, and He has not failed you. Trust**

**Him now for everything, and see if He does not do for you exceeding**

**abundantly above all that you could ever have asked or thought; not**

**according to your power or capacity, but according to His own mighty**

**power, that will work in you all the good pleasure of His most blessed**

**will.**

**You find no difficulty in trusting the Lord with the management of the**

**universe and all the outward creation, and can your case be any more**

**complex or difficult than these, that you need to be anxious or**

**troubled about his management of it. Away with such unworthy doubtings!**

**Take your stand on the power and trustworthiness of your God, and see**

**how quickly all difficulties will vanish before a steadfast**

**determination to believe. Trust in the dark, trust in the light, trust**

**at night, and trust in the morning, and you will find that the faith,**

**which may begin by a mighty effort, will end sooner or later by**

**becoming the easy and natural habit of the soul.**

**All things are possible to God, and "all things are possible to him**

**that believeth." Faith has, in times past, "subdued kingdoms, wrought**

**righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched**

**the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, waxed valiant in**

**fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens"; and faith can do it**

**again. For our Lord Himself says unto us, "If ye have faith as a grain**

**of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to**

**yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto**

**you."**

**If you are a child of God at all, you must have at least as much faith**

**as a grain of mustard seed, and therefore you dare not say again that**

**you cannot trust because you have no faith. Say rather, "I can trust my**

**Lord, and I will trust Him, and not all the powers of earth or hell**

**shall be able to make me doubt my wonderful, glorious, faithful**

**Redeemer!"**

**In that greatest event of this century, the emancipation of our slaves,**

**there is a wonderful illustration of the way of faith. The slaves**

**received their freedom by faith, just as we must receive ours. The good**

**news was carried to them that the government had proclaimed their**

**freedom. As a matter of fact they were free the moment the Proclamation**

**was issued, but as a matter of experience they did not come into actual**

**possession of their freedom until they had heard the good news and had**

**believed it. The fact had to come first, but the believing was**

**necessary before the fact became available, and the feeling would**

**follow last of all. This is the divine order always, and the order of**

**common-sense as well. I. The fact. II. The faith. III. The feeling. But**

**man reverses this order and says, I. The feeling. II. The faith. III.**

**The fact.**

**Had the slaves followed man's order in regard to their emancipation,**

**and refused to believe in it until they had first felt it, they might**

**have remained in slavery a long while. I have heard of one instance**

**where this was the case. In a little out-of-the-way Southern town a**

**Northern lady found, about two or three years after the war was over,**

**some slaves who had not yet taken possession of their freedom. An**

**assertion of hers, that the North had set them free, aroused the**

**attention of an old colored auntie, who interrupted her with the eager**

**question,--**

**"O missus, is we free?"**

**"Of course you are," replied the lady.**

**"O missus, is you sure?" urged the woman, with intensest eagerness.**

**"Certainly, I am sure," answered the lady. "Why, is it possible you did**

**not know it?"**

**"Well," said the woman, "we heered tell as how we was free, and we**

**asked master, and he `lowed we wasn't, and so we was afraid to go. And**

**then we heered tell again, and we went to the cunnel, and he `lowed**

**we'd better stay with ole massa. And so we's just been off and on.**

**Sometimes we'd hope we was free, and then again we'd think we wasn't.**

**But now, missus, if you is sure we is free, won't you tell me all about**

**it?"**

**Seeing that this was a case of real need, the lady took the pains to**

**explain the whole thing to the poor woman; all about the war, and the**

**Northern army, and Abraham Lincoln, and his Proclamation of**

**Emancipation, and the present freedom.**

**The poor slave listened with the most intense eagerness. She heard the**

**good news. She believed it. And when the story was ended, she walked**

**out of the room with an air of the utmost independence, saying as she**

**went,--"I's free! I's ain't agoing to stay with ol massa any longer!"**

**She had at last received her freedom, and she had received it by faith.**

**The government had declared her to be free long before, but this had**

**not availed her, because she had never yet believed in this**

**declaration. The good news had not profited her, not being "mixed with**

**faith" in the one who heard it. But now she believed, and believing,**

**she dared to reckon herself to be free. And this, not because of any**

**change in herself or her surroundings, not because of any feelings of**

**emotions of her own heart, but because she had confidence in the word**

**of another, who had come to her proclaiming the good news of her**

**freedom.**

**Need I make the application? In a hundred different messages God has**

**declared to us our freedom, and over and over He urges us to reckon**

**ourselves free. Let your faith then lay hold of His proclamation, and**

**assert it to be true. Declare to yourself, to your friends, and in the**

**secret of your soul to God, that you are free. Refuse to listen for a**

**moment to the lying assertions of your old master, that you are still**

**his slave. Let nothing discourage you, no inward feelings nor outward**

**signs. Hold on to your reckoning in the face of all opposition, and I**

**can promise you, on the authority of our Lord, that according to your**

**faith it shall be unto you.**

**Of all the worships we can bring our God, none is so sweet to Him as**

**this utter self-abandoning trust, and none brings Him so much glory.**

**Therefore in every dark hour remember that "though now for a season, if**

**need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations," it is in**

**order that "the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of**

**gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto**

**praise, and honor, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ."**

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**Chapter 7**

**DIFFICULTIES CONCERNING THE WILL**

**When the child of God has, by the way of entire abandonment and**

**absolute trust, stepped out of himself into Christ, and has begun to**

**know something of the blessedness of the life hid with Christ in God,**

**there is one form of difficulty which is very likely to start up in his**

**path. After the first emotions of peace and rest have somewhat**

**subsided, or if, as is sometimes the case, they have never seemed to**

**come at all, he begins to feel such an utter unreality in the things he**

**has been passing through, that he seems to himself like a hypocrite,**

**when he says or even thinks they are real. It seems to him that his**

**belief does not go below the surface, that it is a mere lip-belief, and**

**therefore of no account, and that his surrender is not a surrender of**

**the heart, and therefore cannot be acceptable to God. He is afraid to**

**say he is altogether the Lord's, for fear he will be telling an**

**untruth, and yet he cannot bring himself to say he is not, because he**

**longs for it so intensely. The difficulty is real and very**

**disheartening.**

**But there is nothing here which will not be very easily overcome, when**

**the Christian once thoroughly understands the principles of the new**

**life, and has learned how to live in it. The common thought is, that**

**this life hid with Christ in God is to be lived in the emotions, and**

**consequently all the attention of the soul is directed towards them,**

**and as they are satisfactory or otherwise, the soul rests or is**

**troubled. Now the truth is that this life is not to be lived in the**

**emotions at all, but in the will, and therefore the varying states of**

**emotion do not in the least disturb or affect the reality of the life,**

**if only the will is kept steadfastly abiding in its centre, God's will.**

**To make this plain, I must enlarge a little. Fenelon says somewhere,**

**that "pure religion resides in the will alone." By this he means that**

**as the will is the governing power in the man's nature, if the will is**

**set straight, all the rest of the nature must come into harmony. By the**

**will I do not mean the wish of the man, nor even his purpose, but the**

**choice, the deciding power, the king, to which all that is in the man**

**must yield obedience. It is the man, in short, the "Ego," that which we**

**feel to be ourselves.**

**It is sometimes thought that the emotions are the governing power in**

**our nature. But, as a matter of practical experience, I think we all of**

**us know that there is something within us, behind our emotions, and**

**behind our wishes,--an independent self,--that after all decides**

**everything and controls everything. Our emotions belong to us, and are**

**suffered and enjoyed by us, but they are not ourselves; and if God is**

**to take possession of us, it must be into this central will or**

**personality that He shall enter. If, then, He is reigning there by the**

**power of His Spirit, all the rest of our nature must come under His**

**sway; and as the will is, so is the man.**

**The practical bearing of this truth upon the difficulty I am**

**considering is very great. For the decisions of our will are often so**

**directly opposed to the decisions of our emotions, that, if we are in**

**the habit of considering our emotions as the test, we shall be very apt**

**to feel like hypocrites in declaring those things to be real which our**

**will alone has decided. But the moment we see that the will is king, we**

**shall utterly disregard anything that clamors against it, and shall**

**claim as real its decisions, let the emotions rebel as they may.**

**I am aware that this is a difficult subject to deal with, but it is so**

**exceedingly practical in its bearing upon the life of faith, that I beg**

**of you, dear reader, not to turn from it until you have mastered it.**

**Perhaps an illustration will help you. A young man of great**

**intelligence, seeking to enter into this new life, was utterly**

**discouraged at finding himself the slave to an inveterate habit of**

**doubting. To his emotions nothing seemed true, nothing seemed real; and**

**the more he struggled the more unreal did it all become. He was told**

**this secret concerning the will, that if he would only put his will**

**over on to the believing side; if he would choose to believe; if, in**

**short, he would, in the Ego of his nature, say, "I will believe! I do**

**believe!" he need not trouble about his emotions, for they would find**

**themselves compelled, sooner or later, to come into harmony. "What!" he**

**said, "do you mean to tell me that I can choose to believe in that way,**

**when nothing seems true to me; and will that kind of believing be**

**real?" "Yes," was the answer, "your part is only this,--to put your**

**will over on God's side in this matter of believing; and when you do**

**this, God immediately takes possession of it, and works in you to will**

**of His good pleasure, and you will soon find that He has brought all**

**the rest of your nature into subjection to Himself." "Well," was the**

**answer, "I can do this. I cannot control my emotions, but I can control**

**my will, and the new life begins to look possible to me, if it is only**

**my will that needs to be set straight in the matter. I can give my will**

**to God, and I do!"**

**From that moment, disregarding all the pitiful clamoring of his**

**emotions, which continually accused him of being a wretched hypocrite,**

**this young man held on steadily to the decision of his will, answering**

**every accusation with the continued assertion that he chose to believe,**

**he meant to believe, he did believe; until at the end of a few days he**

**found himself triumphant, with every emotion and every thought brought**

**into captivity to the mighty power of the blessed Spirit of God, who**

**had taken possession of the will thus put into His hands. He had held**

**fast the profession of his faith without wavering, although it had**

**seemed to him that, as to real faith itself, he had none to hold fast.**

**At times it had drained all the will power he possessed to his lips, to**

**say that he believed, so contrary was it to all the evidence of his**

**senses or of his emotions. But he had caught the idea that his will**

**was, after all, himself, and that if he kept that on God's side, he was**

**doing all he could do, and that God alone could change his emotions or**

**control his being. The result has been one of the grandest Christian**

**lives I know of, in its marvellous simplicity, directness, and power**

**over sin.**

**The secret lies just here. That our will, which is the spring of all**

**our actions, is in our natural state under the control of self, and**

**self has been working it in us to our utter ruin and misery. Now God**

**says, "Yield yourselves up unto Me, as those that are alive from the**

**dead, and I will work in you to will and to do of my good pleasure."**

**And the moment we yield ourselves, He of course takes possession of us,**

**and does work in us "that which is well pleasing in His sight through**

**Jesus Christ," giving us the mind that was in Christ, and transforming**

**us into His image. (See Rom. 12:1, 2.)**

**Let us take another illustration. A lady, who had entered into this**

**life hid with Christ, was confronted by a great prospective trial.**

**Every emotion she had within her rose up in rebellion against it, and**

**had she considered her emotions to be her king, she would have been in**

**utter despair. But she had learned this secret of the will, and knowing**

**that, at the bottom, she herself did really choose the will of God for**

**her portion, she did not pay the slightest attention to her emotions,**

**but persisted in meeting every thought concerning the trial, with the**

**words, repeated over and over, "Thy will be done! Thy will be done!"**

**asserting in the face of all her rebelling feelings, that she did**

**submit her will to God's, that she chose to submit, and that His will**

**should be and was her delight! The result was, that in an incredibly**

**short space of time every thought was brought into captivity; and she**

**began to find even her very emotions rejoicing in the will of God.**

**Again, there was a lady who had a besetting sin, which in her emotions**

**she dearly loved, but which in her will she hated. Having believed**

**herself to be necessarily under the control of her emotions, she had**

**therefore thought she was unable to conquer it, unless her emotions**

**should first be changed. But she learned this secret concerning the**

**will, and going to her knees she said, "Lord, Thou seest that with one**

**part of my nature I love this sin, but in my real central self I hate**

**it. And now I put my will over on thy side in the matter. I will not do**

**it any more. Do thou deliver me." Immediately God took possession of**

**the will thus surrendered to Himself, and began to work in her, so that**

**His will in the matter gained the mastery over her emotions, and she**

**found herself delivered, not by the power of an outward commandment,**

**but by the inward power of the Spirit of God working in her that which**

**was well pleasing in His sight.**

**And now, dear Christian, let me show you how to apply this principle to**

**your difficulties. Cease to consider your emotions, for they are only**

**the servants; and regard simply your will, which is the real king in**

**your being. Is that given up to God? Is that put into His hands? Does**

**your will decide to believe? Does your will choose to obey? If this is**

**the case, then you are in the Lord's hands, and you decide to believe,**

**and you choose to obey; for your will is yourself. And the thing is**

**done. The transaction with God is as real, where only your will acts,**

**as when every emotion coincides. It does not seem as real to you; but**

**in God's sight it is as real. And when you have got hold of this**

**secret, and have discovered that you need not attend to your emotions,**

**but simply to the state of your will, all the Scripture commands, to**

**yield yourself to God, to present yourself a living sacrifice to Him,**

**to abide in Christ, to walk in the light, to die to self, become**

**possible to you; for you are conscious that, in all these, your will**

**can act, and can take God's side: whereas, if it had been your emotions**

**that must do it, you would sink down in despair, knowing them to be**

**utterly uncontrollable.**

**When, then, this feeling of unreality or hypocrisy comes, do not be**

**troubled by it. It is only in your emotions, and is not worth a**

**moment's thought. Only see to it that your will is in God's hands; that**

**your inward self is abandoned to His working; that your choice, your**

**decision, is on His side; and there leave it. Your surging emotions,**

**like a tossing vessel, which, by degrees, yields to the steady pull of**

**the cable, finding themselves attached to the mighty power of God by**

**the choice of your will, must inevitably come into captivity, and give**

**in their allegiance to Him; and you will verify the truth of the saying**

**that, "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine."**

**The will is like a wise mother in a nursery; the feelings are like a**

**set of clamoring, crying children. The mother decides upon a certain**

**course of action, which she believes to be right and best. The children**

**clamor against it, and declare it shall not be. But the mother, knowing**

**that she is mistress and not they, pursues her course calmly, unmoved**

**by their clamors, and takes no notice of them except in trying to**

**soothe and quiet them. The result is that the children are sooner or**

**later compelled to yield, and fall in with the decision of the mother.**

**Thus order and harmony are preserved. But if that mother should for a**

**moment let in the thought that the children were the mistresses instead**

**of herself, confusion would reign unchecked. Such instances have been**

**known in family life! And in how many souls at this very moment is**

**there nothing but confusion, simply because the feelings are allowed to**

**govern, instead of the will!**

**Remember, then, that the real thing in your experience is what your**

**will decides, and not the verdict of your emotions; and that you are**

**far more in danger of hypocrisy and untruth in yielding to the**

**assertions of your feelings, than in holding fast to the decision of**

**your will. So that, if your will is on God's side, you are no hypocrite**

**at this moment in claiming as your own the blessed reality of belonging**

**altogether to Him, even though your emotions may all declare the**

**contrary.**

**I am convinced that, throughout the Bible, the expressions concerning**

**the "heart" do not mean the emotions, that which we now understand by**

**the word "heart"; but they mean the will, the personality of the man,**

**the man's own central self; and that the object of God's dealings with**

**man is, that this "I" may be yielded up to Him, and this central life**

**abandoned to His entire control. It is not the feelings of the man God**

**wants, but the man himself.**

**Have you given Him yourself, dear reader? Have you abandoned your will**

**to His working? Do you consent to surrender the very centre of your**

**being into His hands? Then, let the outposts of your nature clamor as**

**they may, it is your right to say, even now, with the apostle, "I am**

**crucified with Christ; nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ**

**liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the**

**faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."**

**After this chapter had been enclosed to the printer, the following**

**remarkable practical illustration of its teaching was presented by**

**Pasteur T. Monod, of Paris. It is the experience of a Presbyterian**

**minister, which this pasteur had carefully kept for many years.**

**NEWBURGH, Sept. 26, 1842.**

**Dear Brother,--I take a few moments of that time which I have devoted**

**to the Lord, in writing a short epistle to you, His servant. It is**

**sweet to feel we are wholly the Lord's, that He has received us and**

**called us His. This is religion,--a relinquishment of the principle of**

**self-ownership, and the adoption in full of the abiding sentiment, "I**

**am not my own, I am bought with a price." Since I last saw you, I have**

**been pressing forward, and yet there has been nothing remarkable in my**

**experience of which I can speak; indeed I do not know that it is best**

**to look for remarkable things; but strive to be holy, as God is holy,**

**pressing right on toward the mark of the prize.**

**I do not feel myself qualified to instruct you; I can only tell you the**

**way in which I was led. The Lord deals differently with different**

**souls, and we ought not to attempt to copy the experience of others,**

**yet there are certain things which must be attended to by every one who**

**is seeking after a clean heart.**

**There must be a personal consecration of all to God, a covenant made**

**with God, that we will be wholly and forever His. This I made**

**intellectually without any change in my feeling, with a heart full of**

**hardness and darkness, unbelief and sin and insensibility.**

**I covenanted to be the Lord's, and laid all upon the altar, a living**

**sacrifice, to the best of my ability. And after I rose from my knees, I**

**was conscious of no change in my feeling. I was painfully conscious**

**that there was no change. But yet I was sure that I did, with all the**

**sincerity and honesty of purpose of which I was capable, make an entire**

**and eternal consecration of myself to God. I did not then consider the**

**work done by any means, but I engaged to abide in a state of entire**

**devotion to God, a living perpetual sacrifice. And now came the effort**

**to do this.**

**I knew that I must believe that God did accept me, and had come in to**

**dwell in my heart. I was conscious I did not believe this, and yet I**

**desired to do so. I read with much prayer John's First Epistle, and**

**endeavored to assure my heart of God's love to me as an individual. I**

**was sensible that my heart was full of evil. I seemed to have no power**

**to overcome pride, or to repel evil thoughts, which I abhorred. But**

**Christ was manifested to destroy the works of the devil, and it was**

**clear that the sin in my heart was the work of the devil. I was**

**enabled, therefore, to believe that God was working in me, to will and**

**to do, while I was working out my own salvation with fear and**

**trembling.**

**I was convinced of unbelief, that it was voluntary and criminal. I**

**clearly saw that unbelief was an awful sin, it made the faithful God a**

**liar. The Lord brought before me my besetting sins which had dominion**

**over me, especially preaching myself instead of Christ, and indulging**

**self-complacent thoughts after preaching. I was enabled to make myself**

**of no reputation, and to seek the honor which cometh from God only.**

**Satan struggled hard to beat me back from the Rock of Ages but thanks**

**to God I finally hit upon the method of living by the moment, and then**

**I found rest.**

**I trusted in the blood of Jesus already shed, as a sufficient atonement**

**for all my past sins, and the future I committed wholly to the Lord,**

**agreeing to do His will under all circumstances as He should make it**

**known, and I saw that all I had to do was to look to Jesus for a**

**present supply of grace, and to trust Him to cleanse my heart and keep**

**me from sin at the present moment.**

**I felt shut up to a momentary dependence upon the grace of Christ. I**

**would not permit the adversary to trouble me about the past or future,**

**for I each moment looked for the supply for that moment. I agreed that**

**I would be a child of Abraham, and walk by naked faith in the Word of**

**God, and not by inward feelings and emotions: I would seek to be a**

**Bible Christian. Since that time the Lord has given me a steady victory**

**over sins which before enslaved me. I delight in the Lord, and in His**

**Word. I delight in my work as a minister: my fellowship is with the**

**Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. I am a babe in Christ; I know my**

**progress has been small compared with that made by many. My feelings**

**vary, but when I have feelings, I praise God, and I trust in His word;**

**and when I am empty and my feelings are gone, I do the same. I have**

**covenanted to walk by faith and not by feelings.**

**The Lord, I think, is beginning to revive His work among my people.**

**"Praise the Lord." May the Lord fill you with all His fulness and give**

**you all the mind of Christ. Oh, be faithful! Walk before God and be**

**perfect. Preach the Word. Be instant in season and out of season. The**

**Lord loves you. He works with you. Rest your soul fully upon that**

**promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."**

**Your fellow soldier,**

**WILLIAM HILL**

**There may be some who will object to this teaching, that it ignores the**

**work of the blessed Holy Spirit. But I must refer such to the**

**introductory chapter of this book, in which I have fully explained**

**myself. I am not writing upon that side of the subject; I am**

**considering man's part in the matter, and not the part of the Spirit. I**

**realize intensely that all a man can do or try to do would be utterly**

**useless, if the Holy Spirit did not work in that man continually. And**

**it is only because I believe in the Spirit as a mighty power, ever**

**present and always ready to do his work, that I can write as I do. But,**

**like the wind that bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound**

**thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth, the**

**operations of the Spirit are beyond our control, and also beyond our**

**comprehension.**

**The results we know, and the steps on our part which lead to those**

**results, but we know nothing more. And yet, like a workman in a great**

**manufactory, who does not question the commands of his employer, and is**

**not afraid to undertake apparent impossibilities, because he knows**

**there is a mighty unseen power, called steam, behind his machinery,**

**which can accomplish it all, so we dare to urge upon men that they**

**shall simply and courageously set themselves to do that which they are**

**commanded to do, because we know that the mighty Spirit will never fail**

**to supply at each moment the necessary power for that moment's act. And**

**we boldly claim that we who thus write can say from our very hearts, as**

**earnestly and as solemnly as any other Christians, We believe in the**

**Holy Ghost.**

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**Chapter 8**

**IS GOD IN EVERYTHING?**

**One of the greatest obstacles to living unwaveringly this life of**

**entire surrender is the difficulty of seeing God in everything. People**

**say, "I can easily submit to things which come from God; but I cannot**

**submit to man, and most of my trials and crosses come through human**

**instrumentality." Or they say, "It is all well enough to talk of**

**trusting; but when I commit a matter to God, man is sure to come in and**

**disarrange it all; and while I have no difficulty in trusting God, I do**

**see serious difficulties in the way of trusting men."**

**This is no imaginary trouble, but it is of vital importance, and if it**

**cannot be met, does really make the life of faith an impossible and**

**visionary theory. For nearly everything in life comes to us through**

**human instrumentalities, and most of our trials are the result of**

**somebody's failure, or ignorance, or carelessness, or sin. We know God**

**cannot be the author of these things, and yet unless He is the agent in**

**the matter, how can we say to Him about it, "Thy will be done"?**

**Besides, what good is there in trusting our affairs to God, if, after**

**all, man is to be allowed to come in and disarrange them; and how is it**

**possible to live by faith, if human agencies, in whom it would be wrong**

**and foolish to trust, are to have a predominant influence in moulding**

**our lives?**

**Moreover, things in which we can see God's hand always have a sweetness**

**in them which consoles while it wounds. But the trials inflicted by man**

**are full of bitterness.**

**What is needed, then, is to see God in everything, and to receive**

**everything directly from His hands, with no intervention of second**

**causes. And it is just to this that we must be brought, before we can**

**know an abiding experience of entire abandonment and perfect trust. Our**

**abandonment must be to God, not to man, and our trust must be in Him,**

**not in any arm of flesh, or we shall fail at the first trial.**

**The question here confronts us at once, "But is God in everything, and**

**have we any warrant from the Scripture for receiving everything from**

**His hands, without regarding the second causes which may have been**

**instrumental in bringing it about?" I answer to this, unhesitatingly,**

**Yes. To the children of God everything comes directly from their**

**Father's hand, no matter who or what may have been the apparent agents.**

**There are no "second causes" for them.**

**The whole teaching of the Bible asserts and implies this. "Not a**

**sparrow falls to the ground without our Father." The very hairs of our**

**head are all numbered. We are not to be careful about anything, because**

**our Father cares for us. We are not to avenge ourselves, because our**

**Father has charged Himself with our defence. We are not to fear, for**

**the Lord is on our side. No one can be against us, because He is for**

**us. We shall not want, for He is our Shepherd. When we pass through the**

**rivers they shall not overflow us, and when we walk through the fire we**

**shall not be burned, because He will be with us. He shuts the mouths of**

**lions, that they cannot hurt us. "He delivereth and rescueth." "He**

**changeth the times and the seasons; He removeth kings and setteth up**

**kings." A man's heart is in His hand, and, "as the river of water, He**

**turneth it whithersoever He will." He ruleth over all the kingdoms of**

**the heathen; and in His hand there is power and might, "so that none is**

**able to withstand" Him. "He ruleth the raging of the sea; when the**

**waves thereof arise, He stilleth them." He "bringeth the counsel of the**

**heathen to nought; He maketh the devices of the people of none effect."**

**"Whatsoever the Lord pleaseth, that does He in heaven, and in earth, in**

**the seas, and all deep places."**

**"If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of**

**judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter; for He**

**that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there be higher than**

**they."**

**"Lo, these are a part of His ways; but how little a portion is heard of**

**Him? But the thunder of His power who can understand?" "Hast thou not**

**known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the**

**Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There**

**is no searching of His understanding."**

**And this "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in**

**trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and**

**though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the**

**waters thereof roar and be troubled; though the mountains shake with**

**the swelling thereof." "I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my**

**fortress, my God, in Him will I trust. Surely He shall deliver thee**

**from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisesome pestilence. He**

**shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou**

**trust. His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be**

**afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day,**

**nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the**

**destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side,**

**and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee."**

**"Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most**

**High, thy habitation, there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall**

**any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For He shall give His angels charge**

**over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways."**

**To my own mind, these Scriptures, and many others like them, settle**

**forever the question as to the power of second causes in the life of**

**the children of God. They are all under the control of our Father, and**

**nothing can touch us except with His knowledge and by His permission.**

**It may be the sin of man that originates the action, and therefore the**

**thing itself cannot be said to be the will of God but by the time it**

**reaches us, it has become God's will for us, and must be accepted as**

**directly from His hands. No man or company of men, no power in earth or**

**heaven, can touch that soul which is abiding in Christ, without first**

**passing through Him, and receiving the seal of His permission. If God**

**be for us, it matters not who may be against us; nothing can disturb or**

**harm us, except He shall see that it is best for us, and shall stand**

**aside to let it pass.**

**An earthly parent's care for his helpless child is a feeble**

**illustration of this. If the child is in its father's arms, nothing can**

**touch it without that father's consent, unless he is too weak to**

**prevent it. And even if this should be the case, he suffers the harm**

**first in his own person, before he allows it to reach his child. And if**

**an earthly parent would thus care for his little helpless one, how much**

**more will our Heavenly Father, whose love is infinitely greater, and**

**whose strength and wisdom can never be baffled! I am afraid there are**

**some, even of God's own children, who scarcely think that He is equal**

**to themselves in tenderness, and love, and thoughtful care; and who in**

**their secret thoughts, charge Him with a neglect and indifference of**

**which they would feel themselves incapable. The truth really is, that**

**His care is infinitely superior to any possibilities of human care; and**

**that He who counts the very hairs of our head, and suffers not a**

**sparrow to fall without Him, takes note of the minutest matters that**

**can affect the lives of His children, and regulates them all according**

**to His own sweet will, let their origin be what they may.**

**The instances of this are numberless. Take Joseph. What could have**

**seemed more apparently on the face of it to be the result of sin, and**

**utterly contrary to the will of God, than his being sold into slavery?**

**And yet Joseph, in speaking of it, said, "As for you, ye thought evil**

**against me: but God meant it unto good." "Now, therefore, be not**

**grieved nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither, for God did**

**send me before you to preserve life." To the eye of sense it was surely**

**Joseph's wicked brethren who had sent him into Egypt; and yet Joseph,**

**looking at it with the eye of faith, could say, "God sent me." It had**

**been undoubtedly a grievous sin in his brethren, but, by the time it**

**had reached Joseph, it had become God's will for him, and was in truth,**

**though at first it did not look so, the greatest blessing of his whole**

**life. And thus we see how the Lord can make even the wrath of man to**

**praise Him, and how all things, even the sins of others, shall work**

**together for good to them that love Him.**

**I learned this lesson practically and experimentally long years before**

**I knew the scriptural truth concerning it. I was attending a**

**prayer-meeting held for the promotion of scriptural holiness, when a**

**strange lady rose to speak, and I looked at her, wondering who she**

**could be, little thinking she was to bring a message to my soul which**

**would teach me such a grand lesson. She said she had had great**

**difficulty in living the life of faith, on account of the second causes**

**that seemed to her to control nearly everything that concerned her. Her**

**perplexity became so great, that at last she began to ask God to teach**

**her the truth about it, whether He really was in everything or not.**

**After praying this for a few days, she had what she described as a**

**vision. She thought she was in a perfectly dark place, and that there**

**advanced towards her from a distance a body of light, which gradually**

**surrounded and enveloped her and everything around her. As it**

**approached, a voice seemed to say, "This is the presence of God; this**

**is the presence of God." While surrounded with this presence, all the**

**great and awful things in life seemed to pass before her,--fighting**

**armies, wicked men, raging beasts, storms and pestilences, sin and**

**suffering of every kind.**

**She shrank back at first in terror, but she soon saw that the presence**

**of God so surrounded and enveloped each one of these, that not a lion**

**could reach out its paw, nor a bullet fly through the air, except as**

**His presence moved out of the way to permit it. And she saw that, let**

**there be ever so thin a sheet, as it were, of this glorious presence**

**between herself and the most terrible violence, not a hair of her head**

**could be ruffled, nor anything touch her, unless the presence divided**

**to let the evil through. Then all the small and annoying things of life**

**passed before her, and equally she saw that these all were so enveloped**

**in this presence of God that not a cross look, not a harsh word, nor**

**petty trial of any kind, could reach her unless His presence moved out**

**of the way to let them through.**

**Her difficulty vanished. Her question was answered forever. God was in**

**everything; and to her henceforth there were no second causes. She saw**

**that her life came to her day by day and hour by hour directly from His**

**hand, let the agencies which should seem to control it be what they**

**might. And never again had she found any difficulty in an abiding**

**consent to His will and an unwavering trust in His care.**

**If we look at the seen things, we shall not be able to understand the**

**secret of this. But the children of God are called to look, "not at the**

**things which are seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but**

**the things which are not seen are eternal." Could we but see with our**

**bodily eyes His unseen forces surrounding us on every side, we would**

**walk through this world in an impregnable fortress, which nothing could**

**ever overthrow or penetrate, for "the angel of the Lord encampeth round**

**about them that fear Him, and delivereth them."**

**We have a striking illustration of this in the history of Elisha. The**

**king of Syria was warring against Israel, but his evil designs were**

**continually frustrated by the prophet; and at last he sent his army to**

**the prophet's own city for the express purpose of taking him captive.**

**We read, "He sent thither horses and chariots and a great host; and**

**they came by night and compassed the city about." This was the seen**

**thing. And the servant of the prophet, whose eyes had not yet been**

**opened to see the unseen things, was alarmed. And we read, "And when**

**the servant of the man of God was risen early and gone forth, behold an**

**host compassed the city, both with horses and chariots. And his servant**

**said unto him, Alas, my master, how shall we do?" But his master could**

**see the unseen things, and he replied, "Fear not; for they that be with**

**us are more than they that be with them." And then he prayed, saying,**

**"Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes that he may see. And the Lord opened**

**the eyes of the young man, and he saw; and behold, the mountain was**

**full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."**

**The presence of God is the fortress of His people. Nothing can**

**withstand it. At His presence the wicked perish; the earth trembles;**

**the hills melt like wax; the cities are broken down; "the heavens also**

**dropped, and Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God." And in the**

**secret of this presence He has promised to hide His people from the**

**pride of man, and from the strife of tongues. "My presence shall go**

**with thee," He says, "and I will give thee rest."**

**I wish it were only possible to make every Christian see this truth as**

**plainly as I see it; for I am convinced it is the only clue to a**

**completely restful life. Nothing else will enable a soul to live only**

**in the present moment, as we are commanded to do, and to take no**

**thought for the morrow. Nothing else will take all the risks and**

**"supposes" out of a Christian's heart, and enable him to say, "Surely**

**goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." Abiding in**

**God's presence, we run no risks; and such a soul can triumphantly**

**say,--**

**"I know not what it is to doubt,**

**My heart is alway gay;**

**I run no risks, for, come what will,**

**God alway has His way."**

**I once heard of a colored woman who earned a precarious living by daily**

**labor, but who was a joyous, triumphant Christian. "Ah! Nancy," said a**

**gloomy Christian lady to her one day, who almost disapproved of her**

**constant cheerfulness, and yet envied it,--"ah! Nancy, it is all well**

**enough to be happy now; but I should think the thoughts of your future**

**would sober you. Only suppose, for instance, that you should have a**

**spell of sickness and be unable to work; or suppose your present**

**employers should move away, and no one else should give you anything to**

**do; or suppose--" "Stop!" cried Nancy, "I never supposes. De Lord is my**

**shepherd, and I knows I shall not want. And, honey," she added to her**

**gloomy friend, "it's all dem supposes as is makin' you so misable.**

**You'd better give dem all up, and just trust de Lord."**

**There is one text that will take all the "suppose" out of a believer's**

**life, if only it is received and acted out in a childlike faith; it is**

**in Heb. 3:5, 6: "Be content, therefore, with such things as ye have;**

**for He hath said I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee"; so that we**

**may boldly say, "THE LORD IS MY HELPER, AND I WILL NOT FEAR WHAT MAN**

**SHALL DO UNTO ME." What if dangers of all sorts shall threaten you from**

**every side, and the malice or foolishness or ignorance of men shall**

**combine to do you harm? You may face every possible contingency with**

**these triumphant words, "The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear**

**what man shall do unto me." If the Lord is your helper, how can you**

**fear what man may do unto you? There is no man in this world, nor**

**company of men, that can touch you, unless your God, in whom you trust,**

**shall please to let them. "He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: He**

**that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, He that keepeth Israel**

**shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper; the Lord is**

**thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day nor**

**the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: He shall**

**preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy**

**coming in, from this time forth, and even for evermore."**

**Nothing else but this seeing God in everything will make us loving and**

**patient with those who annoy and trouble us. They will be to us then**

**only the instruments for accomplishing His tender and wise purposes**

**towards us, and we shall even find ourselves at last inwardly thanking**

**them for the blessings they bring us.**

**Nothing else will completely put an end to all murmuring or rebelling**

**thoughts. Christians often feel a liberty to murmur against man, when**

**they would not dare to murmur against God. But this way of receiving**

**things would make it impossible ever to murmur. If our Father permits a**

**trial to come, it must be because that trial is the sweetest and best**

**thing that could happen to us, and we must accept it with thanks from**

**His dear hand. The trial itself may be hard to flesh and blood, and I**

**do not mean that we can like or enjoy the suffering of it. But we can**

**and must love the will of God in the trial, for His will is always**

**sweet, whether it be in joy or in sorrow.**

**Our trials may be our chariots. We long for some victory over sin and**

**self, and we ask God to grant it to us. His answer comes in the form of**

**a trial which He means shall be the chariot to bear us to the**

**longed-for triumph. We may either let it roll over us and crush us as a**

**Juggernaut car, or we may mount into it and ride triumphantly onward.**

**Joseph's chariots, which bore him on to the place of his exaltation,**

**were the trials of being sold into slavery, and being cast unjustly**

**into prison. Our chariots may be much more insignificant things than**

**these; they may be nothing but irritating people or uncomfortable**

**circumstances. But whatever they are, God means them to be our cars of**

**triumph, which shall bear us onward to the victories we have prayed**

**for. If we are impatient in our dispositions and long to be made**

**patient, our chariot will probably be a trying person to live in the**

**house with us, whose ways or words will rasp our very souls. If we**

**accept the trial as from God, and bow our necks to the yoke, we shall**

**find it just the discipline that will most effectually produce in us**

**the very grace of patience for which we have asked.**

**God does not order the wrong thing, but He uses it for our blessing;**

**just as He used the cruelty of Joseph's wicked brethren, and the false**

**accusations of Pharaoh's wife. In short, this way of seeing our Father**

**in everything makes life one long thanksgiving, and gives a rest of**

**heart, and more than that, a gayety of spirit, that is unspeakable.**

**Someone says, "God's will on earth is always joy, always tranquillity."**

**And since He must have His own way concerning His children, into what**

**wonderful green pastures of inward rest, and beside what blessedly**

**still waters of inward refreshment, is the soul led that learns this**

**secret.**

**If the will of God is our will, and if He always has His way, then we**

**always have our way also, and we reign in a perpetual kingdom. He who**

**sides with God cannot fail to win in every encounter; and whether the**

**result shall be joy or sorrow, failure or success, death or life, we**

**may, under all circumstances, join in the apostle's shout of victory,**

**"Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ!"**

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**Chapter 9**

**GROWTH**

**When the believer has been brought to the point of entire surrender and**

**perfect trust, and finds himself dwelling and walking in a life of**

**happy communion and perfect peace, the question naturally arises, "Is**

**this the end?" I answer emphatically "No, it is only the beginning."**

**And yet this is so little understood, that one of the greatest**

**objections made against the advocates of this life of faith, is, that**

**they do not believe in growth in grace. They are supposed to teach that**

**the soul arrives at a state of perfection beyond which there is no**

**advance, and that all the exhortations in the Scripture which point**

**towards growth and development are rendered void by this teaching.**

**As exactly the opposite of this is true, I have thought it important**

**next to consider this subject carefully, that I may, if possible, fully**

**answer such objections, and may also show what is the scriptural place**

**to grow in, and how the soul is to grow.**

**The text which is most frequently quoted is 2 Pet. 3:18, "But grow in**

**grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Now**

**this text exactly expresses what we believe to be God's will for us,**

**and what also we believe He has made it possible for us to experience.**

**We accept, in their very fullest meaning, all the commands and promises**

**concerning our being no more children, and our growing up into Christ**

**in all things, until we come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of**

**the stature of the fulness of Christ. We rejoice that we need not**

**continue always to be babes, needing milk; but that we may, by reason**

**of use and development become such as have need of strong meat, skilful**

**in the word of righteousness, and able to discern both good and evil.**

**And none would grieve more than we at the thought of any finality in**

**the Christian life beyond which there could be no advance.**

**But then we believe in a growing that does really produce maturity, and**

**in a development that, as a fact, does bring forth ripe fruit. We**

**expect to reach the aim set before us, and if we do not, we feel sure**

**there must be some fault in our growing. No parent would be satisfied**

**with the growth of his child, if, day after day, and year after year,**

**it remained the same helpless babe it was in the first months of its**

**life; and no farmer would feel comfortable under such growing of his**

**grain as should stop short at the blade, and never produce the ear, nor**

**the full corn in the ear. Growth, to be real, must be progressive, and**

**the days and weeks and months must see a development and increase of**

**maturity in the thing growing. But is this the case with a large part**

**of that which is called growth in grace? Does not the very Christian**

**who is the most strenuous in his longings and in his efforts after it,**

**too often find that at the end of the year he is not as far on in his**

**Christian experience as at the beginning, and that his zeal, and his**

**devotedness, and his separation from the world are not as whole-souled**

**or complete as when his Christian life first began?**

**I was once urging upon a company of Christians the privileges and rest**

**of an immediate and definite step into the land of promise, when a lady**

**of great intelligence interrupted me, with what she evidently felt to**

**be a complete rebuttal of all I had been saying, exclaiming, "Ah! but,**

**my dear friend, I believe in growing in grace." "How long have you been**

**growing?" I asked. "About twenty-five years," was her answer. "And how**

**much more unworldly and devoted to the Lord are you now than when you**

**began your Christian life?" I continued. "Alas!" was the answer, "I**

**fear I am not nearly so much so"; and with this answer her eyes were**

**opened to see that at all events her way of growing had not been**

**successful, but quite the reverse.**

**The trouble with her, and every other such case, is simply this, they**

**are trying to grow into grace, instead of in it. They are like a**

**rosebush which the gardener should plant in the hard, stony path, with**

**a view to its growing into the flower-bed, and which would of course**

**dwindle and wither in consequence, instead of flourishing and maturing.**

**The children of Israel wandering in the wilderness are a perfect**

**picture of this sort of growing. They were travelling about for forty**

**years, taking many weary steps, and finding but little rest from their**

**wanderings, and yet, at the end of it all, were no nearer the promised**

**land than they were at the beginning. When they started on their**

**wanderings at Kadesh Barnea, they were at the borders of the land, and**

**a few steps would have taken them into it.**

**When they ended their wanderings in the plains of Moab, they were also**

**at its borders; only with this great difference, that now there was a**

**river to cross, which at first there would not have been. All their**

**wanderings and fightings in the wilderness had not put them in**

**possession of one inch of the promised land. In order to get possession**

**of this land it was necessary first to be in it; and in order to grow**

**in grace, it is necessary first to be planted in grace. But when once**

**in the land, their conquest was very rapid; and when once planted in**

**grace, the growth of the soul in one month will exceed that of years in**

**any other soil. For grace is a most fruitful soil, and the plants that**

**grow therein are plants of a marvellous growth. They are tended by a**

**Divine Husbandman, and are warmed by the Sun of Righteousness, and**

**watered by the dew from Heaven. Surely it is no wonder that they bring**

**forth fruit, "some an hundred-fold, some sixty-fold, some thirty-fold."**

**But, it will be asked, what is meant by growing in grace? It is**

**difficult to answer this question because so few people have any**

**conception of what the grace of God really is. To say that it is free,**

**unmerited favor, only expresses a little of its meaning. It is the**

**wondrous, boundless love of God, poured out upon us without stint or**

**measure, not according to our deserving, but according to His infinite**

**heart of love, which passeth knowledge, so unfathomable are its heights**

**and depths. I sometimes think we give a totally different meaning to**

**the word "love" when it is associated with God, from that we so well**

**understand in its human application. But if ever human love was tender**

**and self-sacrificing and devoted; if ever it could bear and forbear; if**

**ever it could suffer gladly for its loved ones; if ever it was willing**

**to pour itself out in a lavish abandonment for the comfort or pleasure**

**of its objects,--then infinitely more is Divine love tender and**

**self-sacrificing and devoted, and glad to bear and forbear, and to**

**suffer, and to lavish its best of gifts and blessings upon the objects**

**of its love. Put together all the tenderest love you know of, dear**

**reader, the deepest you have ever felt, and the strongest that has ever**

**been poured out upon you, and heap upon it all the love of all the**

**loving human hearts in the world, and then multiply it by infinity, and**

**you will begin perhaps to have some faint glimpses of what the love of**

**God in Christ Jesus is. And this is grace. And to be planted in grace**

**is to live in the very heart of this love, to be enveloped by it, to be**

**steeped in it, to revel in it, to know nothing else but love only and**

**love always, to grow day by day in the knowledge of it, and in faith in**

**it, to intrust everything to its care, and to have no shadow of a doubt**

**but that it will surely order all things well.**

**To grow in grace is opposed to all self-dependence, to all self-effort,**

**to all legality of every kind. It is to put our growing, as well as**

**everything else, into the hands of the Lord, and leave it with Him. It**

**is to be so satisfied with our Husbandman, and with His skill and**

**wisdom, that not a question will cross our minds as to His modes of**

**treatment or His plan of cultivation. It is to grow as the lilies grow,**

**or as the babes grow, without a care and without anxiety; to grow by**

**the power of an inward life principle that cannot help but grow; to**

**grow because we live and therefore must grow; to grow because He who**

**has planted us has planted a growing thing, and has made us to grow.**

**Surely this is what our Lord meant when He said "Consider the lilies,**

**how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto**

**you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of**

**these." Or, when He says again, "Which of you by taking thought can add**

**one cubit unto his stature?" There is no effort in the growing of a**

**child or of a lily. They do not toil nor spin, they do not stretch nor**

**strain, they do not make any effort of any kind to grow; they are not**

**conscious even that they are growing; but by an inward life principle,**

**and through the nurturing care of God's providence, and the fostering**

**of caretaker or gardener, by the heat of the sun and the falling of the**

**rain, they grow and grow.**

**And the result is sure. Even Solomon, our Lord says, in all his glory,**

**was not arrayed like one of these. Solomon's array cost much toiling**

**and spinning, and gold and silver in abundance, but the lily's array**

**costs none of these. And though we may toil and spin to make for**

**ourselves beautiful spiritual garments, and may strain and stretch in**

**our efforts after spiritual growth, we shall accomplish nothing; for no**

**man by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature; and no array of**

**ours can ever equal the beautiful dress with which the great Husbandman**

**clothes the plants that grow in His garden of grace and under His**

**fostering care.**

**If I could but make each one of my readers realize how utterly helpless**

**we are in this matter of growing, I am convinced a large part of the**

**strain would be taken out of many lives at once. Imagine a child**

**possessed of the monomania that he would not grow unless he made some**

**personal effort after it, and who should insist upon a combination of**

**rope and pulleys whereby to stretch himself up to the desired height.**

**He might, it is true, spend his days and years in a weary strain, but**

**after all there would be no change in the inexorable fact, "No man by**

**taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature"; and his years of**

**labor would be only wasted, if they did not really hinder the**

**longed-for end.**

**Imagine a lily trying to clothe itself in beautiful colors and graceful**

**lines, stretching its leaves and stems to make them grow, and seeking**

**to manage the clouds and the sunshine, that its needs might be all**

**judiciously supplied!**

**And yet in these two pictures we have, I conceive, only too true a**

**picture of what many Christians are trying to do; who, knowing they**

**ought to grow, and feeling within them an instinct that longs for**

**growth, yet think to accomplish it by toiling, and spinning, and**

**stretching, and straining, and pass their lives in such a round of**

**self-effort as is a weariness to contemplate.**

**Grow, dear friends, but grow, I beseech you, in God's way, which is the**

**only effectual way. See to it that you are planted in grace, and then**

**let the Divine Husbandman cultivate you in His own way and by His own**

**means. Put yourselves out in the sunshine of His presence, and let the**

**dew of heaven come down upon you, and see what will come of it. Leaves**

**and flowers and fruit must surely come in their season, for your**

**Husbandman is a skilful one, and He never fails in His harvesting. Only**

**see to it that you interpose no hindrance to the shining of the Sun of**

**Righteousness or the falling of the dew from Heaven. A very thin**

**covering may serve to keep off the heat or the moisture, and the plant**

**may wither even in their midst; and the slightest barrier between your**

**soul and Christ may cause you to dwindle and fade as a plant in a**

**cellar or under a bushel. Keep the sky clear. Open wide every avenue of**

**your being to receive the blessed influences our Divine Husbandman may**

**bring to bear upon you. Bask in the sunshine of His love. Drink in of**

**the waters of His goodness. Keep your face up-turned to Him. Look, and**

**your soul shall live.**

**You need make no efforts to grow; but let your efforts instead be all**

**concentrated on this, that you abide in the Vine. The Husbandman who**

**has the care of the vine, will care for its branches also, and will so**

**prune and purge and water and tend them that they will grow and bring**

**forth fruit, and their fruit shall remain; and, like the lily, they**

**shall find themselves arrayed in apparel so glorious that that of**

**Solomon will be as nothing to it.**

**What if you seem to yourselves to be planted at this moment in a desert**

**soil where nothing can grow! Put yourself absolutely into the hands of**

**the great Husbandman, and He will at once make that desert blossom as**

**the rose, and will cause springs and fountains of water to start up out**

**of its sandy wastes; for the promise is sure, that the man who trusts**

**in the Lord "shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that**

**spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat**

**cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the**

**year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." It is the**

**great prerogative of our Divine Husbandman that He is able to turn any**

**soil, whatever it may be like, into the soil of grace, the moment we**

**put our growing into His hands. He does not need to transplant us into**

**a different field, but right where we are, with just the circumstances**

**that surround us, He makes His sun to shine and His dew to fall upon**

**us, and transforms the very things that were before our greatest**

**hindrances into the chiefest and most blessed means of our growth. I**

**care not what the circumstances may be, His wonder-working power can**

**accomplish this. And we must trust Him with it all. Surely He is a**

**Husbandman we can trust. And if He sends storms, or winds, or rains, or**

**sunshine, all must be accepted at His hands with the most unwavering**

**confidence that He who has undertaken to cultivate us, and to bring us**

**to maturity, knows the very best way of accomplishing His end, and**

**regulates the elements, which are all at His disposal, expressly with a**

**view to our most rapid growth.**

**Let me entreat of you, then, to give up all your efforts after growing,**

**and simply to let yourselves grow. Leave it all to the Husbandman,**

**whose care it is, and who alone is able to manage it. No difficulties**

**in your case can baffle Him. No dwarfing of your growth in years that**

**are past, no apparent dryness of your inward springs of life, no**

**crookedness or deformity in any of your past development, can in the**

**least mar the perfect work that He will accomplish, if you will only**

**put yourselves absolutely into His hands, and let Him have His own way**

**with you. His own gracious promise to His backsliding children assures**

**you of this. "I will heal their backslidings," He says: "I will love**

**them freely, for mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the**

**dew unto Israel; he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as**

**Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the**

**olive-tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under His shadow**

**shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine; the**

**scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon." And again He says, "Be**

**not afraid, for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree**

**beareth her fruit, the fig-tree and the vine do yield their strength.**

**And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with**

**wine and oil. And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath**

**eaten; and ye shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name**

**of the Lord your God, who hath dealt wondrously with you; and my people**

**shall never be ashamed."**

**Oh! that you could but know just what your Lord meant when He said,**

**"Consider the lilies, how they grow; for they toil not, neither do they**

**spin." Surely these words give us a picture of a life and of a growth**

**far different from the ordinary life and growth of Christians; a life**

**of rest, and a growth without effort; and yet a life and a growth**

**crowned with glorious results. And to every soul that will thus become**

**a lily in the garden of the Lord, and will grow as the lilies grow, the**

**same glorious array will be surely given as is given them; and they**

**will know the fulfilment of that wonderful mystical passage concerning**

**their Beloved, that "He feedeth among the lilies."**

**This is the sort of growth in grace in which we who have entered into**

**the life of full trust believe: a growth which brings the desired**

**results, which blossoms out into flower and fruit, and becomes a tree**

**planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his**

**season; whose leaf also does not wither, and who prospers in whatsoever**

**he doeth. And we rejoice to know that there are growing up now in the**

**Lord's heritage many such plants, who, as the lilies behold the face of**

**the sun and grow thereby, are, by beholding as in a glass the glory of**

**the Lord, being changed into the same image from glory to glory, even**

**as by the spirit of the Lord.**

**Should you ask such, how it is that they grow so rapidly and with such**

**success, their answer would be that they are not concerned about their**

**growing, and are hardly conscious that they do grow; that their Lord**

**has told them to abide in Him, and has promised that if they do thus**

**abide, they shall certainly bring forth much fruit; and that they are**

**concerned only about the abiding, which is their part, and leave the**

**cultivating and the growing and the training and pruning to their good**

**Husbandman, who alone is able to manage these things or bring them**

**about. You will find that such souls are not engaged in watching self,**

**but in looking unto Jesus. They do not toil nor spin for their**

**spiritual garments, but leave themselves in the hands of the Lord to be**

**arrayed as it may please Him. Self-effort and self-dependence are at an**

**end with them. Their interest in self is gone, transferred over into**

**the hands of another. Self has become really nothing, and Christ alone**

**is all in all to such as these. And the blessed result is, that not**

**even Solomon, in all his glory, was arrayed like these shall be.**

**Let us look at this subject practically. We all know that growing is**

**not a thing of effort, but is the result of an inward life, a principle**

**of growth. All the stretching and pulling in the world could not make a**

**dead oak grow. But a live oak grows without stretching. It is plain,**

**therefore, that the essential thing is to get within you the growing**

**life, and then you cannot help but grow. And this life is the life hid**

**with Christ in God, the wonderful divine life of an indwelling Holy**

**Ghost. Be filled with this, dear believer, and, whether you are**

**conscious of it or not, you must grow, you cannot help growing. Do not**

**trouble about your growing, but see to it that you have the growing**

**life. Abide in the Vine. Let the life from Him flow through all your**

**spiritual veins. Interpose no barrier to His mighty life-giving power,**

**working in you all the good pleasure of His will. Yield yourself up**

**utterly to His sweet control. Put your growing into His hands, as**

**completely as you have put all your other affairs. Suffer Him to manage**

**it as He will. Do not concern yourself about it, nor even think of it.**

**Trust Him absolutely, and always. Accept each moment's dispensation as**

**it comes to you, from His dear hands, as being the needed sunshine or**

**dew for that moment's growth. Say a continual "Yes" to your Father's**

**will.**

**Heretofore you have perhaps tried, as so many do, to be both the lily**

**and the gardener, both the vineyard and the husbandman. You have taken**

**upon your shoulders the burdens and responsibilities that belong only**

**to the Divine Husbandman, and which He alone is able to bear.**

**Henceforth consent to take your rightful place and to be only what you**

**really are. Say to yourself, If I am the garden only, and not the**

**gardener, if I am the vine only, and not the husbandman, it is surely**

**essential to my right growth and well being that I should keep the**

**place and act the part of the garden, and should not usurp the**

**gardener's place, nor try to act the gardener's part.**

**Do not seek then to choose your own soil, nor the laying out of your**

**borders; do not plant your own seeds, nor dig about, nor prune, nor**

**watch over your own vines. Be content with what the Divine Husbandman**

**arranges for you, and with the care He gives. Let Him choose the sort**

**of plants and fruits He sees best to cultivate, and grow a potato as**

**gladly as a rose, if such be His will, and homely everyday virtues as**

**willingly as exalted fervors. Be satisfied with the seasons He sends,**

**with the sunshine and rain He gives, with the rapidity or slowness of**

**your growth, in short, with all His dealings and processes, no matter**

**how little we may comprehend them.**

**There is infinite repose in this. As the viole rests in its little**

**nook, receiving contentedly its daily portion satisfied to let rains**

**fall, and suns rise, and the earth to whirl, without one anxious pang,**

**so must we repose in the present as God gives it to us, accepting**

**contentedly our daily portion, and with no anxiety as to all that may**

**be whirling around us, in His great creative and redemptive plan.**

**The wind that blows can never kill**

**The tree God plants;**

**It bloweth east, it bloweth west,**

**The tender leaves have little rest,**

**But any wind that blows is best.**

**The tree God plants**

**Strikes deeper root, grows higher still,**

**Spreads wider boughs, for God's good-will**

**Meets all its wants.**

**There is no frost hath power to blight**

**The tree God shields;**

**The roots are warm beneath soft snows,**

**And when spring comes it surely knows,**

**And every bud to blossom grows.**

**The tree God shields**

**Grows on apace by day and night,**

**Till, sweet to taste and fair to sight,**

**Its fruit it yields.**

**There is no storm hath power to blast**

**The tree God knows;**

**No thunder-bolt, nor beating rain,**

**Nor lightning flash, nor hurricane;**

**When they are spent it doth remain.**

**The tree God knows**

**Through every tempest standeth fast,**

**And, from its first day to its last,**

**Still fairer grows.**

**If in the soul's still garden-place**

**A seed God sows--**

**A little seed--it soon will grow,**

**And far and near all men will know**

**For heavenly land He bids it blow.**

**A seed God sows,**

**And up it springs by day and night;**

**Through life, through death, it groweth right,**

**Forever grows.**

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**Chapter 10**

**SERVICE**

**There is, perhaps, no part of Christian experience where a greater**

**change is known upon entering into the life hid with Christ in God,**

**than in the matter of service. In all the lower forms of Christian**

**life, service is apt to have more or less of bondage in it; that is, it**

**is one purely as a matter of duty, and often as a trial and a cross.**

**Certain things, which at the first may have been a joy and delight,**

**become weary tasks, performed faithfully, perhaps, but with much secret**

**disinclination, and many confessed or unconfessed wishes that they need**

**not be done at all, or at least that they need not be done so often.**

**The soul finds itself saying, instead of the "May I" of love, the "Must**

**I" of duty. The yoke, which was at first easy, begins to gall, and the**

**burden feels heavy instead of light.**

**One dear Christian expressed it once to me in this way. "When I was**

**first converted," she said, "I was so full of joy and love that I was**

**only too glad and thankful to be allowed to do anything for my Lord,**

**and I eagerly entered every open door. But after a while, as my early**

**joy faded away, and my love burned less fervently, I began to wish I**

**had not been quite so eager; for I found myself involved in lines of**

**service which were gradually becoming very distasteful and burdensome**

**to me. I could not very well give them up, since I had begun them,**

**without exciting great remark, and yet I longed to do so increasingly.**

**I was expected to visit the sick, and pray beside their beds. I was**

**expected to attend prayer-meetings, and speak at them. I was expected**

**to be always ready for every effort in Christian work, and the sense of**

**these expectations bowed me down continually. At last it became so**

**unspeakably burdensome to me to live the sort of Christian life I had**

**entered upon, and was expected by all around me to live, that I felt as**

**if any kind of manual labor would have been easier, and I would have**

**preferred, infinitely, scrubbing all day on my hands and knees, to**

**being compelled to go through the treadmill of my daily Christian work.**

**I envied," she said, "the servants in the kitchen, and the women at the**

**wash-tubs."**

**This may seem to some like a strong statement: but does it not present**

**a vivid picture of some of your own experiences, dear Christian? Have**

**you never gone to your work as a slave to his daily task, knowing it to**

**be your duty, and that therefore you must do it, but rebounding like an**

**India-rubber ball back into your real interests and pleasures the**

**moment your work was over?**

**Of course you have known this was the wrong way to feel, and have been**

**ashamed of it from the bottom of your heart, but still you have seen no**

**way to help it. You have not loved your work, and, could you have done**

**so with an easy conscience, you would have been glad to have given it**

**up altogether.**

**Or, if this does not describe your case, perhaps another picture will.**

**You do love your work in the abstract; but, in the doing of it, you**

**find so many cares and responsibilities connected with it, so many**

**misgivings and doubts as to your own capacity or fitness, that it**

**becomes a very heavy burden, and you go to it bowed down and weary,**

**before the labor has even begun. Then also you are continually**

**distressing yourself about the results of your work, and greatly**

**troubled if they are not just what you would like, and this of itself**

**is a constant burden.**

**Now from all these forms of bondage the soul is entirely delivered that**

**enters fully into the blessed life of faith. In the first place,**

**service of any sort becomes delightful to it, because, having**

**surrendered its will into the keeping of the Lord, He works in it to**

**will and to do of His good pleasure, and the soul finds itself really**

**wanting to do the things God wants it to do. It is always very pleasant**

**to do the things we want to do, let them be ever so difficult of**

**accomplishment, or involve ever so much of bodily weariness. If a man's**

**will is really set on a thing, he regards with a sublime indifference**

**the obstacles that lie in the way of his reaching it, and laughs to**

**himself at the idea of any opposition or difficulties hindering him.**

**How many men have gone gladly and thankfully to the ends of the world**

**in search of worldly fortunes, or to fulfil worldly ambitions, and have**

**scorned the thoughts of any cross connected with it! How many mothers**

**have congratulated themselves and rejoiced over the honor done their**

**sons in being promoted to some place of power and usefulness in their**

**country's service, although it has involved perhaps years of**

**separation, and a life of hardship for their dear ones? And yet these**

**same men and these very mothers would have felt and said that they were**

**taking up crosses too heavy almost to be borne, had the service of**

**Christ required the same sacrifice of home, and friends, and worldly**

**ease. It is altogether the way we look at things, whether we think they**

**are crosses or not. And I am ashamed to think that any Christian should**

**ever put on a long face and shed tears over doing a thing for Christ,**

**which a worldly man would be only too glad to do for money.**

**What we need in the Christian life is to get believers to want to do**

**God's will, as much as other people want to do their own will. And this**

**is the idea of the Gospel. It is what God intended for us; and it is**

**what He has promised. In describing the new covenant in Heb. 8:6-13, He**

**says it shall no more be the old covenant made on Sinai, that is, a law**

**given from the outside, controlling a man by force, but it shall be a**

**law written within constraining a man by love. "I will put my laws," He**

**says, "in their mind, and write them in their hearts." This can mean**

**nothing but that we shall love His law, for anything written on our**

**hearts we must love. And putting it into our minds is surely the same**

**as God working in us to "will and to do of His good pleasure," and**

**means that we shall will what God wills, and shall obey His sweet**

**commands, not because it is our duty to do so, but because we ourselves**

**want to do what He wants us to do. Nothing could possibly be conceived**

**more effectual than this. How often have we thought when dealing with**

**our children, "Oh, if I could only get inside of them and make them**

**want to do just what I want, how easy it would be to manage them then!"**

**And how often practically in experience we have found that, to deal**

**with cross-grained people, we must carefully avoid suggesting our**

**wishes to them, but must in some way induce them to suggest them**

**themselves, sure that then there will be no opposition to contend with.**

**And we, who are by nature a stiff-necked people, always rebel more or**

**less against a law from outside of us, while we joyfully embrace the**

**same law springing up within.**

**God's plan for us therefore is to get possession of the inside of a**

**man, to take the control and management of his will, and to work it for**

**him; and then obedience is easy and a delight, and service becomes**

**perfect freedom, until the Christian is forced to exclaim, "This happy**

**service! Who could dream earth had such liberty?"**

**What you need to do then, dear Christian, if you are in bondage, is to**

**put your will over completely into the hands of your Lord, surrendering**

**to Him the entire control of it. Say, "Yes, Lord, YES!" to everything;**

**and trust Him so to work in you to will, as to bring your whole wishes**

**and affections into conformity with His own sweet and lovable and most**

**lovely will. I have seen this done over and over, in cases where it**

**looked beforehand an utterly impossible thing. In one case, where a**

**lady had been for years rebelling fearfully against a thing which she**

**knew was right, but which she hated, I saw her, out of the depths of**

**despair and without any feeling, give her will in that matter up into**

**the hands of her Lord, and begin to say to Him, "Thy will be done; thy**

**will be done!" And in one short hour that very thing began to look**

**sweet and precious to her. It is wonderful what miracles God works in**

**wills that are utterly surrendered to Him. He turns hard things into**

**easy, and bitter things into sweet. It is not that He puts easy things**

**in the place of the hard, but He actually changes the hard thing into**

**an easy one. And this is salvation. It is grand. Do try it, you who are**

**going about your daily Christian living as to a hard and weary task,**

**and see if your divine Master will not transform the very life you live**

**now as a bondage, into the most delicious liberty!**

**Or again, if you do love His will in the abstract, but find the doing**

**of it hard and burdensome, from this also there is deliverance in the**

**wonderful life of faith. For in this life no burdens are carried, nor**

**anxieties felt. The Lord is our burden-bearer, and upon Him we must lay**

**off every care. He says, in effect, Be careful for nothing, but just**

**make your requests known to Me, and I will attend to them all. Be**

**careful for nothing, He says, not even your service. Above all, I**

**should think, our service, because we know ourselves to be so utterly**

**helpless in this, that even if we were careful, it would not amount to**

**anything. What have we to do with thinking whether we are fit or not!**

**The Master-workman surely has a right to use any tool He pleases for**

**His own work, and it is plainly not the business of the tool to decide**

**whether it is the right one to be used or not. He knows; and if He**

**chooses to use us, of course we must be fit. And in truth, if we only**

**knew it, our chiefest fitness is in our utter helplessness. His**

**strength can only be made perfect in our weakness. I can give you a**

**convincing illustration of this.**

**I was once visiting an idiot asylum and looking at the children going**

**through dumb-bell exercises. Now we all know that it is a very**

**difficult thing for idiots to manage their movements. They have**

**strength enough, generally, but no skill to use this strength, and as a**

**consequence cannot do much. And in these dumb-bell exercises this**

**deficiency was very apparent. They made all sorts of awkward movements.**

**Now and then, by a happy chance, they would make a movement in harmony**

**with the music and the teacher's directions, but for the most part all**

**was out of harmony. One little girl, however, I noticed, who made**

**perfect movements. Not a jar nor a break disturbed the harmony of her**

**exercises. And the reason was, not that she had more strength than the**

**others, but that she had no strength at all. She could not so much as**

**close her hands over the dumb-bells, nor lift her arms, and the master**

**had to stand behind her and do it all. She yielded up her members as**

**instruments to him, and his strength was made perfect in her weakness.**

**He knew how to go through those exercises, for he himself had planned**

**them, and therefore when he did it, it was done right. She did nothing**

**but yield herself up utterly into his hands, and he did it all. The**

**yielding was her part, the responsibility was all his. It was not her**

**skill that was needed to make harmonious movements, but only his. The**

**question was not of her capacity, but of his. Her utter weakness was**

**her greatest strength. And if this is a picture of our Christian life,**

**it is no wonder that Paul could say, "Most gladly therefore will I**

**rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon**

**me." Who would not glory in being so utterly weak and helpless, that**

**the Lord Jesus Christ should find no hindrance to the perfect working**

**of His mighty power through us and in us?**

**Then, too, if the work is His, the responsibility is His, and we have**

**no room left for worrying about it. Everything in reference to it is**

**known to Him, and He can manage it all. Why not leave it all with Him**

**then, and consent to be treated like a child and guided where to go. It**

**is a fact that the most effectual workers I know are those who do not**

**feel the least care or anxiety about their work, but who commit it all**

**to their dear Master, and, asking Him to guide them moment by moment in**

**reference to it, trust Him implicitly for each moment's needed supplies**

**of wisdom and of strength. To see such, you would almost think perhaps**

**that they were too free from care, where such mighty interests are at**

**stake. But when you have learned God's secret of trusting, and see the**

**beauty and the power of that life which is yielded up to His working,**

**you will cease to condemn, and will begin to wonder how any of God's**

**workers can dare to carry burdens, or assume responsibilities which He**

**alone is able to bear.**

**There are one or two other bonds of service from which this life of**

**trust delivers us. We find out that we are not responsible for all the**

**work in the world. The commands cease to be general, and become**

**personal and individual. The Master does not map out a general course**

**of action for us and leave us to get along through it by our own wisdom**

**and skill as best we may, but He leads us step by step, giving us each**

**hour the special guidance needed for that hour. His blessed Spirit**

**dwelling in us, brings to our remembrance at the time the necessary**

**command; so that we do not need to take any thought ahead but simply to**

**take each step as it is made known to us, following our Lord**

**whithersoever He leads us. "The steps of a good man are ordered of the**

**Lord" not his way only, but each separate step in that way. Many**

**Christians make the mistake of expecting to receive God's commands all**

**in a lump, as it were. They think because He tells them to give a tract**

**to one person in a railway train, for instance, that He means them**

**always to give tracts to everybody, and they burden themselves with an**

**impossible command.**

**There was a young Christian once, who, because the Lord had sent her to**

**speak a message to one soul whom she met in a walk, took it as a**

**general command for always, and thought she must speak to every one she**

**met about their souls. This was, of course, impossible, and as a**

**consequence she was soon in hopeless bondage about it. She became**

**absolutely afraid to go outside of her own door, and lived in perpetual**

**condemnation. At last she disclosed her distress to a friend who was**

**instructed in the ways of God with His servants, and this friend told**

**her she was making a great mistake; that the Lord had His own especial**

**work for each especial workman, and that the servants in a**

**well-regulated household might as well each one take it upon himself to**

**try and do the work of all the rest, as for the Lord's servants to**

**think they were each one under obligation to do everything. He told her**

**just to put herself under the Lord's personal guidance as to her work,**

**and trust Him to point out to her each particular person to whom He**

**would have her speak, assuring her that He never puts forth His own**

**sheep without going before them, and making a way for them Himself. She**

**followed this advice, and laid the burden of her work on the Lord, and**

**the result was a happy pathway of daily guidance, in which she was led**

**into much blessed work for her Master, but was able to do it all**

**without a care or a burden, because He led her out and prepared the way**

**before her.**

**Putting ourselves into God's hands in this way, seems to me just like**

**making the junction between the machinery and the steam engine. The**

**power is not in the machinery, but in the steam; disconnected from the**

**engine, the machinery is perfectly useless; but let the connection be**

**made, and the machinery goes easily and without effort, because of the**

**mighty power there is behind it. Thus the Christian life becomes an**

**easy, natural life when it is the development of the divine working**

**within. Most Christians live on a strain, because their wills are not**

**fully in harmony with the will of God, the connection is not perfectly**

**made at every point, and it requires an effort to move the machinery.**

**But when once the connection is fully made, and the law of the Spirit**

**of life in Christ Jesus can work in us with all its mighty power, we**

**are then indeed made free from the law of sin and death, and shall know**

**the glorious liberty of the children of God. We shall lead frictionless**

**lives.**

**Another form of bondage as to service, from which the life of faith**

**delivers the soul, is in reference to the after-reflections which**

**always follow any Christian work. These self-reflections are of two**

**sorts. Either the soul congratulates itself upon its success, and is**

**lifted up; or it is distressed over its failure, and is utterly cast**

**down. One of these is sure to come, and of the two I think the first is**

**the more to be dreaded, although the last causes at the time the**

**greater suffering. But in the life of trust, neither will trouble us;**

**for, having committed ourselves and our work to the Lord, we will be**

**satisfied to leave it to Him, and will not think about ourselves in the**

**matter at all.**

**Years ago I came across this sentence in an old book: "Never indulge,**

**at the close of an action, in any self-reflective acts of any kind,**

**whether of self-congratulation or of self-despair. Forget the things**

**that are behind, the moment they are past, leaving them with God." It**

**has been of unspeakable value to me. When the temptation comes, as it**

**always does, to indulge in these reflections, either of one sort or the**

**other, I turn from them at once, and positively refuse to think about**

**my work at all, leaving it with the Lord to overrule the mistakes, and**

**to bless it as He chooses.**

**To sum it all up then, what is needed for happy and effectual service**

**is simply to put your work into the Lord's hands, and leave it there.**

**Do not take it to Him in prayer, saying, "Lord, guide me; Lord, give me**

**wisdom; Lord, arrange for me," and then arise from your knees, and take**

**the burden all back, and try to guide and arrange for yourself. Leave**

**it with the Lord, and remember that what you trust to Him, you must not**

**worry over nor feel anxious about. Trust and worry cannot go together.**

**If your work is a burden, it is because you are not trusting it to Him.**

**But if you do trust it to Him, you will surely find that the yoke He**

**puts upon you is easy, and the burden He gives you to carry is light,**

**and even in the midst of a life of ceaseless activity you shall find**

**rest to your soul.**

**But some may say that this teaching would make us into mere puppets. I**

**answer, No, it would simply make us into servants. It is required of a**

**servant, not that he shall plan, or arrange, or decide, or supply the**

**necessary material, but simply and only that he shall obey. It is for**

**the Master to do all the rest. The servant is not responsible, either,**

**for results. The Master alone knows what results he wished to have**

**produced, and therefore he alone can judge of them. Intelligent service**

**will, of course, include some degree of intelligent sympathy with the**

**thoughts and plans of the Master, but after all there cannot be a full**

**comprehension, and the responsibility cannot be transferred from the**

**Master's shoulders to the servant's. And in our case, where our outlook**

**is so limited and our ignorance so great, we can do very little more**

**than be in harmony with the will of our Divine Master, without**

**expecting to comprehend it very fully, and we must leave all the**

**results with Him. What looks to us like failure on the seen side, is**

**often, on the unseen side, the most glorious success; and if we allow**

**ourselves to lament and worry, we shall often be doing the foolish and**

**useless thing of weeping where we ought to be singing and rejoicing.**

**Far better is it to refuse utterly to indulge in any self-reflective**

**acts at all; to refuse, in fact, to think about self in any way,**

**whether for good or evil. We are not our own property, nor our own**

**business. We belong to God, and are His instruments and His business;**

**and since He always attends to His own business, He will of course**

**attend to us.**

**I heard once of a slave who was on board a vessel in a violent storm,**

**and who was whistling contentedly while every one else was in an agony**

**of terror. At last someone asked him if he was not afraid he would be**

**drowned. He replied with a broad grin, "Well, missus, s'pose I is. I**

**don't b'long to myself, and it will only be massa's loss any how."**

**Something of this spirit would deliver us from many of our perplexities**

**and sufferings in service. And with a band of servants thus abandoned**

**to our Master's use and to His care, what might He not accomplish?**

**Truly one such would "chase a thousand, and two would put ten thousand**

**to flight"; and nothing would be impossible to them. For it is nothing**

**with the Lord "to help, whether with many or with them that have no**

**power."**

**May God raise up such an army speedily!**

**And may you, my dear reader enroll your name in this army today and,**

**yielding yourself unto God as one who is alive from the dead, may every**

**one of your members be also yielded unto Him as instruments of**

**righteousness, to be used by Him as He pleases.**

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**Chapter 11**

**DIFFICULTIES CONCERNING GUIDANCE**

**You have now begun, dear reader, the life of faith. You have given**

**yourself to the Lord to be His wholly and altogether, and He has taken**

**you and has begun to mould and fashion you into a vessel unto His**

**honor. Your one most earnest desire is to be very pliable in His hands,**

**and to follow Him whithersoever He may lead you, and you are trusting**

**Him to work in you to will and to do of His good pleasure. But you find**

**a great difficulty here. You have not learned yet to know the voice of**

**the Good Shepherd, and are therefore in great doubt and perplexity as**

**to what really is His will concerning you.**

**Perhaps there are certain paths into which God seems to be calling you,**

**of which your friends utterly disapprove. And these friends, it may be,**

**are older than yourself in the Christian life, and seem to you also to**

**be much further advanced. You can scarcely bear to differ from them or**

**distress them; and you feel also very diffident of yielding to any**

**seeming impressions of duty of which they do not approve. And yet you**

**cannot get rid of these impressions, and you are plunged into great**

**doubt and uneasiness.**

**There is a way out of all these difficulties, to the fully surrendered**

**soul. I would repeat, fully surrendered, because if there is any**

**reserve of will upon any point, it becomes almost impossible to find**

**out the mind of God in reference to that point; and therefore the first**

**thing is to be sure that you really do purpose to obey the Lord in**

**every respect. If however this is the case, and your soul only needs to**

**know the will of God in order to consent to it, then you surely cannot**

**doubt His willingness to make His will known, and to guide you in the**

**right paths. There are many very clear promises in reference to this.**

**Take, for instance, John 10:3, 4: "He calleth His own sheep by name,**

**and leadeth them out. And when He putteth forth His own sheep He goeth**

**before them, and the sheep follow Him, for they know His voice." Or,**

**John 14:26: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the**

**Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring**

**all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Or,**

**James 1:5, 6: "If any of you lack wisdom, let Him ask of God, that**

**giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given**

**him." With such passages as these, and many more like them, we must**

**believe that Divine guidance is promised to us, and our faith must**

**confidently look for and expect it. This is essential; for in James**

**1:6, 7, we are told, "Let him ask in faith nothing wavering. For he**

**that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and**

**tossed. For let not such a man think that he shall receive anything of**

**the Lord."**

**Settle this point then first of all, that Divine guidance has been**

**promised, and that you are sure to have it, if you ask for it; and let**

**no suggestion of doubt turn you from this.**

**Next, you must remember that our God has all knowledge and all wisdom,**

**and that therefore it is very possible He may guide you into paths**

**wherein He knows great blessings are awaiting you, but which to the**

**short-sighted human eyes around you seem sure to result in confusion**

**and loss. You must recognize the fact that God's thoughts are not as**

**man's thoughts, nor His ways as man's ways; and that He who knows the**

**end of things from the beginning, alone can judge of what the results**

**of any course of action may be. You must therefore realize that His**

**very love for you may perhaps lead you to run counter to the loving**

**wishes of even your dearest friends. You must learn from Luke 14:26-33,**

**and similar passages, that in order, not to be saved only, but to be a**

**disciple or follower of your Lord, you may perhaps be called upon to**

**forsake all that you have, and to turn your backs on even father or**

**mother, or brother or sister, or husband or wife, or it may be your own**

**life also. Unless the possibility of this is clearly recognized, the**

**soul would be very likely to get into difficulty, because it often**

**happens that the child of God who enters upon this life of obedience is**

**sooner or later led into paths which meet with the disapproval of those**

**he best loves; and unless he is prepared for this, and can trust the**

**Lord through it all, he will scarcely know what to do.**

**All this, it will of course be understood, is perfectly in harmony with**

**those duties of honor and love which we owe to one another in the**

**various relations of life. The nearer we are to Christ, the more shall**

**we be enabled to exemplify the meekness and gentleness of our Lord, and**

**the more tender will be our consideration for those who are our natural**

**guardians and counsellors. The Master's guidance will always manifest**

**itself by the Master's Spirit, and where, in obedience to Him, we are**

**led to act contrary to the advice or wishes of our friends, we shall**

**prove that this is our motive, by the love and patience which will mark**

**our conduct.**

**But this point having been settled, we come now to the question as to**

**how God's guidance is to come to us, and how we shall be able to know**

**His voice.**

**There are four especial ways in which God speaks: by the voice of**

**Scripture, the voice of the inward impressions of the Holy Spirit, the**

**voice of our own higher judgment, and the voice of providential**

**circumstances.**

**Where these four harmonize, it is safe to say that God speaks. For I**

**lay it down as a foundation principle, which no one can gainsay, that**

**of course His voice will always be in harmony with itself, no matter in**

**how many different ways He may speak. The voices may be many, the**

**message can be but one. If God tells me in one voice to do or to leave**

**undone anything, He cannot possibly tell me the opposite in another**

**voice. If there is a contradiction in the voices, the speaker cannot be**

**the same. Therefore, my rule for distinguishing the voice of God would**

**be to bring it to the test of this harmony.**

**If I have an impression, therefore, I must see if it is in accordance**

**with Scripture, and whether it commends itself to my own higher**

**judgment, and also whether, as we Quakers say, "way opens" for its**

**carrying out. If either one of these tests fail, it is not safe to**

**proceed; but I must wait in quiet trust until the Lord shows me the**

**point of harmony, which He surely will, sooner or later, if it is His**

**voice that has spoken.**

**For we must not overlook the fact that there are other voices that**

**speak to the soul. There is the loud and clamoring voice of self, that**

**is always seeking to be heard. And there are the voices, too, of evil**

**and deceiving spirits, who lie in wait to entrap every traveller**

**entering these higher regions of the spiritual life. In the same**

**epistle which tells us that we are seated in "heavenly places in**

**Christ" (Eph. 2:6), we are also told that we shall have to fight there**

**with spiritual enemies (Eph. 6:12). These spiritual enemies, whoever or**

**whatever they may be, must necessarily communicate with us by means of**

**our spiritual faculties, and their voices, therefore, will be, as the**

**voice of God is, an inward impression made upon our spirits.**

**Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit may tell us, by impressions, what is**

**the will of God concerning us, so also will these spiritual enemies**

**tell us, by impressions, what is their will concerning us, though not**

**of course giving it their name. It is very plain, therefore, that we**

**must have some test or standard by which to try these inward**

**impressions, in order that we may know whose voice it is that is**

**speaking. And that test will always be the harmony to which I have**

**referred. Sometimes, under a mistaken idea of exalting the Divine**

**Spirit, earnest and honest Christians have ignored and even violated**

**the teachings of Scripture, have disregarded the plain pointings of**

**Providence, and have outraged their own higher judgment. God, who sees**

**the sincerity of their hearts, can and does pity and forgive, but the**

**consequences as to this life are often very sad.**

**Our first test, therefore, of the Divine authority of any voice which**

**may seem to speak to us, must be its harmony in moral character with**

**the mind and will of God, as revealed to us in the Gospel of Christ.**

**Whatever is contrary to this, cannot be Divine, because God cannot**

**contradict Himself.**

**Until we have found and obeyed God's will in reference to any subject,**

**as it is revealed in the Bible, we cannot expect a separate direct**

**personal revelation. A great many fatal mistakes are made in this**

**matter of guidance, by the overlooking of this simple rule. Where our**

**Father has written out for us plain directions about anything, He will**

**not, of course, make an especial revelation to us concerning it. No**

**man, for instance, needs or could expect any direct revelation to tell**

**him not to steal, because God has already in the Scriptures plainly**

**declared His will about it. This seems such an obvious thing that I**

**would not speak of it, but that I have frequently met with Christians**

**who have altogether overlooked it, and have gone off into fanaticism as**

**the result. For the Scriptures are far more explicit even about details**

**than most people think. And there are not many important affairs in**

**life for which a clear direction may not be found in God's book. Take**

**the matter of dress, and we have 1 Pet. 3:3, 4, and 1 Tim. 2:9, 10.**

**Take the matter of conversation, and we have Eph. 4:29, and 5:4. Take**

**the matter of avenging injuries and standing up for your rights, and we**

**have Rom. 12:19, 20, 21, and Matt. 5:38-48, and 1 Pet. 2:19-21. Take**

**the matter of forgiving one another, and we have Eph. 4:32 and Mark**

**11:25, 26. Take the matter of conformity to the world, and we have Rom.**

**12:2, and 1 John 2:15-17, and James 4:4. Take the matter of anxieties**

**of all kind, and we have Matt. 6:25-34, and Phil. 4:6, 7.**

**I only give these as examples to show how very full and practical the**

**Bible guidance is. If, therefore, you find yourself in perplexity,**

**first of all search and see whether the Bible speaks on the point in**

**question, asking God to make plain to you by the power of His Spirit,**

**through the Scripture, what is His mind. And whatever shall seem to you**

**to be plainly taught there, that you must obey.**

**When we read and meditate upon this record of God's mind and will, with**

**our understandings thus illuminated by the inspiring Spirit, our**

**obedience will be as truly an obedience to a present, living word, as**

**though it were afresh spoken to us today by our Lord from Heaven. The**

**Bible is not only an ancient message from God sent to us many ages ago,**

**but it is a present message sent to us now each time we read it. "The**

**words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life," and**

**obedience to these words now is a living obedience to a present and**

**personal command.**

**But it is essential in this connection to remember that the Bible is a**

**book of principles, and not a book of disjointed aphorisms. Isolated**

**texts may often be made to sanction things, to which the principles of**

**Scripture are totally opposed. I heard not long ago of a Christian**

**woman in a Western meeting, who, having had the text, "For we walk by**

**faith, and not by sight," brought very vividly before her mind, felt a**

**strong impression that it was a command to be literally obeyed in the**

**outward; and, blindfolding her eyes, insisted on walking up and down**

**the aisle of the meeting-house, as an illustration of the walk of**

**faith. She very soon stumbled and fell against the stove, burning**

**herself seriously, and then wondered at the mysterious dispensation.**

**The principles of Scripture, and her own sanctified common-sense, if**

**applied to this case, would have saved her from the delusion.**

**The second test, therefore, to which our impressions must be brought,**

**is that of our own higher judgment, or common-sense.**

**It is as true now as in the days when Solomon wrote, that a "man of**

**understanding shall attain unto wise counsels"; and his exhortation**

**still continues binding upon us: "Wisdom is the principal thing,**

**therefore get wisdom; and with all thy getting, get understanding."**

**As far as I can see, the Scriptures everywhere make it an essential**

**thing for the children of God to use all the faculties which have been**

**given them, in their journey through this world. They are to use their**

**outward faculties for their outward walk, and their inward faculties**

**for their inward walk. And they might as well expect to be "kept" from**

**dashing their feet against a stone in the outward, if they walk**

**blindfold, as to be "kept" from spiritual stumbling, if they put aside**

**their judgment and common-sense in their interior life.**

**I asked a Christian of "sound mind" lately how she distinguished**

**between the voice of false spirits and the guidance of the Holy Spirit,**

**and she replied promptly, "I rap them over the head, and see if they**

**have any common-sense."**

**Some, however, may say here, "But I thought we were not to depend on**

**our human understanding in Divine things." I answer to this, that we**

**are not to depend on our unenlightened human understanding, but upon**

**our human judgment and common-sense, enlightened by the Spirit of God.**

**That is, God will speak to us through the faculties He has Himself**

**given us, and not independently of them. That is, just as we are to use**

**our eyes when we walk, no matter how full of faith we may be, so also**

**we are to use our mental faculties in our inward life.**

**The third and last test to which our impressions must be brought is**

**that of providential circumstances. If a "leading" is of God, the way**

**will always open for it. Our Lord assures us of this when He says in**

**John 10:4, "And when He putteth forth His own sheep he goeth before**

**them, and the sheep follow Him, for they know his voice." Notice here**

**the expression "goeth before," and "follow." He goes before to open a**

**way, and we are to follow in the way thus opened. It is never a sign of**

**a Divine leading when the Christian insists on opening his own way, and**

**riding rough-shod over all opposing things. If the Lord "goes before"**

**us, He will open all doors for us, and we shall not need ourselves to**

**hammer them down.**

**The fourth point I would make is this: that, just as our impressions**

**must be tested, as I have shown, by the other three voices, so must**

**these other voices be tested by our inward impressions; and if we feel**

**a "stop in our minds" about anything, we must wait until that is**

**removed before acting. A Christian who had advanced with unusual**

**rapidity in the Divine life, gave me as her secret this simple receipt:**

**"I always mind the checks." We must not ignore the voice of our inward**

**impressions, nor ride rough-shod over them, any more than we must the**

**other three voices of which I have spoken.**

**These four voices, then, will always be found to agree in any truly**

**Divine leading, i.e., the voice of our impressions, the voice of**

**Scripture, the voice of our own sanctified judgment, and the voice of**

**providential circumstances; and where these four do not all agree at**

**first, we must wait until they do.**

**A divine sense of "oughtness," derived from the harmony of all God's**

**various voices, is the only safe foundation for any action.**

**And now I have guarded the points of danger, do permit me to let myself**

**out for a little to the blessedness and joy of this direct**

**communication of God's will to us. It seems to me to be the grandest of**

**privileges. In the first place, that God should love me enough to care**

**about the details of my life is perfectly wonderful. And then that He**

**should be willing to tell me all about it, and to let me know just now**

**to live and walk so as to perfectly please Him, seems almost too good**

**to be true. We never care about the little details of people's lives**

**unless we love them. It is a matter of indifference to us with the**

**majority of people we meet, as to what they do or how they spend their**

**time; but as soon as we begin to love any one, we begin at once to**

**care. That God cares, therefore, is just a precious proof of His love;**

**and it is most blessed to have Him speak to us about everything in our**

**lives, about our duties, about our pleasures, about our friendships,**

**about our occupations, about all that we do, or think, or say. You must**

**know this in your own experience, dear reader, if you would come into**

**the full joy and privilege of this life hid with Christ in God, for it**

**is one of it most precious gifts!**

**God's promise is, that He will work in us to will as well as to do of**

**His good pleasure. This, of course, means that He will take possession**

**of our will, and work it for us, and that His suggestions will come to**

**us, not so much commands from the outside, as desires springing up**

**within. They will originate in our will; we shall feel as though we**

**wanted to do so and so, not as though we must. And this makes it a**

**service of perfect liberty; for it is always easy to do what we desire**

**to do, let the accompanying circumstances be as difficult as they may.**

**Every mother knows that she could secure perfect and easy obedience in**

**her child, if she could only get into that child's will and work it for**

**him, making him want himself to do the things she willed he should. And**

**this is what our Father does for His children in the new dispensation;**

**He writes His laws on our hearts and on our minds, and we love them,**

**and are drawn to our obedience by our affections and judgment, not**

**driven by our fears.**

**The way in which the Holy Spirit, therefore, usually works in His**

**direct guidance is to impress upon the mind a wish or desire to do or**

**leave undone certain things.**

**The soul when engaged, perhaps, in prayer, feels a sudden suggestion**

**made to its inmost consciousness in reference to a certain point of**

**duty. "I would like to do this or the other," it thinks, "I wish I**

**could." Or perhaps the suggestion may come as question, "I wonder**

**whether I had not better do so and so?" Or it may be only at first in**

**the way of a conviction that such is the right and best thing to be**

**done.**

**At once the matter should be committed to the Lord, with an instant**

**consent of the will to obey Him; and if the suggestion is in accordance**

**with the Scriptures, and a sanctified judgment, and with Providential**

**circumstances, an immediate obedience is the safest and easiest course.**

**At the moment when the Spirit speaks, it is always easy to obey; if the**

**soul hesitates and begins to reason, it becomes more and more difficult**

**continually. As a general rule, the first convictions are the right**

**ones in a fully surrendered heart; for God is faithful in His dealings**

**with us, and will cause His voice to be heard before any other voices.**

**Such convictions, therefore, should never be met by reasoning. Prayer**

**and trust are the only safe attitudes of the soul; and even these**

**should be but momentary, as it were, lest the time for action should**

**pass and the blessing be missed.**

**If, however, the suggestion does not seem quite clear enough to act**

**upon, and doubt and perplexity ensue, especially if it is something**

**about which one's friends hold a different opinion, then we shall need**

**to wait for further light. The Scripture rule is, "Whatsoever is not of**

**faith is sin"; which means plainly that we must never act in doubt. A**

**clear conviction of right is the only safe guide. But we must wait in**

**faith, and in an attitude of entire surrender, saying, "Yes,"**

**continually to the will of our Lord, whatever it may be. I believe the**

**lack of a will thus surrendered lies at the root of many of our**

**difficulties; and next to this lies the want of faith in any real**

**Divine guidance. God's children are amazingly skeptical here. They read**

**the promises and they feel the need, but somehow they cannot seem to**

**believe the guidance will be given to them; as if God should want us to**

**obey His voice, but did not know how to make us hear and understand**

**Him. It is, therefore, very possible for God to speak, but for the soul**

**not to hear, because it does not believe He is speaking. No earthly**

**parent or master could possibly guide his children or servants, if they**

**should refuse to believe he was speaking, and should not accept his**

**voice as being really the expression of his will.**

**God, who at sundry times and in manners many,**

**Spake to the fathers and is speaking still,**

**Eager to see if ever or if any**

**Souls will obey and hearken to His will.**

**Every moment of our lives our Father is seeking to reveal Himself to**

**us. "I that speak unto thee am He. I that speak in thy heart, I that**

**speak in thy outward circumstances, I that speak in thy losses, I that**

**speak in thy gains, I that speak in thy sorrows or in thy joys, I that**

**speak everywhere and in everything, am He."**

**We must, therefore, have perfect confidence that the Lord's voice is**

**speaking to us to teach and lead us, and that He will give us the**

**wisdom needed for our right guidance; and when we have asked for light,**

**we must accept our strongest conviction of "oughtness" as being the**

**guidance we have sought.**

**A few rules will help us here.**

**I. We must believe that God will guide us.**

**II. We must surrender our own will to His guidance.**

**III. We must hearken for the Divine voice.**

**IV. We must wait for the divine harmony.**

**V. When we are sure of the guidance, we must obey without question.**

**God only is the creature's home;**

**Though rough and strait the rod,**

**Yet nothing less can satisfy**

**The love that longs, for God.**

**How little of that road, my soul!**

**How little hast thou gone!**

**Take heart, and let the thought of God**

**Allure thee further on.**

**The perfect way is hard to flesh;**

**It is not hard to love;**

**If thou wert sick for want of God,**

**How swiftly wouldst thou move.**

**Dole not thy duties out to God,**

**But let thy hand be free;**

**Look long at Jesus, His sweet love,**

**How was it dealt to thee?**

**And only this perfection needs**

**A heart kept calm all day,**

**To catch the words the Spirit there,**

**From hour to hour may say.**

**Then keep thy conscience sensitive,**

**No inward token miss:**

**And go where grace entices thee--**

**Perfection lies in this.**

**Be docile to thine unseen Guide,**

**Love Him as He loves thee;**

**Time and obedience are enough,**

**And thou a saint shalt be.**

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**Chapter 12**

**CONCERNING TEMPTATION**

**Certain very great mistakes are made concerning this matter of**

**temptation, in the practical working out of this life of faith.**

**First of all, people seem to expect that, after the soul has entered**

**into its rest in God, temptations will cease; and to think that the**

**promised deliverance is not only to be from yielding to temptation, but**

**even also from being tempted. Consequently, when they find the**

**Canaanite still in the land, and see the cities great and walled up to**

**Heaven, they are utterly discouraged, and think they must have gone**

**wrong in some way, and that this cannot be the true land after all.**

**Then, next they make the mistake of looking upon temptation as sin, and**

**of blaming themselves for what in reality is the fault of the enemy**

**only. This brings them into condemnation and discouragement; and**

**discouragement, if continued in, always ends at last in actual sin. The**

**enemy makes an easy prey of a discouraged soul; so that we fall often**

**from the very fear of having fallen.**

**To meet the first of these difficulties it is only necessary to refer**

**to the Scripture declarations, that the Christian life is to be**

**throughout a warfare; and that, especially when seated in heavenly**

**places in Christ Jesus, we are to wrestle against spiritual enemies**

**there, whose power and skill to tempt us must doubtless be far superior**

**to any we have ever heretofore encountered. As a fact, temptations**

**generally increase in strength tenfold after we have entered into the**

**interior life, rather than decrease; and no amount or sort of them must**

**ever for a moment lead us to suppose we have not really found the true**

**abiding place. Strong temptations are generally a sign of great grace,**

**rather than of little grace. When the children of Israel had first left**

**Egypt, the Lord did not lead them through the country of the**

**Philistines, although that was the nearest way; for God said, "lest**

**peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to**

**Egypt." But afterwards, when they learned better how to trust Him, He**

**permitted their enemies to attack them. Then also in their wilderness**

**journey they met with but few enemies and fought but few battles,**

**compared to those in the land, where they found seven great nations and**

**thirty-one kings to be conquered, besides walled cities to be taken,**

**and giants to be overcome.**

**They could not have fought with the Canaanites, or the Hittites, and**

**the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites,**

**until they had gone into the land where these enemies were. And the**

**very power of your temptations, dear Christian, therefore, may perhaps**

**be one of the strongest proofs that you really are in the land you have**

**been seeking to enter, because they are temptations peculiar to that**

**land. You must never allow your temptations to cause you to question**

**the fact of your having entered the promised "heavenly places."**

**The second mistake is not quite so easy to deal with. It seems hardly**

**worth while to say that temptation is not sin, and yet most of the**

**distress about it arises from not understanding this fact. The very**

**suggestion of wrong seems to bring pollution with it, and the evil**

**agency not being recognized, the poor tempted soul begins to feel as if**

**it must be very bad indeed, and very far off from God to have had such**

**thoughts and suggestions. It is as though a burglar should break into a**

**man's house to steal, and, when the master of the house began to resist**

**him and to drive him out, should turn round and accuse the owner of**

**being himself the thief. It is the enemy's grand ruse for entrapping**

**us. He comes and whispers suggestions of evil to us, doubts,**

**blasphemies, jealousies, envyings, and pride; and then turns round and**

**says, "Oh, how wicked you must be to think of such things! It is very**

**plain that you are not trusting the Lord; for if you were, it would**

**have been impossible for these things to have entered your heart." This**

**reasoning sounds so very plausible that the soul often accepts it as**

**true, and at once comes under condemnation, and is filled with**

**discouragement; then it is easy for it to be led on into actual sin.**

**One of the most fatal things in the life of faith is discouragement.**

**One of the most helpful is cheerfulness. A very wise man once said that**

**in overcoming temptations, cheerfulness was the first thing,**

**cheerfulness the second, and cheerfulness the third. We must expect to**

**conquer. That is why the Lord said so often to Joshua, "Be strong and**

**of a good courage"; "Be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed"; "Only be**

**thou strong and very courageous." And it is also the reason He says to**

**us, "Let not your heart he troubled neither let it be afraid." The**

**power of temptation is in the fainting of our own hearts. The enemy**

**knows this well, and always begins his assaults by discouraging us, if**

**it can in any way be accomplished.**

**Sometimes this discouragement arises from what we think is a righteous**

**grief and disgust at ourselves that such things could be any temptation**

**to us; but which is really a mortification arising from the fact that**

**we have been indulging in a secret self-congratulation that our tastes**

**were too pure, or our separation from the world was too complete for**

**such things to tempt us. We have expected something from ourselves, and**

**have been sorely disappointed not to find that something there, and are**

**discouraged in consequence. This mortification and discouragement are**

**really a far worse condition than the temptation itself, though they**

**present an appearance of true humility, for they are nothing but the**

**results of wounded self-love. True humility can bear to see its own**

**utter weakness and foolishness revealed, because it never expected**

**anything from itself, and knows that its only hope and expectation must**

**be in God. Therefore, instead of discouraging the soul from trusting,**

**it drives it to a deeper and more utter trust. But the counterfeit**

**humility which springs from self, plunges the soul into the depths of a**

**faithless discouragement, and drives it into the very sin at which it**

**is so distressed.**

**I remember once hearing an allegory that illustrated this to me**

**wonderfully. Satan called together a council of his servants to consult**

**how they might make a good man sin. One evil spirit started up and**

**said, "I will make him sin." "How will you do it?" asked Satan. "I will**

**set before him the pleasures of sin," was the reply; "I will tell him**

**of its delights and the rich rewards it brings." "Ah," said Satan,**

**"that will not do; he has tried, it, and knows better than that." Then**

**another spirit started up and said, "I will make him sin." "What will**

**you do?" asked Satan. "I will tell him of the pains and sorrows of**

**virtue. I will show him that virtue has no delights, and brings no**

**rewards." "Ah, no!" exclaimed Satan, "that will not do at all; for he**

**has tried it, and knows that `wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness**

**and all her paths are peace.'" "Well," said another imp, starting up,**

**"I will undertake to make him sin." "And what will you do?" asked**

**Satan, again. "I will discourage his soul," was the short reply. "Ah,**

**that will do," cried Satan,--"that will do! We shall conquer him now."**

**And they did.**

**An old writer says, "All discouragement is from the devil"; and I wish**

**every Christian would just take this as a pocket-piece, and never**

**forget it. We must fly from discouragement as we would from sin.**

**But this is impossible if we fail to recognize the true agency in**

**temptation. For if the temptations are our own fault, we cannot help**

**being discouraged. But they are not. The Bible says, "Blessed is the**

**man that endureth temptation"; and we are exhorted to "count it all joy**

**when we fall into divers temptations." Temptation, therefore, cannot be**

**sin; and the truth is, it is no more a sin to hear these whispers and**

**suggestions of evil in our souls, than it is for us to hear the**

**swearing or wicked talk of bad men as we pass along the street. The sin**

**only comes in either case by our stopping and joining in with them. If,**

**when the wicked suggestions come, we turn from them at once, as we**

**would from wicked talk, and pay no more attention to them, we do not**

**sin. But if we carry them on in our minds, and roll them under our**

**tongues, and dwell on them with a half-consent of our will to them as**

**true, then we sin. We may be enticed by evil a thousand times a day**

**without sin, and we cannot help these enticings. But if the enemy can**

**succeed in making us think that his enticings are our sin, he has**

**accomplished half the battle, and can hardly fail to gain a complete**

**victory.**

**A dear lady once came to me under great darkness, simply from not**

**understanding this. She had been living very happily in the life of**

**faith for some time, and had been so free from temptation as almost to**

**begin to think she would never be tempted any more. But suddenly a very**

**peculiar form of temptation had assailed her, which had horrified her.**

**She found that the moment she began to pray, dreadful thoughts of all**

**kinds would rush into her mind. She had lived a very sheltered,**

**innocent life, and these thoughts seemed so awful to her, that she felt**

**she must be one of the most wicked of sinners to be capable of having**

**them. She began by thinking she could not possibly have entered into**

**the rest of faith, and ended by concluding that she had never even been**

**born again. Her soul was in an agony of distress. I told her that these**

**dreadful thoughts were altogether the suggestions of the enemy, who**

**came to her the moment she kneeled in prayer, and poured them into her**

**mind, and that she herself was not to blame for them at all; that she**

**could not help them any more than she could help hearing if a wicked**

**man should pour out his blasphemies in her presence. And I urged her to**

**recognize and treat them as from the enemy; not to blame herself or be**

**discouraged, but to turn at once to Jesus and commit them to Him. I**

**showed her how great an advantage the enemy had gained by making her**

**think these thoughts were originated by herself, and plunging her into**

**condemnation and discouragement on account of them. And I assured her**

**she would find a speedy victory if she would pay no attention to them;**

**but, ignoring their presence, would simply turn her back on them and**

**look to the Lord.**

**She grasped the truth, and the next time these thoughts came she said**

**to the enemy, "I have found you out now. It is you who are suggesting**

**these dreadful thoughts to me, and I hate them, and will have nothing**

**to do with them. The Lord is my Saviour; take them to Him, and settle**

**them in His presence." Immediately the baffled enemy, finding himself**

**discovered, fled in confusion, and her soul was perfectly delivered.**

**Another thing also. The enemy knows that if a Christian recognizes a**

**suggestion of evil as coming from him, he will recoil from it far more**

**quickly than if it seems to be the suggestion of his own mind. If Satan**

**prefaced each temptation with the words, "I am Satan, your relentless**

**enemy; I have come to make you sin," I suppose we would hardly feel any**

**desire at all to yield to his suggestions. He has to hide himself in**

**order to make his baits attractive. And our victory will be far more**

**easily gained if we are not ignorant of his devices, but recognize him**

**at his very first approach.**

**We also make another great mistake about temptations in thinking that**

**all time spent in combating them is lost. Hours pass, and we seem to**

**have made no progress, because we have been so beset with temptations.**

**But it often happens that we have been serving God far more truly**

**during these hours, than in our times of comparative freedom from**

**temptation. Temptation is really more the devil's wrath against God,**

**than against us. He cannot touch our Saviour, but he can wound our**

**Saviour by conquering us, and our ruin is important to him only as it**

**accomplishes this. We are, therefore, really fighting our Lord's**

**battles when we are fighting temptation, and hours are often worth days**

**to us under these circumstances. We read, "Blessed is the man that**

**endureth temptation"; and I am sure this means enduring the continuance**

**of it and its frequent recurrence. Nothing so cultivates the grace of**

**patience as the endurance of temptation, and nothing so drives the soul**

**to an utter dependence upon the Lord Jesus as its continuance. And**

**finally, nothing brings more praise and honor and glory to our dearest**

**Lord Himself, than the trial of our faith which comes through manifold**

**temptations. We are told that it is more precious than gold, though it**

**be tried with fire, and that we, who patiently endure the trial, shall**

**receive for our reward "the crown of life which the Lord hath promised**

**to them that love Him."**

**We cannot wonder, therefore, any longer at the exhortation with which**

**the Holy Ghost opens the Book of James: "Count it all joy when ye fall**

**into divers temptations, knowing this, that the trying of your faith**

**worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may**

**be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."**

**Temptation is plainly to be the blessed instrument used by God to**

**complete our perfection, and thus the enemy's own weapons are turned**

**against himself, and we see how it is that all things, even**

**temptations, can work together for good to them that love God.**

**As to the way of victory over temptations, it seems hardly necessary to**

**say to those whom I am at this time especially addressing, that it is**

**to be by faith. For this is, of course, the foundation upon which the**

**whole interior life rests. Our one great motto is throughout, "We are**

**nothing, Christ is all." And always and everywhere we have started out**

**to stand, and walk, and overcome, and live by faith. We have discovered**

**our own utter helplessness, and know that we cannot do anything for**

**ourselves. Our only way, therefore, is to hand the temptation over to**

**our Lord, and trust Him to conquer it for us. But when we put it into**

**His hands we must leave it there. It must be as real a committing of**

**ourselves to Him for victory, as it was at first a committing of**

**ourselves to Him for salvation. He must do all for us in the one case,**

**as completely as in the other. It was faith only then, and it must be**

**faith only now.**

**And the victories which the Lord works in conquering the temptations of**

**those who thus trust Him are nothing short of miracles, as thousands**

**can testify.**

**But into this part of the subject I cannot go at present, as my object**

**has been rather to present temptation in its true light, than to**

**develop the way of victory over it. I want to deliver conscientious,**

**faithful souls from the bondage into which they are sure to be brought,**

**if they fail to understand the true nature and use of temptation, and**

**confound it with sin. I want that they should not be ignorant of the**

**fact that temptations are, after all, an invaluable part of our soul's**

**development; and that, whatever may be their original source, they are**

**used by God to work out in us many blessed graces of character which**

**would otherwise be lacking. Wherever temptation is, there is God also,**

**superintending and controlling its power. "Where wert thou, Lord I**

**while I was being tempted?" cried the saint of the desert. "Close**

**beside thee, my son, all the while," was the tender reply.**

**Temptations try us; and we are worth nothing if we are not tried. They**

**develop our spiritual strength and courage and knowledge; and our**

**development is the one thing God cries for. How shallow would all our**

**spirituality be if it were not for temptations. "Blessed is the man**

**that endureth temptation: for when he is tried he shall receive the**

**crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him."**

**This "crown of life" will be worth all that it has cost of trial and**

**endurance to obtain it; and without these it could not be attained.**

**An invalid lady procured once the cocoon of a very beautiful butterfly**

**with unusually magnificent wings hoping to have the pleasure of seeing**

**it emerge from its cocoon in her sick-chamber. She watched it eagerly**

**as spring drew on, and finally was delighted to see the butterfly**

**beginning to emerge. But it seemed to have great difficulty. It pushed,**

**and strained, and struggled, and seemed to make so little headway, that**

**she concluded it must need some help, and with a pair of delicate**

**scissors she finally clipped the tight cord that seemed to bind in the**

**opening of the cocoon. Immediately the cocoon opened wide, and the**

**butterfly escaped without any further struggle. She congratulated**

**herself on the success of her experiment, but found in a moment that**

**something was the matter with the butterfly. It was all out of the**

**cocoon it is true, but its great wings were lifeless and colorless, and**

**dragged after it as a useless burden. For a few days it lived a**

**miserable sickly life, and then died, without having once lifted its**

**powerless wings. The lady was sorely disappointed and could not**

**understand it. But when she related the circumstance to a naturalist,**

**he told her that it had all been her own fault. That it required just**

**that pushing and struggling to send the life fluid into the veins of**

**the wings, and that her mistaken kindness in shortening the struggle,**

**had left the wings lifeless and colorless.**

**Just so do our spiritual wings need the struggle and effort of our**

**conflict with temptation and trial; and to grant us an escape from it**

**would be to weaken the power of our soul to "mount up with wings as**

**eagles," and would deprive us of the "crown of life" which is promised**

**to those who endure.**

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**Chapter 13**

**FAILURES**

**The very title of this chapter may perhaps startle some. "Failures,"**

**they will say; "we thought there were no failures in this life of**

**faith!"**

**To this I would answer that there ought not to be, and need not be;**

**but, as a fact, there sometimes are. And we have got to deal with**

**facts, and not with theories. No teacher of this interior life ever**

**says that it becomes impossible to sin; they only insist that sin**

**ceases to be a necessity, and that a possibility of uniform victory is**

**opened before us. And there are very few who do not confess that, as to**

**their own actual experience, they have at times been overcome by**

**momentary temptation.**

**Of course, in speaking of sin here, I mean conscious, known sin. I do**

**not touch on the subject of sins of ignorance, or what is called the**

**inevitable sin of our nature, which are all covered by the atonement,**

**and do not disturb our fellowship with God. I have no desire nor**

**ability to treat of the doctrines concerning sin; these I will leave**

**with the theologians to discuss and settle, while I speak only of the**

**believer's experience in the matter. And I wish it to be fully**

**understood that in all I shall say, I have reference simply to that**

**which comes within the range of our consciousness.**

**Misunderstanding, then, on this point of known or conscious sin, opens**

**the way for great dangers in the higher Christian life. When a**

**believer, who has, as he trusts, entered upon the highway of holiness,**

**finds himself surprised into sin, he is tempted either to be utterly**

**discouraged, and to give everything up as lost; or else, in order to**

**preserve the doctrine untouched, he feels it necessary to cover his sin**

**up, calling it infirmity, and refusing to be honest and above-board**

**about it. Either of these courses is equally fatal to any real growth**

**and progress in the life of holiness. The only way is to face the sad**

**fact at once, call the thing by its right name, and discover, if**

**possible, the reason and the remedy. This life of union with God**

**requires the utmost honesty with Him and with ourselves. The communion**

**which the sin itself would only momentarily disturb, is sure to be lost**

**by any dishonest dealing with it. A sudden failure is no reason for**

**being discouraged and giving up all as lost. Neither is the integrity**

**of our doctrine touched by it. We are not preaching a state, but a**

**walk. The highway of holiness is not a place, but a way. Sanctification**

**is not a thing to be picked up at a certain stage of our experience,**

**and forever after possessed, but it is a life to be lived day by day,**

**and hour by hour. We may for a moment turn aside from a path, but the**

**path is not obliterated by our wandering, and can be instantly**

**regained. And in this life and walk of faith, there may be momentary**

**failures, which, although very sad and greatly to be deplored, need**

**not, if rightly met, disturb the attitude of the soul as to entire**

**consecration and perfect trust, nor interrupt, for more than the**

**passing moment, its happy communion with its Lord.**

**The great point is an instant return to God. Our sin is no reason for**

**ceasing to trust, but only an unanswerable argument why we must trust**

**more fully than ever. From whatever cause we have been betrayed into**

**failure, it is very certain that there is no remedy to be found for it**

**in discouragement. As well might a child who is learning to walk, lie**

**down in despair when he has fallen, and refuse to take another step; as**

**a believer, who is seeking to learn how to live and walk by faith, give**

**up in despair because of having fallen into sin. The only way in both**

**cases is to get right up and try again. When the children of Israel had**

**met with that disastrous defeat, soon after their entrance into the**

**land, before the little city of Ai, they were all so utterly**

**discouraged that we read:**

**"Wherefore the hearts of the people melted, and became as water. And**

**Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the**

**ark of the Lord until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and**

**put dust upon their heads. And Joshua said, Alas! O Lord God, wherefore**

**hast Thou at all brought this people over Jordan to deliver us into the**

**hands of the Amorites to destroy us? Would to God we had been content,**

**and dwelt on the other side Jordan! O Lord, what shall I say, when**

**Israel turneth their backs before their enemies? For the Canaanites and**

**all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall environ us**

**round and cut off our name from the earth: and what wilt Thou do unto**

**Thy great name?"**

**What a wail of despair this was! And how exactly it is repeated by many**

**a child of God in the present day, whose heart, because of a defeat,**

**melts and becomes as water, and who cries out, "Would to God we had**

**been content and dwelt on the other side Jordan!" and predicts for**

**itself further failures and even utter discomfiture before its enemies.**

**No doubt Joshua thought then, as we are apt to think now, that**

**discouragement and despair were the only proper and safe condition**

**after such a failure. But God thought otherwise. "And the Lord said**

**unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore liest thou upon thy face?"**

**The proper thing to do was not to abandon themselves thus to utter**

**discouragement, humble as it might look, but at once to face the evil**

**and get rid of it, and afresh and immediately to "sanctify themselves."**

**"Up, sanctify the people," is always God's command. "Lie down and be**

**discouraged," is always the enemy's temptation. Our feeling is that it**

**is presumptuous, and even almost impertinent, to go at once to the**

**Lord, after having sinned against Him. It seems as if we ought to**

**suffer the consequences our sin first for a little while, and endure**

**the accusings of our conscience. And we can hardly believe that the**

**Lord can be willing at once to receive us back into loving fellowship**

**with Himself.**

**A little girl once expressed the feeling to me, with a child's**

**outspoken candor. She had asked whether the Lord Jesus always forgave**

**us for our sins as soon as we asked Him, and I had said, "Yes, of**

**course He does." "Just as soon" she repeated, doubtingly. "Yes," I**

**replied, "the very minute we ask, He forgives us." "Well," she said**

**deliberately, "I cannot believe that. I should think He would make us**

**feel sorry for two or three days first. And then I should think He**

**would make us ask Him a great many times, and in a very pretty way too,**

**not just in common talk. And I believe that is the way He does, and you**

**need not try to make me think He forgives me right at once, no matter**

**what the Bible says." She only said what most Christians think, and,**

**what is worse, what most Christians act on, making their discouragement**

**and their very remorse separate them infinitely further off from God**

**than their sin would have done. Yet it is so totally contrary to the**

**way we like our children to act towards us, that I wonder how we ever**

**could have conceived such an idea of God. How a mother grieves when a**

**naughty child goes off alone in despairing remorse, and doubts her**

**willingness to forgive; and how, on the other hand, her whole heart**

**goes out in welcoming love to the darling who runs to her at once and**

**begs her forgiveness! Surely our God knew this yearning love when He**

**said to us, "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your**

**backslidings."**

**The fact is, that the same moment which brings the consciousness of**

**having sinned, ought to bring also the consciousness of being forgiven.**

**This is especially essential to an unwavering walk in the highway of**

**holiness, for no separation from God can be tolerated here for an**

**instant.**

**We can only walk in this path by looking continually unto Jesus, moment**

**by moment; and if our eyes are taken off of Him to look upon our own**

**sin and our own weakness, we shall leave the path at once. The**

**believer, therefore, who has, as he trusts, entered upon this highway,**

**if he finds himself overcome by sin, must flee with it instantly to the**

**Lord. He must act on 1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, He is**

**faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all**

**unrighteousness." He must not hide his sin and seek to salve it over**

**with excuses, or to push it out of his memory by the lapse of time. But**

**he must do as the children of Israel did, rise up "early in the**

**morning," and "run" to the place where the evil thing is hidden, and**

**take it out of its hiding-place, and lay it "out before the Lord." He**

**must confess his sin. And then he must stone it with stones, and burn**

**it with fire, and utterly put it away from him, and raise over it a**

**great heap of stones, that it may be forever hidden from his sight. And**

**he must believe, then and there, that God is, according to His word,**

**faithful and just to forgive him his sin, and that He does do it; and**

**further, that He also cleanses him from all unrighteousness. He must**

**claim an immediate forgiveness and an immediate cleansing by faith, and**

**must go on trusting harder and more absolutely than ever.**

**As soon as Israel's sin had been brought to light and put away, at once**

**God's word came again in a message of glorious encouragement, "Fear**

**not, neither be thou dismayed . . . See, I have given into thy hand the**

**king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land." Our courage**

**must rise higher than ever, and we must abandon ourselves more**

**completely to the Lord, that His mighty power may the more perfectly**

**work in us all the good pleasure of His will. Moreover, we must forget**

**our sin as soon as it is thus confessed and forgiven. We must not dwell**

**on it, and examine it, and indulge in a luxury of distress and remorse.**

**We must not put it on a pedestal, and then walk around it and view it**

**on every side, and so magnify it into a mountain that hides our God**

**from our eyes. We must follow the example of Paul, and "forgetting**

**those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things**

**which are before," we must "press toward the mark for the prize of the**

**high calling of God in Christ Jesus."**

**I would like to bring up two contrastive illustrations of these things.**

**One was an earnest Christian man, an active worker in the Church, who**

**had been living for several months in the enjoyment of full salvation.**

**He was suddenly overcome by a temptation to treat a brother unkindly.**

**Not having supposed it possible that he could ever sin again, he was at**

**once plunged into the deepest discouragement, and concluded he had been**

**altogether mistaken, and had never entered into the life of full trust**

**at all. Day by day his discouragement increased, until it became**

**despair, and he concluded he had never even been born again, and gave**

**himself up for lost. He spent three years of utter misery, going**

**further and further away from God, and being gradually drawn off into**

**one sin after another, until his life was a curse to himself and to all**

**around him. His health failed under the terrible burden, and fears were**

**entertained for his reason.**

**At the end of three years he met a Christian lady, who understood the**

**truth about sin that I have been trying to explain. In a few moments'**

**conversation she found out his trouble, and at once said, "You sinned**

**in that act, there is no doubt about it, and I do not want you to try**

**and excuse it. But have you never confessed it to the Lord and asked**

**Him to forgive you?" "Confessed it!" he exclaimed, "why it seems to me**

**I have done nothing but confess it, and entreat God to forgive me night**

**and day for all these three dreadful years." "And you have never**

**believed He did forgive you?" asked the lady. "No," said the poor man,**

**"how could I, for I never felt as if He did?" "But suppose He had said**

**He forgave you, would not that have done as well as for you to feel**

**it?" "Oh, yes," replied the man, "if God said it, of course I would**

**believe it." "Very well, He does say so," was the lady's answer, and**

**she turned to the verse we have taken above 1 John 1:9) and read it**

**aloud. "Now," she continued, "you have been all these three years**

**confessing and confessing your sin, and all the while God's record has**

**been declaring that He was faithful and just to forgive it and to**

**cleanse you, and yet you have never once believed it. You have been**

**`making God a liar' all this while by refusing to believe His record."**

**The poor man saw the whole thing, and was dumb with amazement and**

**consternation; and when the lady proposed they should kneel down, and**

**that he should confess his past unbelief and sin, and should claim,**

**then and there, a present forgiveness and a present cleansing, he**

**obeyed like one in a maze. But the result was glorious. In a few**

**moments the light broke in, and he burst out into praise at the**

**wonderful deliverance. In three minutes his soul was enabled to**

**traverse back by faith the whole long weary journey that he had been**

**three years in making, and he found himself once more resting in Jesus,**

**and rejoicing in the fulness of His salvation.**

**The other illustration was the case of a Christian lady who had been**

**living in the land of promise about two weeks, and who had had a very**

**bright and victorious experience. Suddenly, at the end of that time,**

**she was overcome by a violent burst of anger. For a moment a flood of**

**discouragement swept over her soul. The enemy said, "There, now, that**

**shows it was all a mistake. Of course you have been deceived about the**

**whole thing, and have never entered into the life of full trust at all.**

**And now you may as well give up altogether, for you never can**

**consecrate yourself any more entirely, nor trust any more fully, than**

**you did this time; so it is very plain this life of holiness is not for**

**you!" These thoughts flashed through her mind in a moment, but she was**

**well taught in the ways of God, and she said at once, "Yes, I have**

**sinned, and it is very sad. But the Bible says that if we confess our**

**sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us**

**from all unrighteousness, and I believe He will do it."**

**She did not delay a moment, but while still boiling over with anger,**

**she ran, she could not walk, into a room where she could be alone, and**

**kneeling down beside the bed, she said, "Lord, I confess my sin. I have**

**sinned, I am even at this very moment sinning. I hate it, but I cannot**

**get rid of it. I confess it with shame and confusion of face to Thee.**

**And now I believe that, according to Thy word, Thou dost forgive and**

**Thou dost cleanse." She said it out loud, for the inward turmoil was**

**too great for it to be said inside. As the words "Thou dost forgive and**

**Thou dost cleanse" passed her lips, the deliverance came. The Lord**

**said, "Peace, be still," and there was a great calm. A flood of light**

**and joy burst on her soul, the enemy fled, and she was more than**

**conqueror through Him that loved her. The whole thing, the sin and the**

**recovery from it, had occupied not five minutes, and her feet trod on**

**more firmly than ever in the blessed highway of holiness. Thus the**

**valley of Achor became to her a door of hope, and she sang afresh and**

**with deeper meaning her song of deliverance, "I will sing unto the**

**Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously."**

**The truth is, the only remedy, after all in every emergency, is to**

**trust in the Lord. And if this is all we ought to do, and all we can**

**do, is it not better to do it at once? I have often been brought up**

**short by the question, "Well, what can I do but trust?" And I have**

**realized at once the folly of seeking for deliverance in any other way,**

**by saying to myself, "I shall have to come to simple trusting in the**

**end, and why not come to it at once now in the beginning?" It is a life**

**and walk of faith we have entered upon, and if we fail in it our only**

**recovery must lie in an increase of faith, not in a lessening of it.**

**Let every failure, then, if any occur, drive you instantly to the Lord,**

**with a more complete abandonment and a more perfect trust; and you will**

**find that, sad as they are, they will not take you out of the land of**

**rest, nor permanently interrupt your sweet communion with Him.**

**And now, having shown the way of deliverance from failure, I want to**

**say a little as to the causes of failure in this life of full**

**salvation. The causes do not lie in the strength of the temptation nor**

**in our own weakness, nor, above all, in any lack in the power or**

**willingness of our Saviour to save us. The promise to Israel was**

**positive, "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the**

**days of thy life." And the promise to us is equally positive. "God is**

**faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able;**

**but will with the temptation also make a way of escape that ye may be**

**able to bear it."**

**The men of Ai were "but few," and yet the people who had conquered the**

**mighty Jericho "fled before the men of Ai." It was not the strength of**

**their enemy, neither had God failed them. The cause of their defeat lay**

**somewhere else, and the Lord Himself declares it, "Israel hath sinned,**

**and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them; for**

**they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen and**

**dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff.**

**Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies,**

**but turned their backs upon their enemies." It was a hidden evil that**

**conquered them. Deep down under the earth, in an obscure tent in that**

**vast army, was hidden something against which God had a controversy,**

**and this little hidden thing made the whole army helpless before their**

**enemies. "There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel;**

**thou canst not stand before thine enemies until ye take away the**

**accursed thing from among you."**

**The teaching here is simply this, that anything allowed in the heart**

**which is contrary to the will of God, let it seem ever so**

**insignificant, or be ever so deeply hidden, will cause us to fall**

**before our enemies. Any root of bitterness cherished towards another,**

**any self-seeking and harsh judgments indulged in, any slackness in**

**obeying the voice of the Lord, any doubtful habits or surroundings, any**

**one of these things will effectually cripple and paralyze our spiritual**

**life. We may have hidden the evil in the most remote corner of our**

**hearts, and may have covered it over from our sight, refusing even to**

**recognize its existence, of which, however, we cannot help being all**

**the time secretly aware. We may steadily ignore it, and persist in**

**declarations of consecration and full trust, we may be more earnest**

**than ever in our religious duties, and have the eyes of our**

**understanding opened more and more to the truth and the beauty of the**

**life and walk of faith. We may seem to ourselves and to others to have**

**reached an almost impregnable position of victory, and yet we may find**

**ourselves suffering bitter defeats. We may wonder, and question, and**

**despair, and pray; nothing will do any good until the accursed thing is**

**dug up from its hiding-place, brought out to the light, and laid before**

**God. And the moment a believer who is walking in this interior life**

**meets with a defeat, he must at once seek for the cause not in the**

**strength of that particular enemy, but in something behind, some hidden**

**want of consecration lying at the very centre of his being. Just as a**

**headache is not the disease itself, but only a symptom of a disease**

**situated in some other part of the body, so the sin in such a Christian**

**is only the symptom of an evil hidden probably in a very different part**

**of his being.**

**Sometimes the evil may be hidden even in that, which at a cursory**

**glance, would look like good. Beneath apparent zeal for the truth, may**

**be hidden a judging spirit, or a subtle leaning to our own**

**understanding. Beneath apparent Christian faithfulness, may be hidden**

**an absence of Christian love. Beneath an apparently rightful care for**

**our affairs, may be hidden a great want of trust in God. I believe our**

**blessed Guide, the indwelling Holy Spirit, is always secretly**

**discovering these things to us by continual little twinges and pangs of**

**conscience, so that we are left without excuse. But it is very easy to**

**disregard His gentle voice, and insist upon it to ourselves that all is**

**right; and thus the fatal evil will continue hidden in our midst**

**causing defeat in most unexpected quarters.**

**A capital illustration of this occurred to me once in my housekeeping.**

**I had moved into a new house and, in looking over it to see if it was**

**all ready for occupancy, I noticed in the cellar a very clean-looking**

**cider-cask headed up at both ends. I debated with myself whether I**

**should have it taken out of the cellar and opened to see what was in**

**it, but concluded, as it seemed empty and looked nice, to leave it**

**undisturbed, especially as it would have been quite a piece of work to**

**get it up the stairs. I did not feel quite easy, but reasoned away my**

**scruples and left it. Every spring and fall, when house-cleaning time**

**came on, I would remember that cask, with a little twinge of my**

**housewifely conscience, feeling that I could not quite rest in the**

**thought of a perfectly cleaned house, while it remained unopened, for**

**how did I know but under its fair exterior it contained some hidden**

**evil. Still I managed to quiet my scruples on the subject, thinking**

**always of the trouble it would involve to investigate it; and for two**

**or three years the innocent-looking cask stood quietly in my cellar.**

**Then, most unaccountably, moths began to fill my house. I used every**

**possible precaution against them, and made every effort to eradicate**

**them, but in vain. They increased rapidly and threatened to ruin**

**everything I had. I suspected my carpets as being the cause, and**

**subjected them to a thorough cleaning. I suspected my furniture, and**

**had it newly upholstered. I suspected all sorts of impossible things.**

**At last the thought of the cask flashed on me. At once I had it brought**

**up out of the cellar and the head knocked in, and I think it is safe to**

**say that thousands of moths poured out. The previous occupant of the**

**house must have headed it up with something in it which bred moths, and**

**this was the cause of all my trouble.**

**Now I believe that, in the same way, some innocent-looking habit or**

**indulgence, some apparently unimportant and safe thing, about which we**

**yet have now and then little twinges of conscience, something which is**

**not brought out fairly into the light, and investigated under the**

**searching eye of God, lies at the root of most of the failure in this**

**higher life. All is not given up. Some secret corner is kept locked**

**against the entrance of the Lord. And therefore we cannot stand before**

**our enemies, but find ourselves smitten down in their presence.**

**In order to prevent failure, or to discover its cause if we have**

**failed, it is necessary that we should keep continually before us this**

**prayer, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my**

**thoughts; and see if there be any evil way in me, and lead me in the**

**way everlasting."**

**There may be something very deceptive in our sufferings over our**

**failures. We may seem to ourselves to be wholly occupied with the glory**

**of God, and yet in our inmost souls it may be self alone that occasions**

**all our trouble. Our self-love is touched in a tender spot by the**

**discovery that we are not so saintly as we thought we were; and this**

**chagrin is often a greater sin than the original fault itself.**

**The only safe way to treat our failures is neither to justify nor**

**condemn ourselves on account of them, but to lay them quietly and in**

**simplicity before the Lord, looking at them in peace and in the spirit**

**of love.**

**All the old mystic writers tell us that our progress is aided far more**

**by a simple, peaceful turning to God, than by all our chagrin and**

**remorse over our lapses from Him. Only be faithful, they say, in**

**turning quietly to Him alone, the moment you perceive what you have**

**done, and His presence will deliver you from the snares which have**

**entrapped you. To look at self plunges you deeper into the slough, for**

**this very slough is after all nothing but self; while the gentlest look**

**towards God will calm and deliver your heart.**

**Finally, let us never forget for one moment, no matter how often we may**

**fail, that the Lord Jesus able, according to the declaration concerning**

**Him, to deliver us out of the hands of our enemies, that we may "serve**

**Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days**

**of our life."**

**Let us then pray, every one of us, day and night, "Lord, keep us from**

**sinning, and make us living witnesses of Thy mighty power to save to**

**the uttermost"; and let us never be satisfied until we are so pliable**

**in His hands, and have learned so to trust Him, that He will be able to**

**"make us perfect, in every good work to do His will, working in us that**

**which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be**

**glory for ever and ever. Amen."**

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**Chapter 14**

**DOUBTS**

**A great many Christians are slaves to the habit of doubting. No**

**drunkard was ever more utterly bound by the chains of his fatal habit**

**than they are by theirs. Every step of their whole Christian life is**

**taken against the fearful odds of an army of doubts, that are forever**

**lying in wait to assail them at each favorable moment. Their lives are**

**made wretched, their usefulness is effectually hindered, and their**

**communion with God is continually broken by their doubts. And although**

**the entrance of the soul upon the life of faith, of which this book**

**treats, does in many cases take it altogether out of the region where**

**these doubts live and flourish; yet even here it sometimes happens that**

**the old tyrant will rise up and reassert his sway, and will cause the**

**feet to stumble and the heart to fail, even when he cannot succeed in**

**utterly turning the believer back into the dreary wilderness again.**

**We all of us remember, doubtless, the childish fascination, and yet**

**horror, of that story of Christian's imprisonment in Doubting Castle by**

**the wicked giant Despair, and our exultant sympathy in his escape**

**through those massive gates and from that cruel tyrant. Little did we**

**suspect then that we should ever find ourselves taken prisoner by the**

**same giant, and imprisoned in the same castle. And yet I fear to every**

**member of the Church of Christ there has been at least one such**

**experience. Turn to the account again, if it is not fresh in your**

**minds, and see if you do not see pictured there experiences of your own**

**that have been very grievous to bear at the time, and very sorrowful to**

**look back upon afterwards.**

**It seems strange that people, whose very name of Believers implies that**

**their one chiefest characteristic is that they believe, should have to**

**confess to such experiences. And yet it is such a universal habit that**

**I feel if the majority of the Church were to be named over again, the**

**only fitting and descriptive name that could be given them would be**

**that of Doubters. In fact, most Christians have settled down under**

**their doubts, as to a sort of inevitable malady, from which they suffer**

**acutely, but to which they must try to be resigned as a part of the**

**necessary discipline of this earthly life. And they lament over their**

**doubts as a man might lament over his rheumatism, making themselves out**

**as an "interesting case" of especial and peculiar trial, which requires**

**the tenderest sympathy and the utmost consideration.**

**And this is too often true of believers, who are earnestly longing to**

**enter upon the life and walk of faith, and who have made perhaps many**

**steps towards it. They have got rid, it may be, of the old doubts that**

**once tormented them, as to whether their sins are really forgiven, and**

**whether they shall, after all, get safe to Heaven; but they have not**

**got rid of doubting. They have simply shifted the habit to a higher**

**platform. They are saying, perhaps, "Yes, I believe my sins are**

**forgiven, and I am a child of God through faith in Jesus Christ. I dare**

**not doubt this any more. But then--" And this "but then" includes an**

**interminable array of doubts concerning every declaration and every**

**promise our Father has made to His children. One after another they**

**fight with them and refuse to believe them, until they can have some**

**more reliable proof of their being true, than the simple word of their**

**God. And then they wonder why they are permitted to walk in such**

**darkness, and look upon themselves almost in the light of martyrs, and**

**groan under the peculiar spiritual conflicts they are compelled to**

**endure.**

**Spiritual conflicts! Far better would they be named did we call them**

**spiritual rebellions! Our fight is to be a fight of faith, and the**

**moment we doubt, our fight ceases and our rebellion begins.**

**I desire to put forth, if possible, one vigorous protest against this**

**whole thing. Just as well might I join in with the lament of a drunkard**

**and unite with him in prayer for grace to endure the discipline of his**

**fatal indulgence, as to give way for one instant to the weak complaints**

**of these enslaved souls, and try to console them under their slavery.**

**To one and to the other I would dare to do nothing else but proclaim**

**the perfect deliverance the Lord Jesus Christ has in store or them, and**

**beseech, entreat, command them, with all the force of my whole nature,**

**to avail themselves of it and be free. Not for one moment would I**

**listen to their despairing excuses. You ought to be free, you can be**

**free, you MUST be free!**

**Will you undertake to tell me that it is an inevitable necessity for**

**God to be doubted by His children? Is it an inevitable necessity for**

**your children to doubt you? Would you tolerate their doubts a single**

**hour? Would you pity your son and condole with him, and feel that he**

**was an interesting case, if he should come to you and say, "Father, I**

**cannot believe your word, I cannot trust your love"?**

**I remember once seeing the indignation of a mother I knew, stirred to**

**its very depths by a little doubting on the part of one of her**

**children. She had brought two little girls to my house to leave them**

**while she did some errands. One of them, with the happy confidence of**

**childhood, abandoned herself to all the pleasures she could find in my**

**nursery, and sang and played until her mother's return. The other one,**

**with the wretched caution and mistrust of maturity, sat down alone in a**

**corner to wonder whether her mother would remember to come back for**

**her, and to fear she would be forgotten, and to imagine her mother**

**would be glad of the chance to get rid of her anyhow, because she was**

**such a naughty girl, and ended with working herself up into a perfect**

**frenzy of despair. The look on that mother's face, when upon her return**

**the weeping little girl told what was the matter with her, I shall not**

**easily forget. Grief, wounded love, indignation, and pity, all strove**

**together for mastery. But indignation gained the day, and I doubt if**

**that little girl was ever so vigorously dealt with before. A hundred**

**times in my life since has that scene come up before me with deepest**

**teaching, and has compelled me, peremptorily, to refuse admittance to**

**the doubts about my Heavenly Father's love, and care, and remembrance**

**of me, that have clamored at the door of my heart for entrance.**

**I am convinced that to many people doubting is a real luxury, and to**

**deny themselves from indulging in it would be to exercise the hardest**

**piece of self-denial they have ever known. It is a luxury that, like**

**the indulgence in all other luxuries, brings very sorrowful results;**

**and, perhaps, looking at the sadness and misery it has brought into**

**your own Christian experience, you may be tempted to say, "Alas! This**

**is no luxury to me, but only a fearful trial." But pause for a moment.**

**Try giving it up, and you will soon find out whether it is a luxury or**

**not. Do not your doubts come trooping to your door as a company of**

**sympathizing friends, who appreciate your hard case, and have come to**

**condole with you? And is it no luxury to sit down with them and**

**entertain them, and listen to their arguments, and join in with their**

**condolences? Would it be no self-denial to turn resolutely from them,**

**and refuse to hear a word they have to say? If you do not know, try it**

**and see.**

**Have you never tasted the luxury of indulging in hard thoughts against**

**those who have, as you think, injured you? Have you never known what a**

**positive fascination it is to brood over their unkindnesses, and to pry**

**into their malice, and to imagine all sorts of wrong and uncomfortable**

**things about them? It has made you wretched, of course, but it has been**

**a fascinating sort of wretchedness that you could not easily give up.**

**And just like this is the luxury of doubting. Things have gone wrong**

**with you in your experience. Dispensations have been mysterious,**

**temptations have been peculiar, your case has seemed different from**

**that of any one's around you. What more natural than to conclude that**

**for some reason God has forsaken you, and does not love you, and is**

**indifferent to your welfare? And how irresistible is the conviction**

**that you are too wicked for Him to care for, or too difficult for Him**

**to manage.**

**You do not mean to blame Him, or accuse Him of injustice, for you feel**

**that His indifference and rejection of you are fully deserved because**

**of your unworthiness. And this very subterfuge leaves you at liberty to**

**indulge in your doubts under the guise of a just and true appreciation**

**of your own shortcomings. But all the while you are as really indulging**

**in hard and wrong thoughts of your Lord as ever you did of a human**

**enemy; for He says He came not to save the righteous, but sinners; and**

**your very sinfulness and unworthiness is your chiefest claim upon His**

**love and His care.**

**As well might the poor little lamb that has wandered from the flock and**

**got lost in the wilderness say, "The shepherd does not love me, nor**

**care for me, nor remember me, because I am lost. He only loves and**

**cares for the lambs that never wander." As well might the ill man say,**

**"The doctor will not come to see me, nor give me any medicines, because**

**I am ill. He only cares for and visits well people." Jesus says, "They**

**that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." And again**

**He says, "What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of**

**them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go**

**after that which is lost, until he find it?" Any thoughts of Him,**

**therefore, which are different from what He says of Himself, are hard**

**thoughts; and to indulge in them is far worse than to indulge in hard**

**thoughts of any earthly friend or foe. From the beginning to the end of**

**your Christian life it is always sinful to indulge in doubts. Doubts**

**are all from the devil, and are always untrue. And the only way to meet**

**them is by a direct and emphatic denial.**

**And this brings me to the practical part of the whole subject, as to**

**how to get deliverance from this fatal habit. My answer would be that**

**the deliverance from this can be by no other means than the deliverance**

**from any other sin. It is to be found in the Lord and in Him only. You**

**must hand your doubting over to Him, as you have learned to hand your**

**other temptations. You must do just what you do with your temper, or**

**your pride. You must give it up to the Lord. I believe myself the only**

**effectual remedy is to take a pledge against it as you would urge a**

**drunkard to do against drink, trusting in the Lord alone to keep you**

**steadfast.**

**Like any other sin, the stronghold is in the will and the will to doubt**

**must be surrendered exactly as you surrender the will to yield to any**

**other temptation. God always takes possession of a surrendered will.**

**And if we come to the point of saying that we will not doubt, and**

**surrender this central fortress of our nature to Him, His blessed**

**Spirit will begin at once to work in us all the good pleasure of His**

**will, and we shall find ourselves kept from doubting by His mighty and**

**overcoming power.**

**The trouble is that in this matter of doubting the soul does not always**

**make a full surrender, but is apt to reserve to itself a little secret**

**liberty to doubt, looking upon it as being sometimes a necessity. "I do**

**not want to doubt any more," we will say, or, "I hope I shall not"; but**

**it is hard to come to the point of saying, "I will not doubt again."**

**But no surrender is effectual until it reaches the point of saying, "I**

**will not." The liberty to doubt must be given up forever. And the soul**

**must consent to a continuous life of inevitable trust. It is often**

**necessary, I think, to make a definite transaction of this surrender of**

**doubting, and to come to a point about it. I believe it is quite as**

**necessary in the case of a doubter as in the case of a drunkard. It**

**will not do to give it up by degrees. The total abstinence principle is**

**the only effectual one here.**

**Then, the surrender once made, the soul must rest absolutely upon the**

**Lord for deliverance in each time of temptation. It must lift up the**

**shield of faith the moment the assault comes. It must hand the very**

**first suggestion of doubt over to the Lord, and must tell the enemy to**

**settle the matter with Him. It must refuse to listen to the doubt a**

**single moment. Let it come ever so plausibly, or under whatever guise**

**of humility, the soul must simply say, "I dare not doubt; I must trust.**

**The Lord is good, and HE DOES love me. Jesus saves me; He saves me**

**now." Those three little words, repeated over and over,--"Jesus saves**

**me, Jesus saves me,"--will put to flight the greatest army of doubts**

**that ever assaulted any soul. I have tried it times without number, and**

**have never known it to fail. Do not stop to argue the matter out with**

**your doubts, nor try to prove that they are wrong. Pay no attention to**

**them whatever; treat them with the utmost contempt. Shut your door in**

**their faces, and emphatically deny every word they say to you. Bring up**

**some "It is written," and hurl it after them. Look right at Jesus, and**

**tell Him you trust Him, and you mean to trust Him. Let the doubts**

**clamor as they may, they cannot hurt you if you will not let them in.**

**I know it will look to you sometimes as though you were shutting the**

**door against your best friends, and your heart will long after your**

**doubts more than ever the Israelites longed after the flesh-pots of**

**Egypt. But deny yourself; take up your cross in this matter, and**

**unmercifully refuse ever to listen to a single word.**

**This very day a perfect army of doubts stood awaiting my awaking, and**

**clamored at my door for admittance. Nothing seemed real, nothing seemed**

**true; and least of all did it seem possible that I--miserable,**

**wretched--could be the object of the Lord's love, or care, or notice.**

**If I only had been at liberty to let these doubts in, and invite them**

**to take seats and make themselves at home, what a luxury I should have**

**felt it to be! But years ago I made a pledge against doubting; and I**

**would as soon think of violating my pledge against intoxicating liquor**

**as to violate this one. I DARED not admit the first doubt. I therefore**

**lifted up my shield of faith the moment I was conscious of these**

**suggestions, and handing the whole army over to my Lord to conquer, I**

**began to say, over and over, "The Lord does love me. He is my present**

**and my perfect Saviour; Jesus saves me, Jesus saves me now!" The**

**victory was complete. The enemy had come in like a flood, but the Lord**

**lifted up a standard against him, and he was routed and put to flight;**

**and my soul is singing the song of Moses and the children of Israel,**

**saying, "I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously:**

**the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea. The Lord is my**

**strength and my song, and He is become my salvation. The Lord is a man**

**of war; the Lord is His name."**

**It will help you to resist the assaults of this temptation to doubt, to**

**see clearly that doubting is sin. It is certainly a direct disobedience**

**to our Lord, who commands us, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither**

**let it be afraid." And all through the Bible everywhere the commands to**

**trust are imperative, and admit of no exceptions. Time and room would**

**fail me to refer to one hundredth part of these, but no one can read**

**the Psalms without being convinced that the man who trusts without a**

**question, is the only man who pleases God and is accepted of Him. The**

**"provocation" of Israel was that they did not trust; "anger also came**

**up against Israel, because they believed not in God, and trusted not in**

**His salvation." (Psalms 78:17-22.) And in contrast, we read in Isaiah**

**concerning those who trust, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose**

**mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee." Nothing grieves**

**or wounds our hearts like doubting on the part of a friend, and**

**nothing, I am convinced, grieves the heart of God more than doubting**

**from us.**

**One of my children, who is now with the Lord, said to me one evening as**

**I was tucking her up in bed, "Well, mother, I have had my first doubt."**

**"Oh, Ray," I said, "what was it?" "Why," she replied, "Satan came to me**

**and told me not to believe the Bible, for it was not a word of it**

**true." "And what did thee say to him?" I asked. "Oh," she replied,**

**triumphantly, "I just said to him, Satan, I will believe it. So there!"**

**I was delighted with the child's spiritual intelligence in knowing so**

**well how to meet doubts, and encouraged her with all my heart,**

**explaining to her how all doubts and discouragements are from the**

**enemy, and how he is always a liar and must not be listened to for a**

**moment. The next night, I had forgotten all about it, however, and was**

**surprised and startled when she said, as I was tucking her in bed,**

**"Well, mother, Satan has been at it again." "Oh, Ray darling!" I**

**exclaimed in dismay, "what did he say this time?" "Well," she replied,**

**"he just told me that I was such a naughty little girl that Jesus could**

**not love me, and I was foolish to think He did." "And what did thee say**

**this time?" I asked. "Oh!" she replied, "I just looked at him cross and**

**said, Satan, shut thy mouth!" And then she added, with a smile, "He**

**can't make me unhappy one bit." A grander battle no soul ever fought**

**than this little child had done, and no greater victory was ever won!**

**Dear, doubting soul, go and do likewise; and a similar victory shall be**

**thine. As you lay down this book take up your pen and write out your**

**determination never to doubt again. Make it a real transaction between**

**your soul and the Lord. Give up your liberty to doubt forever. Put your**

**will in this matter over on the Lord's side, and trust Him to keep you**

**from falling. Tell him all about your utter weakness and your**

**long-encouraged habits of doubt, and how helpless you are before your**

**enemy, and commit the whole battle to Him. Tell Him you will not doubt**

**again; and then henceforward keep your face steadfastly looking unto**

**Jesus, away from yourself and away from your doubts, holding fast the**

**profession of your faith without wavering, because He is faithful who**

**has promised. And as surely as you do thus hold the beginning of your**

**confidence steadfast unto the end, just so surely shall you find**

**yourself in this matter made more than conqueror, through Him who loves**

**you.**

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**Chapter 15**

**PRACTICAL RESULTS IN THE DAILY WALK AND CONVERSATION**

**If all that has been said concerning the life hid with Christ in God be**

**true, its results in the practical daily walk and conversation ought to**

**be very marked, and the people who have entered into the enjoyment of**

**it ought to be, in very truth, a "peculiar people, zealous of good**

**works."**

**My son at college once wrote to a friend to this effect: that**

**Christians are God's witnesses necessarily, because the world will not**

**read the Bible, but they will read our lives; and that upon the report**

**these give will very much depend their belief in the Divine nature of**

**the religion we profess. As we all know, this is an age of facts, and**

**inquiries are being increasingly turned from theories to realities. If**

**our religion is to make any headway now, it must be proved to be more**

**than a theory, and we must present, to the investigation of the**

**critical minds of our age, the grand facts of lives which have been**

**actually and manifestly transformed by the mighty power of God working**

**in us all the good pleasure of His will. Give us "forms of life," say**

**the scientists, and we will be convinced. And when the Church is able**

**to present to them in all its members, the form of a holy life, their**

**last stronghold will be conquered.**

**I desire, therefore, before closing my book, to speak very solemnly of**

**what I conceive to be the necessary fruits of a life of faith, such as**

**I have been describing, and to press home to the hearts of every one of**

**my readers their responsibility to walk worthy of the high calling**

**wherewith they have been called.**

**And I would speak to some of you, at least, as personal friends, for I**

**feel sure we have not gone this far together through this book without**

**there having grown in your hearts, as there has in mine, a tender**

**personal interest and longing for one another, that we may in**

**everything show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of**

**darkness into His marvellous light. As a friend, then, to friends, I am**

**sure I may speak very plainly, and will be pardoned if I go into some**

**particulars of life and character which are vital to all true Christian**

**development.**

**The standard of practical holy living has been so low among Christians**

**that any good degree of real devotedness of life and walk is looked**

**upon with surprise, and even often with disapprobation, by a large**

**portion of the Church. And, for the most part, the professed followers**

**of the Lord Jesus Christ are so little like Him in character or in**

**action, that to an outside observer there would not seem to be much**

**harmony between them.**

**But we, who have heard the call of our God to a life of entire**

**consecration and perfect trust, must do differently from all this. We**

**must come out from the world and be separate, and must not be conformed**

**to it in our characters nor in our purposes. We must no longer share in**

**its spirit or its ways. Our conversation must be in Heaven, and we must**

**seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth on the right**

**hand of God. We must walk through the world as Christ walked. We must**

**have the mind that was in Him. As pilgrims and strangers we must**

**abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul. As good soldiers**

**of Jesus Christ, we must disentangle ourselves from the affairs of this**

**life as far as possible, that we may please Him who hath chosen us to**

**be soldiers. We must abstain from all appearance of evil. We must be**

**kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God,**

**for Christ's sake, hath forgiven us. We must not resent injuries or**

**unkindness, but must return good for evil, and turn the other cheek to**

**the hand that smites us. We must take always the lowest place among our**

**fellowmen; and seek not our own honor, but the honor of others. We must**

**be gentle, and meek, and yielding; not standing up for our own rights,**

**but for the rights of others. All that we do must be done for the glory**

**of God. And, to sum it all up, since He which hath called us is holy,**

**so we must be holy in a manner of conversation; because it is written,**

**"Be ye holy, for I am holy."**

**Now, dear friends, this is all exceedingly practical and means, surely,**

**a life very different from the lives of most professors around us. It**

**means that we do really and absolutely turn our backs on self, and on**

**self's motives and self's aims. It means that we are a peculiar people,**

**not only in the eyes of God, but in the eyes of the world around us;**

**and that, wherever we go, it will be known from our Christlike lives**

**and conversation that we are followers of the Lord Jesus Christ; and**

**are not of the world, even as He was not of the world. We shall no**

**longer feel that our money is our own, but the Lord's, to be used in**

**His service. We shall not feel at liberty to use our energies**

**exclusively in the pursuit of worldly means, but, seeking first the**

**kingdom of God and His righteousness, shall have all needful things**

**added unto us. We shall find ourselves forbidden to seek the highest**

**places, or to strain after worldly advantages. We shall not be**

**permitted to be conformed to the world in our ways of thinking or of**

**living. We shall feel no desire to indulge in the world's frivolous**

**pursuits. We shall find our affections set upon heavenly things, rather**

**than upon earthly things. Our days will be spent not in serving**

**ourselves, but in serving our Lord; and all our rightful duties will be**

**more perfectly performed than ever, because whatever we do will be done**

**"not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ,**

**doing the will of God from the heart."**

**Into all these things we shall undoubtedly be led by the blessed Spirit**

**of God, if we give ourselves up to His guidance. But unless we have the**

**right standard of Christian life set before us, we shall be hindered by**

**our ignorance from recognizing His voice; and it is for this reason I**

**desire to be very plain and definite in my statements.**

**I have noticed that wherever there has been a faithful following of the**

**Lord in a consecrated soul, several things have inevitably followed,**

**sooner or later.**

**Meekness and quietness of spirit become in time the characteristics of**

**the daily life; a submissive acceptance of the will of God, as it comes**

**in the hourly events of each day; pliability in the hands of God to do**

**or to suffer all the good pleasure of His will; sweetness under**

**provocation; calmness in the midst of turmoil and bustle; yieldingness**

**to the wishes of others, and an insensibility to slights and affronts,**

**absence of worry or anxiety; deliverance from care and fear: all these,**

**and many other similar graces are invariably found to be the natural**

**outward development of that inward life which is hid with Christ in**

**God. Then as to the habits of life: we always see such Christians**

**sooner or later giving themselves up to some work for God and their**

**fellowmen, willing to spend and be spent in the Master's service. They**

**become indifferent to outward show in the furniture of their houses and**

**the style of their living, and make all personal adornment secondary to**

**the things of God. The voice is dedicated to God, to talk and sing for**

**Him. The purse is placed at His disposal. The pen is dedicated to write**

**for Him, the lips to speak for Him, the hands and the feet to do His**

**bidding. Year after year such Christians are seen to grow more**

**unworldly, more heavenly-minded, more transformed, more like Christ,**

**until even their very faces express so much of the beautiful inward**

**Divine life, that all who look at them cannot but take knowledge of**

**them that they live with God, and are abiding in Him.**

**I feel sure that to each one of you have come at least some Divine**

**intimations or foreshadowings of the life I here describe. Have you not**

**begun to feel dimly conscious of the voice of God speaking to you in**

**the depths of your soul about these things? Has it not been a pain and**

**a distress to you of late to discover how much there is wrong in your**

**life? Has not your soul been plunged into inward trouble and doubt**

**about certain dispositions and ways, in which you have been formerly**

**accustomed to indulge? Have you not begun to feel uneasy with some of**

**your habits of life, and to wish that you could do differently in these**

**respects? Have not paths of devotedness and of service begun to open**

**out before you, with the longing thought, "Oh, that I could walk in**

**them"?**

**All these longings and doubts, and this inward distress, are the voice**

**of the Good Shepherd in your heart seeking to call you out of all that**

**is contrary to His will. Oh! let me entreat of you not to turn away**

**from His gentle pleadings. You little know the secret paths into which**

**He means to lead you by these very steps, nor the wonderful stores of**

**blessedness that lie at their end, or you would spring forward with an**

**eager joy to yield to every one of His requirements. The heights of**

**Christian perfection can only be reached by faithfully following the**

**Guide who is to lead you there, and He reveals your way to you one step**

**at a time in the teachings and providences of your daily lives, asking**

**only on your part that you yield yourselves up to His guidance. If,**

**then, in anything you are convinced of sin, be sure that it is the**

**voice of your Lord, and surrender it at once to His bidding, rejoicing**

**with a great joy that He has begun thus to lead and guide you. Be**

**perfectly pliable in His wise hands, go where He entices you, turn away**

**from all from which He makes you shrink, obey Him perfectly; and He**

**will lead you out swiftly and easily into a wonderful life of**

**conformity to Himself, that will be a testimony to all around you,**

**beyond what you yourself will ever know.**

**I knew a soul thus given up to follow the Lord whithersoever He might**

**lead her, who in three short months travelled from the depths of**

**darkness and despair into the realization and conscious experience of**

**the most blessed union with the Lord Jesus Christ. Out of the midst of**

**her darkness, she consecrated herself to the Lord, surrendering her**

**will up altogether to Him, that He might work in her to will and to do**

**of His own good pleasure. Immediately He began to speak to her by His**

**Spirit in her heart, suggesting to her some little acts of service for**

**Him, and calling her out of all un-Christlike dispositions and ways.**

**She recognized His voice, and yielded to Him each thing He asked for,**

**following Him whithersoever He might lead her, with no fear but the one**

**fear of disobeying Him. He led her rapidly on, day by day conforming**

**her more and more to His will, and making her life such a testimony to**

**those around her, that even some who had begun by opposing and**

**disbelieving, were forced to acknowledge that it was of God, and were**

**won to a similar surrender. And, finally, after three short months of**

**this faithful following, it came to pass, so swiftly had she gone, that**

**her Lord was able to reveal to her wondering soul some of the deepest**

**secrets of His love, and to fulfil to her the marvellous promise of**

**Acts 1:5, baptizing her with the Holy Ghost. Think you she has ever**

**regretted her wholehearted following of Him? Or that aught but**

**thankfulness and joy can ever fill her soul when she reviews the steps**

**by which her feet had been led to this place of wondrous blessedness,**

**even though some of them may have seemed at the time hard to take? Ah!**

**dear soul, if thou wouldst know a like blessing, abandon thyself, like**

**her, to the guidance of the Divine Master, and shrink from no surrender**

**for which He may call.**

**"The perfect way is hard to flesh,**

**It is not hard to love;**

**If thou wert sick for want of God,**

**How swiftly wouldst thou move."**

**Surely thou canst trust Him! And if some things may be called for which**

**look to thee of but little moment, and not worthy thy Lord's attention,**

**remember that He sees not as man seeth, and that things small to thee**

**may be in His eyes the key and the clue to the deepest springs of thy**

**being. In order to mould thee into entire conformity to His will, He**

**must have thee pliable in his hands, and this pliability is more**

**quickly reached by yielding in the little things than even by the**

**greater. Thy one great desire is to follow Him fully; canst thou not**

**say then a continual "Yes, Lord!" to all His sweet commands, whether**

**small or great, and trust Him to lead thee by the shortest road to thy**

**fullest blessedness?**

**My dear friend, this, and nothing less than this, is what thy**

**consecration meant, whether thou knew it or not. It meant inevitable**

**obedience. It meant that the will of thy God was henceforth to be thy**

**will under all circumstances and at all times. It meant that from that**

**moment thou surrendered thy liberty of choice, and gave thyself up**

**utterly into the control of thy Lord. It meant an hourly following of**

**Him whithersoever He might lead thee, without any dream of turning**

**back.**

**And now I appeal to thee to make good thy word. Let everything else go,**

**that thou mayest live out, in a practical daily walk and conversation,**

**the Divine life thou hast dwelling within thee. Thou art united to thy**

**Lord by a wondrous tie; walk, then, as He walked, and show to the**

**unbelieving world the blessed reality of His mighty power to save, by**

**letting Him save thee to the very uttermost. Thou needst not fear to**

**consent to this, for He is thy Saviour; and His power is to do it all.**

**He is not asking thee, in thy poor weakness, to do it thyself; He only**

**asks thee to yield thyself to Him, that He may work in thee to will and**

**to do by His own mighty power. Thy part is to yield thyself, His part**

**is to work; and never, never will He give thee any command which is not**

**accompanied by ample power to obey it. Take no thought for the morrow**

**in this matter; but abandon thyself with a generous trust to thy loving**

**Lord, who has promised never to call His own sheep out into any path,**

**without Himself going before them to make the way easy and safe. Take**

**each onward step as He makes it plain to thee. Bring all thy life in**

**each of its details to Him to regulate and guide. Follow gladly and**

**quickly the sweet suggestions of His Spirit in thy soul. And day by day**

**thou wilt find Him bringing thee more and more into conformity with His**

**will in all things; moulding thee and fashioning thee, as thou art able**

**to bear it, into a vessel unto His honor, sanctified and meet for His**

**use, and fitted to every good work. So shall be given to thee the sweet**

**joy of being an epistle of Christ known and read of all men; and thy**

**light shall shine so brightly that men seeing, not thee, but thy good**

**works, shall glorify, not thee, but thy Father which is in Heaven.**

**We are predestined to be "conformed to the image" of God's Son. This**

**means, of course, not a likeness of bodily presence, but a likeness of**

**character and nature. It means a similarity of thought, of feeling, of**

**desire, of loves, of hates. It means, that we are to think and act,**

**according to our measure, as Christ would have thought and acted under**

**our circumstances.**

**A little girl was once questioned what it meant to be a Christian. She**

**replied, "It means to be just what Christ would be, if He was a little**

**girl and lived in my house."**

**The secret of Christ's life was the pouring out of Himself for others;**

**and if we are like Him, this will be the secret of our lives also. He**

**saved others, but Himself He could not save. He "pleased not Himself,"**

**and therefore we are "not to please ourselves," but rather our**

**neighbor, when it is for his good.**

**A thoughtful Hindoo religionist, who visited England and America lately**

**to examine into Christianity, said, as the result of his observations,**

**"What Christians need is a little more of Christ's Christianity, and a**

**little less of man's."**

**Man's Christianity teaches sacrifice to save ourselves; Christ's**

**Christianity teaches sacrifice to save others. Man's Christianity**

**produces the fruitless selfishness of too much of our religion.**

**Christ's Christianity produces the blessed unselfishness of lives that**

**are poured out for others, as was His.**

**In short, then, the one practical outcome of all that our book has been**

**teaching us, is simply this, that we are to be Christlike Christians.**

**And all our experiences amount to nothing if they do not produce this**

**result. For "not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter**

**into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father**

**which is in heaven."**

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**Chapter 16**

**THE JOY OF OBEDIENCE**

**I remember reading once somewhere this sentence, "Perfect obedience**

**would be perfect happiness, if only we had perfect confidence in the**

**power we were obeying." I remember being struck with the saying, as the**

**revelation of a possible, although hitherto undreamed-of way of**

**happiness; and often afterwards, through all the lawlessness and**

**wilfulness of my life, did that saying recur to me as the vision of a**

**rest, and yet of a possible development, that would soothe and at the**

**same time satisfy all my yearnings. Need I say that this rest has been**

**revealed to me now, not as a vision, but as a reality; and that I have**

**seen in the Lord Jesus, the Master to whom we may all yield up our**

**implicit obedience, and, taking His yoke upon us, may find our perfect**

**rest?**

**You little know, dear hesitating soul, of the joy you are missing. The**

**Master has revealed Himself to you, and is calling for your complete**

**surrender, and you shrink and hesitate. A measure of surrender you are**

**willing to make, and think indeed it is fit and proper you should. But**

**an utter abandonment, without any reserves, seems to you too much to be**

**asked for. You are afraid of it. It involves too much, you think, and**

**is too great a task. To be measurably obedient you desire; to be**

**perfectly obedient appalls you.**

**And then, too, you see other souls who seem able to walk with easy**

**consciences, in a far wider path than that which appears to be marked**

**out for you, and you ask yourself why this need be. It seems strange,**

**and perhaps hard to you, that you must do what they need not, and must**

**leave undone what they have liberty to do.**

**Ah! dear Christian, this very difference between you is your privilege,**

**though you do not yet know it. Your Lord says, "He that hath my**

**commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that**

**loveth Me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will**

**manifest Myself to him." You have His commandments; those you envy,**

**have them not. You know the mind of your Lord about many things, in**

**which, as yet, they are walking in darkness. Is not this a privilege?**

**Is it a cause for regret that your soul is brought into such near and**

**intimate relations with your Master, that He is able to tell you things**

**which those who are further off may not know? Do you not realize what a**

**tender degree of intimacy is implied in this?**

**There are many relations in life which require from the different**

**parties only very moderate degrees of devotion. We may have really**

**pleasant friendships with one another, and yet spend a large part of**

**our lives in separate interests, and widely differing pursuits. When**

**together, we may greatly enjoy one another's society, and find many**

**congenial points; but separation is not any especial distress to us,**

**and other and more intimate friendships do not interfere. There is not**

**enough love between us, to give us either the right or the desire to**

**enter into and share one another's most private affairs. A certain**

**degree of reserve and distance is the suitable thing, we feel. But**

**there are other relations in life where all this is changed. The**

**friendship becomes love. The two hearts give themselves to one another,**

**to be no longer two but one. A union of souls takes place, which makes**

**all that belongs to one the property of the other. Separate interests**

**and separate paths in life are no longer possible. Things which were**

**lawful before become unlawful now, because of the nearness of the tie**

**that binds. The reserve and distance suitable to mere friendship**

**becomes fatal in love. Love gives all, and must have all in return. The**

**wishes of one become binding obligations to the other, and the deepest**

**desire of each heart is, that it may know every secret wish or longing**

**of the other, in order that it may fly on the wings of the wind to**

**gratify it.**

**Do such as these chafe under this yoke which love imposes? Do they envy**

**the cool, calm, reasonable friendships they see around them, and regret**

**the nearness into which their souls are brought to their beloved one,**

**because of the obligations it creates? Do they not rather glory in**

**these very obligations, and inwardly pity, with a tender yet exulting**

**joy, the poor far-off ones who dare not come so near? Is not every**

**fresh revelation of the mind of one another a fresh delight and**

**privilege, and is any path found hard which their love compels them to**

**travel?**

**Ah! dear souls, if you have ever known this even for a few hours in any**

**earthly relation; if you have ever loved a fellow human being enough to**

**find sacrifice and service on their behalf a joy; if a whole-souled**

**abandonment of your will to the will of another has ever gleamed across**

**you as a blessed and longed-for privilege, or as a sweet and precious**

**reality, then, by all the tender longing love of your heavenly Master,**

**would I entreat you to let it be so towards God!**

**He loves you with more than the love of friendship. As a bridegroom**

**rejoices over his bride, so does He rejoice over you, and nothing but a**

**full surrender will satisfy Him. He has given you all, and He asks for**

**all in return. The slightest reserve will grieve Him to the heart. He**

**spared not Himself, and how can you spare yourself? For your sake He**

**poured out in a lavish abandonment all that He had, and for His sake**

**you must pour out all that you have without stint or measure.**

**Oh, be generous in your self-surrender! Meet His measureless devotion**

**for you, with a measureless devotion to Him. Be glad and eager to throw**

**yourself headlong into His dear arms, and to hand over the reins of**

**government to Him. Whatever there is of you, let Him have it all. Give**

**up forever everything that is separate from Him. Consent to resign from**

**this time forward all liberty of choice; and glory in the blessed**

**nearness of union which makes this enthusiasm of devotedness not only**

**possible but necessary. Have you never longed to lavish your love and**

**attentions upon someone far off from you in position or circumstances,**

**with whom you were not intimate enough for any closer approach? Have**

**you not felt a capacity for self-surrender and devotedness, that has**

**seemed to burn within you like a fire, and yet had no object upon which**

**it dared to lavish itself? Have not your hands been full of alabaster**

**boxes of ointment, very precious, which you have never been near enough**

**to any heart to pour out? If, then, you are hearing the sweet voice of**

**your Lord calling you into a place of nearness to Himself, which will**

**require a separation from all else, and which will make this enthusiasm**

**of devotedness not only possible, but necessary will you shrink or**

**hesitate? Will you think it hard that He reveals to you more of His**

**mind than He does to others, and that He will not allow you to be happy**

**in anything which separates you from Himself? Do you want to go where**

**He cannot go with you, or to have pursuits which He cannot share?**

**No! no, a thousand times, no! You will spring out to meet His dear will**

**with an eager joy. Even His slightest wish will become a binding law to**

**you, which it would fairly break your heart to disobey. You will glory**

**in the very narrowness of the path He marks out for you, and will pity**

**with an infinite pity the poor far-off ones who have missed this**

**precious joy. The obligations of love will be to you its sweetest**

**privileges; and the right you have acquired to lavish the uttermost**

**abandonment of all that you have upon your Lord, will seem to lift you**

**into a region of unspeakable glory. The perfect happiness of perfect**

**obedience will dawn upon your soul, and you will begin to know**

**something of what Jesus meant when He said, "I delight to do thy will,**

**O my God."**

**And do you think the joy in this will be all on your side? Has the Lord**

**no joy in those who have thus surrendered themselves to Him, and who**

**love to obey Him? Ah, my friends, we are not fit to speak of this but**

**surely the Scriptures reveal to us glimpses of the delight, the**

**satisfaction, the joy our Lord has in us, that ravish the soul with**

**their marvellous suggestions of blessedness. That we should need Him,**

**is easy to comprehend; that He should need us, seems incomprehensible.**

**That our desire should be towards Him, is a matter of course; but that**

**His desire should be towards us, passes the bounds of human belief. And**

**yet, over and over He says it, and what can we do but believe Him? He**

**has made our hearts capable of this supreme, overmastering affection,**

**and has offered Himself as the object of it. It is infinitely precious**

**to Him, and He says, "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father,**

**and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." Continually at**

**every heart He is knocking, and asking to be taken in as the supreme**

**object of love. "Wilt thou have me," He says to the believer, "to be**

**thy Beloved? Wilt thou follow me into suffering and loneliness, and**

**endure hardness for my sake, and ask for no reward but my smile of**

**approval, and my word of praise? Wilt thou throw thyself with an utter**

**abandonment into my will? Wilt thou give up to me the absolute control**

**of thyself and all that thou art? Wilt thou be content with pleasing me**

**and me only? May I have my way with thee in all things? Wilt thou come**

**into so close a union with me as to make a separation from the world**

**necessary? Wilt thou accept me for thy only Lord, and leave all others,**

**to cleave only unto Me?"**

**In a thousand ways He makes this offer of oneness with Himself to every**

**believer. But all do not say "Yes," to Him. Other loves and other**

**interests seem to them too precious to be cast aside. They do not miss**

**of Heaven because of this. But they miss an unspeakable joy.**

**You, however, are not one of these. From the very first your soul has**

**cried out eagerly and gladly to all His offers, "Yes, Lord; yes!" You**

**are more than ready to pour out upon Him all your richest treasures of**

**love and devotedness. You have brought to Him an enthusiasm of**

**self-surrender that perhaps may disturb and distress the more prudent**

**and moderate Christians around you. Your love makes necessary a**

**separation from the world, which a lower love cannot even conceive of.**

**Sacrifices and services are possible and sweet to you, which could not**

**come into the grasp of a more half-hearted devotedness. The life upon**

**which you have entered gives you the right to a lavish outpouring of**

**your all upon your beloved One. Services, of which more distant souls**

**know nothing, become now your sweetest privilege. Your Lord claims from**

**you, because of your union with Him, far more than He claims of them.**

**What to them is lawful, love has made unlawful for you. To you He can**

**make known His secrets, and to you He looks for an instant response to**

**every requirement of His love.**

**Oh, it is wonderful! the glorious, unspeakable privilege upon which you**

**have entered! How little it will matter to you if men shall hate you,**

**or shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you and**

**cast out your name as evil for His dear sake! You may well "rejoice in**

**that day and leap for joy"; for behold your reward is great in Heaven,**

**and if you are a partaker of His suffering, you shall be also of His**

**glory.**

**In you He is seeing of the travail of His soul, and is satisfied. Your**

**love and devotedness are His precious reward for all He has done for**

**you. It is unspeakably sweet to Him. Do not be afraid then to let**

**yourself go in a heart-whole devotedness to your Lord, that can brook**

**no reserves. Others may not approve, but He will, and that is enough.**

**Do not stint or measure your obedience or your service. Let your heart**

**and your hand be as free to serve Him, as His heart and His hand were**

**to serve you. Let Him have all there is of you, body, soul, and spirit,**

**time, talents, voice, everything. Lay your whole life open before Him**

**that He may control it. Say to Him each day, "Lord, how shall I**

**regulate this day so as to please Thee? Where shall I go? what shall I**

**do? whom shall I visit? what shall I say?" Give your intellect up into**

**His control and say, "Lord, tell me how to think so as to please Thee?"**

**Give Him your reading, your pursuits, your friendships, and say, "Lord,**

**give me the insight to judge concerning all these things with Thy**

**wisdom." Do not let there be a day nor an hour in which you are not**

**intelligently doing His will, and following Him wholly. And this**

**personal service to Him will give a halo to your life, and gild the**

**most monotonous existence with a heavenly glow.**

**Have you ever grieved that the romance of youth is so soon lost in the**

**hard realities of the world? Bring God thus into your life and into all**

**its details, and a far grander enthusiasm will thrill your soul than**

**the brightest days of youth could ever know, and nothing will seem hard**

**or stern again. The meanest life will be glorified by this. Often, as I**

**have watched a poor woman at her wash-tub, and have thought of all the**

**disheartening accessories of such a life, and have been tempted to**

**wonder why such lives need to be, there has come over me, with a thrill**

**of joy, the recollection of this possible glorification of it, and I**

**have said to myself, Even this life, lived in Christ, and with Christ,**

**following Him whithersoever He may lead, would be filled with an**

**enthusiasm that would make every hour of it glorious. And I have gone**

**on my way comforted to know that God's most wondrous blessings thus lie**

**in the way of the poorest and the meanest lives. "For," says our Lord**

**Himself, "whosoever," whether they be rich or poor, old or young, bond**

**or free, "whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother,**

**and my sister, and my mother."**

**Pause a moment over these simple yet amazing words. His brother, and**

**sister, and mother! What would we not have given to have been one of**

**these! Oh, let me entreat of you, beloved Christian, to come, taste and**

**see for yourself how good the Lord is, and what wonderful things He has**

**in store for those who "keep His commandments, and who do those things**

**that are pleasing in His sight."**

**"And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the**

**voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all His commandments**

**which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on**

**high, above all nations of the earth; and all these blessings shall**

**come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice**

**of the Lord thy God.**

**"Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the**

**field.**

**"Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground,**

**and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks**

**of thy sheep.**

**"Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store.**

**"Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be**

**when thou goest out.**

**"The Lord shall cause thine enemies that shall rise up against thee to**

**be smitten before thy face; they shall come out against thee one way,**

**and flee before thee seven ways.**

**"The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and**

**in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and He shall bless thee in**

**the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.**

**"The Lord shall establish thee an holy people unto Himself, as He hath**

**sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy**

**God, and walk in His ways.**

**"And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name**

**of the Lord, and they shall be afraid of thee.**

**"And the Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy**

**body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, in the fruit of thy ground, in**

**the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers to give thee.**

**"And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou**

**shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou**

**hearken unto the commandments of the Lord thy God, which I command thee**

**this day, to observe and to do them."**

**For the Israelites this was outward and temporal, for us it is inward**

**and spiritual; and, as such, infinitely more glorious. May our**

**surrendered wills leap out to embrace it in all its fulness!**

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**Chapter 17**

**ONENESS WITH CHRIST**

**All the dealings of God with the soul of the believer are in order to**

**bring him into oneness with Himself, that the prayer of our Lord may be**

**fulfilled: "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me and I**

**in thee, that they also may be one in us." . . . "I in them, and thou**

**in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may**

**know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved**

**me."**

**This soul-union was the glorious purpose in the heart of God for His**

**people before the foundation of the world. It was the mystery hid from**

**ages and generations. It was accomplished in the incarnation of Christ.**

**It has been made known by the Scriptures. And it is realized as an**

**actual experience by many of God's dear children.**

**But not by all. It is true of all, and God has not hidden it or made it**

**hard, but the eyes of many are too dim and their hearts too**

**unbelieving, and they fail to grasp it. And it is for the very purpose**

**of bringing them into the personal and actual realization of this, that**

**the Lord is stirring up believers everywhere at the present time to**

**abandon themselves to Him, that He may work in them all the good**

**pleasure of His will.**

**All the previous steps in the Christian life lead up to this. The Lord**

**has made us for it; and until we have intelligently apprehended it, and**

**have voluntarily consented to embrace it, the travail of His soul for**

**us is not satisfied, nor have our hearts found their destined and final**

**rest.**

**The usual course of Christian experience is pictured in the history of**

**the disciples. First they were awakened to see their condition and**

**their need, and they came to Christ and gave in their allegiance to**

**Him. Then they followed Him, worked for Him, believed in Him; and yet,**

**how unlike Him! seeking to be set up one above the other; running away**

**from the cross; misunderstanding His mission and His words; forsaking**

**their Lord in time of danger; but still sent out to preach, recognized**

**by Him as His disciples, possessing power to work for Him. They knew**

**Christ only "after the flesh," as outside of them, their Lord and**

**Master, but not yet their Life.**

**Then came Pentecost, and these disciples came to know Him as inwardly**

**revealed; as one with them in actual union, their very indwelling Life.**

**Henceforth He was to them Christ within, working in them to will and to**

**do of His good pleasure; delivering them by the law of the Spirit of**

**His life from the bondage to the law of sin and death, under which they**

**had been held. No longer was it between themselves and Him, a war of**

**wills and a clashing of interest. One will alone animated them, and**

**that was His will. One interest alone was dear to them, and that was**

**His. They were made ONE with Him.**

**And surely all can recognize this picture, though perhaps as yet the**

**final stage of it has not been fully reached. You may have left much to**

**follow Christ, dear reader; you may have believed on him, and worked**

**for Him, and loved Him, and yet may not be like Him. Allegiance you**

**know, and confidence you know, but not yet union. There are two wills,**

**two interests, two lives. You have not yet lost your own life that you**

**may live only in His. Once it was I and not Christ; then it was I and**

**Christ; perhaps now it is even Christ and I. But has it come yet to be**

**Christ only, and not I at all?**

**Perhaps you do not understand what this oneness means. Some people**

**think it consists in a great emotion or a wonderful feeling of oneness,**

**and they turn inward to examine their emotions, thinking to decide by**

**the state of these, what is the state of their interior union with God.**

**But nowhere is the mistake of trusting to feelings greater than here.**

**Oneness with Christ must, in the very nature of things, consist in a**

**Christ-like life and character. It is not what we feel, but what we are**

**that settles the question. No matter how exalted or intense our**

**emotions on the subject may be, if there is not a likeness of character**

**with Christ, a unity of aim and purpose, a similarity of thought and of**

**action, there can be no real oneness.**

**This is plain common-sense, and it is Scriptural as well.**

**We speak of two people being one, and we mean that their purposes, and**

**actions, and thoughts, and desires are alike. A friend may pour out**

**upon us enthusiastic expressions of love, and unity and oneness, but if**

**that friend's aims, and actions, and ways of looking at things are**

**exactly opposite to ours, we cannot feel there is any real oneness**

**between us, notwithstanding all our affection for one another. To be**

**truly one with another, we must have the same likes and dislikes, the**

**same joys and sorrows, the same hopes and fears. As someone says, we**

**must look through one another's eyes, and think with one another's**

**brains. This is, as I said above, only plain common-sense.**

**And oneness with Christ can be judged by no other rule. It is out of**

**the question to be one with Him in any other way than in the way of**

**nature, and character, and life. Unless we are Christ-like in our**

**thoughts and our ways, we are not one with Him, no matter how we feel.**

**I have seen Christians, with hardly one Christ-like attribute in their**

**whole characters, who yet were so emotional and had such ecstatic**

**feelings of love for Christ, as to think themselves justified in**

**claiming the closest oneness with Him. I scarcely know a sadder sight.**

**Surely our Lord meant to reach such cases when He said in Matt. 7:21,**

**"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the**

**kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in**

**heaven." He was not making here any arbitrary statement of God's will,**

**but a simple announcement of the nature of things. Of course it must be**

**so. It is like saying, "No man can enter the ranks of astronomers who**

**is not an astronomer." Emotions will not make a man an astronomer, but**

**life and action. He must be one, not merely feel that he is one.**

**There is no escape from this inexorable nature of things, and**

**especially here. Unless we are one with Christ as to character and life**

**and action, we cannot be one with Him in any other way, for there is no**

**other way. We must be "partakers of His nature" or we cannot be**

**partakers of His life, for His life and His nature are one.**

**But emotional souls do not always recognize this. They feel so near**

**Christ and so united to Him, that they think it must be real; and**

**overlooking the absolute necessity of Christ-likeness of character and**

**walk, they are building their hopes and their confidence on their**

**delightful emotions and exalted feelings, and think they must be one**

**with Him, or they could not have such rich and holy experiences.**

**Now it is a psychological fact that these or similar emotions can be**

**produced by other causes than a purely divine influence, and that they**

**are largely dependent upon temperament and physical conditions. It is**

**most dangerous, therefore, to make them a test of our spiritual union**

**with Christ. It may result in just such a grievous self-deception as**

**our Lord warns against in Luke 6:46-49, "And why call ye me, Lord,**

**Lord, and do not the things which I say?" Our soul delights perhaps in**

**calling Him, Lord, Lord, but are we doing the things which He said; for**

**this, He tells us, is the important point, after all.**

**If, therefore, led by our feelings, we are saying in meetings, or among**

**our friends, or even in our own heart before the Lord, that we are**

**abiding in Him, let us take home to ourselves in solemn consideration**

**these words of the Holy Ghost, "He that saith he abideth in Him, ought**

**himself so to walk, even as He walked."**

**Unless we are thus walking, we cannot possibly be abiding in Him, no**

**matter how much we may feel as if we were.**

**If you are really one with Christ you will be sweet to those who are**

**cross to you; you will bear everything and make no complaints; when you**

**are reviled you will not revile again; you will consent to be trampled**

**on, as Christ was, and feel nothing but love in return; you will seek**

**the honor of others rather than your own; you will take the lowest**

**place, and be the servant of all, as Christ was; you will literally and**

**truly love your enemies and do good to them that despitefully use you;**

**you will, in short, live a Christ-like life, and manifest outwardly as**

**well as feel inwardly a Christ-like spirit, and will walk among men as**

**He walked among them. This, dear friends, is what it is to be one with**

**Christ. And if all this is not your life according to your measure,**

**then you are not one with Him, no matter how ecstatic or exalted your**

**feelings may be.**

**To be one with Christ is too wonderful and solemn and mighty an**

**experience to be reached by any overflow or exaltation of mere feeling.**

**He was holy, and those who are one with Him will be holy also. There is**

**no escape from this simple and obvious fact.**

**When our Lord tried to make us understand His oneness with God, He**

**expressed it in such words as these, "I do always the things that**

**please Him." "Whatsoever He saith unto me that I do." "The Son can do**

**nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do; for what things**

**soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." "I can of mine own**

**self do nothing; as I hear I judge, and my judgment is just; because I**

**seek not mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me." "If I do not**

**the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe**

**not me, believe the works; that ye may know and believe that the Father**

**is in me and I in Him."**

**The test of oneness then, was the doing of the same works, and it is**

**the test of oneness now. And if our Lord could say of Himself that if**

**He did not the works of his Father, He did not ask to be believed, no**

**matter what professions or claims He might make, surely His disciples**

**must do no less.**

**It is forever true in the nature of things that "a good tree cannot**

**bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good**

**fruit." It is not that they will not, but they cannot. And a soul that**

**is one with Christ will just as surely bring forth a Christ-like life,**

**as a grapevine will bring forth grapes and not thistles.**

**Not that I would be understood to object to emotions. On the contrary,**

**I believe they are very precious gifts, when they are from God, and are**

**to be greatly rejoiced in. But what I do object to is the making them a**

**test or proof of spiritual states, either in ourselves or others, and**

**depending on them as the foundation of our faith. Let them come or let**

**them go, just as God pleases, and make no account of them either way.**

**But always see to it that the really vital marks of oneness with**

**Christ, the marks of likeness in character, and life, and walk, are**

**ours, and all will be well. For "he that saith I know Him, and keepeth**

**not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in Him. But whoso**

**keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby**

**know we that we are in Him."**

**It may be, my dear reader, that the grief of your life has been the**

**fact that you have so few good feelings. You try your hardest to get up**

**the feelings which you hear others talking about, but they will not**

**come. You pray for them fervently, and are often tempted to upbraid God**

**because He does not grant them to you. And you are filled with an**

**almost unbearable anguish because you think your want of emotion is a**

**sign that there is not any interior union of your soul with Christ. You**

**judge altogether by your feelings, and think there is no other way to**

**judge.**

**Now my advice to you is to let your feelings go, and pay no regard to**

**them whatever. They really have nothing to do with the matter. They are**

**not the indicators of your spiritual state, but are merely the**

**indicators of your temperament, or of your present physical condition.**

**People in very low states of grace are often the subjects of very**

**powerful emotional experiences. We all know this from the scenes we**

**have heard of or witnessed at camp-meetings and revivals. I myself had**

**a colored servant once who would become unconscious under the power of**

**her wonderful experiences, whenever there was a revival meeting at**

**their church, who yet had hardly a token of any spiritual life about**

**her at other times, and who was, in fact, not even moral. Now surely,**

**if the Bible teaches nothing else, it does teach this, that a**

**Christ-like life and walk must accompany any experience which is really**

**born of His spirit. It could not be otherwise in the very nature of**

**things. But I fear some Christians have separated the two things so**

**entirely in their conceptions, as to have exalted their experiences at**

**the expense of their walk, and have come to care far more about their**

**emotions than about their character.**

**A certain colored congregation in one of the Southern States was a**

**plague to the whole neighborhood by their open disregard of even the**

**ordinary rules of morality; stealing, and lying, and cheating, without**

**apparently a single prick of conscience on the subject. And yet their**

**nightly meetings were times of the greatest emotion and "power."**

**Someone finally spoke to the preacher about it, and begged him to**

**preach a sermon on morality, which would lead his people to see their**

**sins. "Ah, missus," he replied, "I knows dey's bad, but den it always**

**brings a coldness like over de meetings when I preaches about dem**

**things."**

**You are helpless as to your emotions, but character you can have if you**

**will. You can be so filled with Christ as to be Christ-like, and if you**

**are Christ-like, then you are one with Him in the only vital and**

**essential way, even though your feelings may tell you that it is an**

**impossibility.**

**Having thus settled what oneness with Christ really is, the next point**

**for us to consider is how to reach it for ourselves.**

**We must first of all find out what are the facts in the case, and what**

**is our own relation to these facts.**

**If you read such passages as 1 Cor. 3:16, "Know ye not that ye are the**

**temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" and then**

**look at the opening of the chapter to see to whom these wonderful words**

**are spoken, even to "babes in Christ," who were "yet carnal," and**

**walked according to man, you will see that this soul-union of which I**

**speak, this unspeakably glorious mystery of an indwelling God is the**

**possession of even the weakest and most failing believer in Christ. So**

**that it is not a new thing you are to ask for, but only to realize that**

**which you already have. Of every believer in the Lord Jesus it is**

**absolutely true, that his "body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which**

**is in him, which he has of God."**

**It seems to me just in this way; as though Christ were living in a**

**house, shut up in a far-off closet, unknown and unnoticed by the**

**dwellers in the house, longing to make Himself known to them and be one**

**with them in all their daily lives, and share in all their interests,**

**but unwilling to force Himself upon their notice; as nothing but a**

**voluntary companionship could meet or satisfy the needs of His love.**

**The days pass by over that favored household, and they remain in**

**ignorance of their marvellous privilege. They come and go about all**

**their daily affairs with no thought of their wonderful Guest. Their**

**plans are laid without reference to Him. His wisdom to guide, and His**

**strength to protect, are all lost to them. Lonely days and weeks are**

**spent in sadness, which might have been full of the sweetness of His**

**presence.**

**But suddenly the announcement is made, "The Lord is in the house!"**

**How will its owner receive the intelligence? Will he call out an eager**

**thanksgiving, and throw wide open every door for the entrance of his**

**glorious Guest; Or will he shrink and hesitate, afraid of His presence**

**and seek to reserve some private corner for a refuge from His**

**all-seeing eye?**

**Dear friend, I make the glad announcement to thee that the Lord is in**

**thy heart. Since the day of thy conversion He has been dwelling there,**

**but thou hast lived on in ignorance of it. Every moment during all that**

**time might have been passed in the sunshine of His sweet presence, and**

**every step have been taken under His advice. But because thou knew it**

**not, and hast never looked for Him there, thy life has been lonely and**

**full of failure. But now that I make the announcement to thee, how wilt**

**thou receive it? Art thou glad to have Him? Wilt thou throw wide open**

**every door to welcome Him in? Wilt thou joyfully and thankfully give up**

**the government of thy life into His hands? Wilt thou consult Him about**

**everything, and let Him decide each step for thee, and mark out every**

**path? Wilt thou invite Him to thy innermost chambers, and make Him the**

**sharer in thy most hidden life? Wilt thou say, "YES!" to all His**

**longing for union with thee, and with a glad and eager abandonment,**

**hand thyself and all that concerns thee over into His hands? If thou**

**wilt, then shall thy soul begin to know something of the joy of union**

**with Christ.**

**And yet, after all, this is but a faint picture of the blessed reality.**

**For far more glorious than it would be to have Christ a dweller in the**

**house or in the heart, is it to be brought into such a real and actual**

**union with Him as to be one with Him, one will, one purpose, one**

**interest, one life. Human words cannot express such glory as this. And**

**yet I want to express it. I want to make your souls so unutterably**

**hungry to realize it, that day or night you cannot rest without it. Do**

**you understand the words, one with Christ? Do you catch the slightest**

**glimpse of their marvellous meaning? Does not your whole soul begin to**

**exult over such a wondrous destiny? For it is a reality. It means to**

**have no life but His life, to have no will but His will, to have no**

**interests but His interests, to share His riches, to enter into His**

**joys, to partake of His sorrows, to manifest His life, to have the same**

**mind as He had, to think, and feel, and act, and walk as He did. Oh,**

**who could have dreamed that such a destiny could have been ours!**

**Wilt thou have it, dear soul? Thy Lord will not force it on thee, for**

**He wants thee as His companion and His friend, and a forced union would**

**be incompatible with this. It must be voluntary on thy part.**

**The bride must say a willing "Yes," to her bridegroom, or the joy of**

**their union is utterly wanting. Canst thou say a willing "Yes," to thy**

**Lord?**

**It is such a simple transaction, and yet so real! The steps are but**

**three. First, be convinced that the Scriptures teach this glorious**

**indwelling of thy God; then surrender thy whole being to Him to be**

**possessed by Him; and finally believe that He has taken possession, and**

**is dwelling in thee. Begin to reckon thyself dead, and to reckon Christ**

**as thy only life. Maintain this attitude of soul unwaveringly. Say, "I**

**am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ**

**liveth in me," over and over day and night, until it becomes the**

**habitual breathing of thy soul. Put off thy self-life by faith and in**

**fact continually, and put on practically the life of Christ. Let this**

**act become, by its constant repetition, the attitude of thy whole**

**being. And as surely as thou dost this day by day, thou shalt find**

**thyself continually bearing about in thy body the dying of the Lord**

**Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in thy mortal**

**flesh. Thou shalt learn to know what salvation means; and shalt have**

**opened out to thy astonished gaze secrets of the Lord, of which thou**

**hast hitherto hardly dreamed.**

**How have I erred! God is my home**

**And God Himself is here.**

**Why have I looked so far for Him,**

**Who is nowhere but near?**

**Yet God is never so far off**

**As even to be near;**

**He is within, our spirit is**

**The home He holds most dear.**

**So all the while I thought myself**

**Homeless, forlorn, and weary;**

**Missing my joy, I walked the earth,**

**Myself God's sanctuary.**

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**Chapter 18**

**"ALTHOUGH" AND "YET," A LESSON IN THE INTERIOR LIFE**

**In many of our store windows at Christmas time there stands a most**

**significant picture. It is a dreary, desolate winter scene. There is a**

**dark, stormy, wintry sky, bare trees, and brown grass and dead weeds,**

**with patches of snow over them. On a leafless tree at one side of the**

**picture is an empty and snow-covered nest, and on a branch near sits a**

**little bird. All is cold, and dark, and desolate enough to daunt any**

**bird, and drive it to some fairer clime, but this bird is sitting there**

**in an attitude of perfect contentment, and has its little head bravely**

**lifted up towards the sky, while a winter song is evidently about to**

**burst forth from its tiny throat.**

**This picture, which always stands on my shelf, has preached me many a**

**sermon. And the test is always the same, and finds its expression in**

**the two words that stand at the head of this article, "Although" and**

**"Yet."**

**"ALTHOUGH the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the**

**vines: the labor of the olive shall fail, and the field shall yield no**

**meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no**

**herd in the stall: YET I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the**

**God of my salvation."**

**There come times in many lives, when, like this bird in the winter, the**

**soul finds itself bereft of every comfort both outward and inward; when**

**all seems dark, and all seems wrong, even; when everything in which we**

**have trusted seems to fail us; when the promises are apparently**

**unfulfilled, and our prayers gain no response; when there seems nothing**

**left to rest on in earth or Heaven. And it is at such times as these**

**that the brave little bird with its message is needed. "Although" all**

**is wrong everywhere, "yet" there is still one thing left to rejoice in,**

**and that is God; the "God of our salvation," who changes not, but is**

**the same good, loving, tender God yesterday, today, and forever. We can**

**joy in Him always, whether we have anything else to rejoice in or not.**

**By rejoicing in Him, however, I do not mean rejoicing in ourselves,**

**although I fear most people think this is really what is meant. It is**

**their feelings or their revelations or their experiences that**

**constitute the groundwork of their joy, and if none of these are**

**satisfactory, they see no possibility of joy at all.**

**But the lesson the Lord is trying to teach us all the time is the**

**lesson of self-effacement. He commands us to look away from self and**

**all self's experiences, to crucify self and count it dead, to cease to**

**be interested in self, and to know nothing and be interested in nothing**

**but God.**

**The reason for this is that God has destined us for a higher life than**

**the self-life. That just as He has destined the caterpillar to become**

**the butterfly, and therefore has appointed the caterpillar life to die,**

**in order that the butterfly life may take its place, so He has**

**appointed our self-life to die in order that the divine life may become**

**ours instead. The caterpillar effaces itself in its grub form, that it**

**may evolve or develop into its butterfly form. It dies that it may**

**live. And just so must we.**

**Therefore, the one most essential thing in this stage of our existence**

**must be the death to self and the resurrection to a life only in God.**

**And it is for this reason that the lesson of joy in the Lord, and not**

**in self, must be learned. Every advancing soul must come sooner or**

**later to the place where it can trust God, the bare God, if I may be**

**allowed the expression, simply and only because of what He is in**

**Himself, and not because of His promises or His gifts. It must learn to**

**have its joy in Him alone, and to rejoice in Him when all else in**

**Heaven and earth shall seem to fail.**

**The only way in which this place can be reached I believe, is by the**

**soul being compelled to face in its own experience the loss of all**

**things both inward and outward. I do not mean necessarily that all**

**one's friends must die, or all one's money be lost: but I do mean that**

**the soul shall find itself, from either inward or outward causes,**

**desolate, and bereft, and empty of all consolation. It must come to the**

**end of everything that is not God; and must have nothing else left to**

**rest on within or without. It must experience just what the prophet**

**meant when he wrote that "Although."**

**It must wade through the slough, and fall off of the precipice, and be**

**swamped by the ocean, and at last find in the midst of them, and at the**

**bottom of them, and behind them, the present, living, loving,**

**omnipotent God! And then, and not until then, will it understand the**

**prophet's exulting shout of triumph, and be able to join it: "YET I**

**will rejoice in the Lord; I will joy in the God of my salvation."**

**And then, also, and not until then, will it know the full meaning of**

**the verse that follows: "The Lord God is my strength, and He will make**

**my feet like hind's feet, and He will make me to walk upon mine high**

**places."**

**The soul often walks on what seem high places, which are, however,**

**largely self-evolved and emotional, and have but little of God in them;**

**and in moments of loss and failure and darkness, these high places**

**become precipices of failure. But the high places to which the Lord**

**brings the soul that rejoices only in Him, can be touched by no**

**darkness or loss, for their very foundations are laid in the midst of**

**an utter loss and death of all that is not God.**

**If we want an unwavering experience, therefore, we can find it only in**

**the Lord, apart from all else; apart from His gifts, apart from His**

**blessings, apart from all that can change or be affected by the**

**changing conditions of our earthly life.**

**The prayer which is answered today, may seem to be unanswered tomorrow;**

**the promises once so gloriously fulfilled, may cease to be a reality to**

**us; the spiritual blessing which was at one time such a joy, may be**

**utterly lost; and nothing of all we once trusted to and rested on may**

**be left us, but the hungry and longing memory of it all. But when all**

**else is gone, God is still left. Nothing changes Him. He is the same**

**yesterday, today, and forever, and in Him is no variableness, neither**

**shadow of turning. And the soul that finds its joy in Him alone, can**

**suffer no wavering.**

**It is grand to trust in the promises, but it is grander still to trust**

**in the Promiser. The promises may be misunderstood or misapplied, and**

**at the moment when we are leaning all our weight upon them, they may**

**seem utterly to fail us. But no one ever trusted in the Promiser and**

**was confounded.**

**The God who is behind His promises and is infinitely greater than His**

**promises, can never fail us in any emergency, and the soul that is**

**stayed on Him cannot know anything but perfect peace.**

**The little child does not always understand its mother's promises, but**

**it knows its mother, and its childlike trust is founded not on her**

**word, but upon herself. And just so it is with those of us who have**

**learned the lesson of this "Although" and "Yet." There may not be a**

**prayer answered or a promise fulfilled to our own consciousness, but**

**what of that? Behind the prayers and behind the promises, there is God,**

**and He is enough. And to such a soul the simple words, GOD IS, answer**

**every question and solve every doubt.**

**To the little trusting child the simple fact of the mother's existence**

**is the answer to all its need. The mother may not make one single**

**promise, or detail any plan, but she is, and that is enough for the**

**child. The child rejoices in the mother; not in her promises, but in**

**herself. And to the child, as to us, there is behind all that changes**

**and can change, the one unchangeable joy of the mother's existence.**

**While the mother lives, the child must be cared for, and the child**

**knows this, instinctively if not intelligently, and rejoices in knowing**

**it. And while God lives, His children must be cared for as well, and**

**His children ought to know this, and rejoice in it as instinctively and**

**far more intelligently than the child of human parents. For what else**

**can God do, being what He is? Neglect, indifference, forgetfulness,**

**ignorance, are all impossible to Him. He knows everything, He cares**

**about everything, He can manage everything; and He loves us; and what**

**more could we ask? Therefore, come what may, we will lift our faces to**

**our God, like our brave little bird teacher, and, in the midst of our**

**darkest "Althoughs," will sing our glad and triumphant "Yet."**

**All of God's saints in all ages have done this. Job said, out of the**

**depths of sorrow and trial which few can equal, "Though He slay me yet**

**will I trust in Him."**

**David could say in the moment of his keenest anguish, "Yea, though I**

**walk through the valley of the shadow of death," yet "I will fear no**

**evil; for Thou art with me." And again he could say, "God is our refuge**

**and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore, will not we**

**fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried**

**into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be**

**troubled; though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof . . .**

**God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God shall help her,**

**and that right early."**

**Paul could say in the midst of his sorrows, "We are troubled on every**

**side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;**

**persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed . . . for**

**which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the**

**inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is**

**but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal**

**weight of glory; while we look, not at the things which are seen, but**

**at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are**

**temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."**

**All this and more can the soul say that learned this lesson of**

**rejoicing in God alone.**

**Spiritual joy is not a thing, not a lump of joy, so to speak, stored**

**away in one's heart to be looked at and rejoiced over. Joy is only the**

**gladness that comes from the possession of something good, or the**

**knowledge of something pleasant. And the Christian's joy is simply his**

**gladness in knowing Christ, and in his possession of such a God and**

**Saviour. We do not on an earthly plane rejoice in our joy, but in the**

**thing that causes our joy. And on the heavenly plane it is the same. We**

**are to "rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of our salvation"; and**

**this joy no man nor devil can take from us, and no earthly sorrows can**

**touch.**

**A writer on the interior life says, in effect, that our spiritual**

**pathway is divided into three regions, very different from one another,**

**and yet each one a necessary stage in the onward progress. First, there**

**is the region of beginnings, which is a time full of sensible joys and**

**delights, of fervent aspirations, of emotional experiences, and of many**

**secret manifestations of God. Then comes a vast extent of wilderness,**

**full of temptation, and trial, and conflict, of the loss of sensible**

**manifestations, of dryness, and of inward and outward darkness and**

**distress. And then, finally, if this desert period is faithfully**

**traversed, there comes on the further side of it a region of mountain**

**heights of uninterrupted union and communion with God, of superhuman**

**detachment from everything earthly, of infinite contentment with the**

**Divine will, and of marvellous transformation into the image of Christ.**

**Whether this order is true or not, I cannot here discuss, but of one**

**thing I am very sure, that to many souls who have tasted the joy of the**

**"region of beginnings" here set forth, there has come afterwards a**

**period of desert experience at which they have been sorely amazed and**

**perplexed. And I cannot but think such might, perhaps, in this**

**explanation, find the answer to their trouble. They are being taught**

**the lesson of detachment from all that is not God, in order that their**

**souls may at last be brought into that interior union and oneness with**

**Him which is set forth in the picture given of the third and last**

**region of mountain heights of blessedness.**

**The soul's pathway is always through death to life. The caterpillar**

**cannot in the nature of things become the butterfly in any other way**

**than by dying to the one life in order to live in the other. And**

**neither can we. Therefore, it may well be that this region of death and**

**desolation must needs be passed through, if we would reach the calm**

**mountain heights beyond. And if we know this, we can walk triumphantly**

**through the darkest experience, sure that all is well, since God is**

**God.**

**In the lives of many who read this paper there is, I feel sure, at**

**least one of these desert "Althoughs," and in some lives there are**

**many.**

**Dear friends, is the "Yet" there also? Have you learned the prophet's**

**lesson? Is God enough for you? Can you sing and mean it,**

**"Thou, O Christ, art all I want,**

**More than all in thee I find"?**

**If not, you need the little bird to speak to you.**

**And the song that he sings, as he sits on that bare and leafless tree,**

**with the winter storm howling around him, must become your song also.**

**"Though the rain may fall and the wind be blowing,**

**And cold and chill is the wintry blast;**

**Though the cloudier sky is still cloudier growing,**

**And the dead leaves tell that summer is passed;**

**Yet my face I hold to the stormy heaven,**

**My heart is as calm as a summer sea;**

**Glad to receive what my God hath given,**

**Whate'er it be.**

**"When I feel the cold, I can say, He sends it,'**

**And His wind blows blessing I surely know;**

**For I've never a want but that He attends it;**

**And my heart beats warm, though the winds may blow**

**The soft sweet summer was warm and glowing,**

**Bright were the blossoms on every bough;**

**I trusted Him when the roses were blowing,**

**I trust Him now.**

**"Small were my faith should it weakly falter,**

**Now that the roses have ceased to blow;**

**Frail were the trust that now should alter,**

**Doubting His love when the storm-clouds grow.**

**If I trust Him once I must trust Him ever,**

**And His way is best, though I stand or fall,**

**Through wind or storm He will leave me never,**

**For He sends all."**

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**Chapter 19**

**KINGS AND THEIR KINGDOMS; OR, HOW TO REIGN IN THE INTERIOR LIFE**

**"And when he was demanded of the Pharisees when the kingdom of God**

**should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not**

**with observation: neither shall they say, lo here! or, lo there! for,**

**behold, the kingdom of God is within you."**

**The expressions "kingdom of God" and "kingdom of Heaven" are used in**

**Scripture concerning the divine life in the soul. They mean simply the**

**place or condition where God rules, and where His will is done. It is**

**an interior kingdom, not an exterior one. Its thrones are not outward**

**thrones of human pomp and glory, but inward thrones of dominion and**

**supremacy over the things of time and sense. Its kings are not clothed**

**in royal robes of purple and fine linen, but with the interior garments**

**of purity and truth. And its reign is not in outward show, but in**

**inward power. Neither is it in one place rather than another, nor in**

**one form of things above another. It is not, lo here, nor lo there, not**

**in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem, that we are to find Christ, and**

**enter into His kingdom. It is not a matter of place at all, but one of**

**condition. And in every place and under every name, and through every**

**form, all who seek God and work righteousness shall find His kingdom**

**within them.**

**But this is very little understood. In our childish fashion of**

**literalism we have too much imbibed the idea that a kingdom must**

**necessarily be in a particular place and with outward observation; and**

**have therefore expected that the kingdom of heaven would mean for us an**

**outward victory of heaven over earth in some particular place, or under**

**some especial form; and that to sit on a throne with Christ, would be**

**to have an outward uplifting in power and glory before the face of all**

**around us.**

**But as the inner sense of Scripture unfolds to us, we see that this**

**would be but a poor and superficial fulfilling of the real meaning of**

**these wonderful symbols. And the vision of their true significance**

**grows and strengthens before the "eyes that see," until at last we know**

**that our Lord's words were truer than ever we had dreamed before, that**

**the "kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they**

**say, lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within**

**you."**

**In Daniel 2:44, we have the announcement of the kingdom, and in Isaiah**

**9:6, 7, the announcement of the King:--**

**"The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be**

**destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it**

**shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall**

**stand forever."**

**"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the**

**government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called**

**Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the**

**Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there**

**shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to**

**order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from**

**henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform**

**this."**

**This kingdom is to break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms by**

**right of the law by which the inward always rules the outward. If there**

**is peace within, no outward turmoil can affect the soul; but outward**

**peace can never quiet an inward tempest. A happy heart can walk in**

**triumphant indifference through a sea of external trouble; while**

**internal anguish cannot find happiness in the most favorable**

**surroundings. What a man is within himself, makes or unmakes his joy,**

**and not what he possesses outside of himself.**

**Someone said to Diogenes, "The king has degraded you." "Yes" replied**

**Diogenes, triumphantly, "but I am not degraded!" No act of kings or**

**emperors can degrade a soul that retains its own dignity; no tyrant can**

**enslave a man who is inwardly free.**

**Therefore to have this divine kingdom set up within, means that all**

**other powers to conquer or enslave are broken, and the soul reigns**

**triumphant over them all. Men and devils may try to hold such a one in**

**bondage, but they are powerless before the might of this interior**

**kingdom. No longer will fashion, or conventionality, or the fear of**

**man, or the love of ease, or any other of the many tyrants to which**

**Christians cringe and bow, rule a soul that has been raised to a throne**

**in this inward kingdom. No sin or temptation can overcome, no sorrow**

**can crush, no discouragement can hinder. Let a man or woman have been**

**bound in ever so tyrannical chains of sinful habits, this kingdom will**

**set them free. Circumstances make men kings in the outward life, but in**

**this hidden life men become kings over circumstances. And the soul that**

**has aforetime been the slave of a thousand outward things, finds itself**

**here utterly independent of them, every one.**

**For the King in this kingdom is One whom no circumstances can affect or**

**baffle. He it is indeed who makes circumstances. And since the**

**government is upon His shoulders, we cannot doubt that He will order**

**the kingdom with a judgment and justice that will leave nothing for any**

**subject in His kingdom to desire.**

**In the expression "the government shall be upon His shoulder," we have**

**the whole secret of this wonderful kingdom. Upon His shoulder, not upon**

**ours. The care is His, the burdens are His, the responsibility belongs**

**to Him, the protection rests upon Him, the planning, and providing, and**

**controlling, and guiding, all are in His hands. No one can question as**

**to His perfect fulfilment of every requirement of His kingship.**

**Therefore those who are in His kingdom, are utterly delivered from any**

**need to be anxious, or burdened, or perplexed, or troubled. And by this**

**deliverance they become kings. The government is not upon their**

**shoulders, and they have no business to interfere with it. Their King**

**has assumed the whole responsibility, and if He can but see His**

**subjects happy and prosperous, He is content Himself to bear all the**

**weight and care of kingship. How often we speak of the responsibilities**

**of earthly kings, and pity them for the burdens that kingship imposes.**

**We recognize, even on an earthly plane, that to be a king means, or**

**ought to mean, the bearing of the burdens of even the meanest of his**

**subject. And even now, as I write, many hearts are aching with sympathy**

**for the new Czar, who has assumed the grievous burden of the mighty**

**Russian Empire.**

**From this instinctive sense of every human heart as to the rightful**

**duties and responsibilities of kingship, we may learn what it means to**

**be in a kingdom over which God is King, and where He has himself**

**declared all things shall be ordered with judgment and justice from**

**henceforth and even forever. Surely no care or anxiety can ever enter**

**here, if the heart but knows its kingdom and its King!**

**In John 18:36, our King tells us the tactics of His kingdom: "Jesus**

**answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this**

**world then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to**

**the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence."**

**Earthly kings and earthly kingdoms gain and keep their supremacy by**

**outward conflict; God's kingdom conquers by inward power. Earthly kings**

**subdue enemies; God subdues enmity. His victories must be interior**

**before they can be exterior. He does not subjugate, but he conquers.**

**Even we, on our earthly plane, know something of this principle, and do**

**not value any victory over another which only reaches the body and has**

**not subdued the heart. No true mother cares for an outward obedience**

**merely; nothing will satisfy her but the inward surrender. Unless the**

**citadel of the heart is conquered, the conquest seem worthless. And**

**with God how much more will this be the case, since we are told that**

**"He seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance,**

**but the Lord looketh on the heart." We speak of "subduing hearts," and**

**we mean, not that they are overpowered or forced into an unwilling and**

**compulsory surrender, but that they are conquered by being won, and are**

**willingly yielded up to another's control. And it is after this fashion**

**and no other that God subdues. So that to read that "His kingdom ruleth**

**over all," means that all hearts are won to His service in a glad and**

**willing surrender.**

**For again I repeat, His reign must be inward before it can be outward.**

**And in truth it is no reign at all, unless it is within. If we think of**

**it a moment we shall see that this must be so in the very nature of**

**things, and that it is impossible to conceive of God reigning in a**

**kingdom where the subduing reaches no further than the outside actions**

**of His subjects. His kingdom is not of this world, but is in a**

**spiritual sphere, where its power is over the souls and not the bodies**

**of men; and therefore only when the soul is conquered, can it be set**

**up.**

**Understood in this light, how full of love and blessing do all those**

**declarations and prophecies become, which tell us that God is to subdue**

**His enemies under His feet, and is to rule them in righteousness and**

**power! And how glorious with hope does the voice of that great**

**multitude heard by John sound out, saying, "Alleluia! for the Lord God**

**omnipotent reigneth!"**

**In confirmation of all this we have two passages descriptive of this**

**kingdom, in Rom. 14:17, and 1 Cor. 4:20: "For the kingdom of God is not**

**meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."**

**"For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power."**

**Not outward things, but inward. Not what a man eats and drinks, not**

**where he lives, nor what is his nationality, nor the customs of his**

**race, not even what he thinks nor what he says; but what are the inward**

**characteristics of his nature, and the inward power of his spiritual**

**life. For these alone constitute this kingdom of God. Not what I do,**

**but what I am, is to decide whether I belong to it or not. And only as**

**inward righteousness, and inward peace, and inward joy, and inward**

**power are bestowed and experienced, can this kingdom be set up.**

**Therefore no outward subjugation can accomplish results like these, but**

**only the interior work of the all-subduing spirit of God.**

**I have been greatly instructed by the story of Ulysses, when he was**

**sailing past the islands of the sirens. These sirens had the power of**

**charming by their songs all who listened to them, and of inducing them**

**to leap into the sea. To avert this danger, Ulysses filled the ears of**

**his crew with wax, that they might not hear the fatal music, and bound**

**himself to the mast with knotted cords; and thus they passed the isle**

**in safety. But when Orpheus was obliged to sail by the same island, he**

**gained a better victory, for he himself made sweeter music than that of**

**the sirens, and enchanted his crew with more alluring songs; so that**

**they passed the dangerous charmers not only with safety, but with**

**disdain. Wax and knotted cords kept Ulysses and his crew from making**

**the fatal leap; but inward delights enabled Orpheus and his crew to**

**reign triumphant over the very source of temptation itself. And just so**

**is it with the kingdom of which we speak. It needs no outward law to**

**bind it, but reigns by right of its inward life. So that it is said of**

**those who have entered it, "Against such there is no law."**

**For it is a kingdom of kings. The song we shall one day sing, nay, that**

**we ought to be singing even now and here in this life, declare this:**

**"Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood,**

**and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be**

**glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." (Rev. 1:5, 6.)**

**We who have entered this kingdom, or, rather, in whom this kingdom is**

**set up, sit upon the throne with our King and share His dominion. The**

**world was His footstool, and it becomes our footstool also. Over the**

**things of time and sense He reigned triumphant by the power of a life**

**lived in a plane above them and superior to them, and so may we. We are**

**all of us familiar with the expression that such or such a person**

**"rises superior to his surroundings," and we mean that there is in that**

**soul a hidden power that controls its surroundings, instead of being**

**controlled by them. Our King essentially rose superior to His**

**surroundings; and it is given to us who are reigning with Him to do the**

**same.**

**But, just as He was not a king in outward appearance, but only in**

**inward power, so shall we be. He reigned, not in this, that He had all**

**the treasures and riches of the world at His command, but that He had**

**none of them, and could do without them. And so shall our reigning be.**

**We shall not have all men bowing down to us, and all things bending to**

**our will; but with all men opposing and all things adverse, we shall**

**walk in a royal triumph of soul through the midst of them. We shall**

**suffer the loss of all things, and by that loss be set forever free**

**from their power to bind. We shall hide ourselves in the impregnable**

**fortress of the will of our King, and shall reign there in a perpetual**

**kingdom.**

**All this is contrary to man's thought of kingship. The only idea the**

**human heart can compass, is, that outward circumstances must bend and**

**bow to the soul that is seated on a throne with Christ. Friends must**

**approve, enemies must be silenced, obstacles must be overcome, affairs**

**must prosper, or there can be no reigning. If man had had the ordering**

**of Daniel's business, or of that matter of the three Hebrew children in**

**the burning fiery furnace, he would have said the only way of victory**

**would be for the minds of the kings to have been so changed that Daniel**

**should not have been cast into the den of lions, and the Hebrew**

**children should have been kept out of the furnace. But God's way was**

**infinitely grander. He suffered Daniel to be cast among the lions, in**

**order that he might reign triumphant over them when in their very**

**midst, and He allowed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to be cast into**

**the burning, fiery furnace, in order that they might walk through it**

**without so much as the smell of fire upon them. He tells us, not that**

**we shall walk in paths where there are no dragons and adders, but that**

**we shall walk through the midst of dragons and adders, and shall "tread**

**them under our feet."**

**And how much more glorious a kingdom is this than any outward rule or**

**control could be! To be inwardly a king, while outwardly a slave, is**

**one of the grandest heights of triumph of which our hearts can**

**conceive. To be destitute, afflicted, tormented, to be stoned and torn**

**asunder, and slain with the sword; to wander in sheepskins and**

**goatskins, and in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the**

**earth, and yet to be through it all, kings in interior kingdoms of**

**righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, is surely a kingdom**

**that none but God could give, and none but God-like souls receive.**

**A few such kings we have at some time or other seen or heard of in this**

**world of ours, and all hearts have acknowledged their unconscious sway.**

**One I read of among the brethren of the monastery of St. Cyr. Because**

**of their piety, these brethren incurred the hatred of the monasteries**

**around them, and the anger of their superiors, and were cast out as**

**evil from their community. One of them was sent as prisoner to a**

**monastery where his chief enemies dwelt, and was there subjected to the**

**most cruel and degrading treatment. Although he was of gentle birth,**

**and had been an abbot in the community he had left, he was compelled to**

**do the most menial work, was forced to carry a noisome burden on his**

**back, and was driven out to beg with a placard on his bosom declaring**

**him to be the vilest of the vile. But through it all the spirit of the**

**saint reigned triumphant, and nothing disturbed his calm, or soured for**

**a moment his Christ-like sweetness. For his persecutors he never had**

**anything but words of kindness and smiles of love. And at last by the**

**mighty power of the divine kingdom in which he lived, he subdued all**

**hearts around him to himself, and became the trusted friend and**

**adviser, and the beloved ruler over the very enemies who had once so**

**delighted to persecute and revile him. "Blessed are the meek, for they**

**shall inherit the earth." By his meekness he conquered and became king.**

**At one time a dangerous criminal was sent to the monastery for**

**imprisonment. He was so violent that no bonds sufficed to bind him, and**

**no strength could control him. At last he was taken to the cell of this**

**brother from St. Cyr, and they were shut up together; even the stolid**

**monks themselves recognizing in that divine meekness a power to conquer**

**that surpassed all the powers with which they were acquainted. The**

**saint received the violent man as a beloved brother, and smiled upon**

**him with heavenly kindness. But the criminal returned it with abuse and**

**violence. He broke the monk's furniture and destroyed his bed, he**

**kicked him, and beat him, and tore his hair, and spat upon him. He**

**exhausted himself in his violence against him. Through it all the monk**

**made no resistance, and said no word but words of love; and when at**

**length the criminal, worn out with his fury, paused to take breath, the**

**beaten and outraged man looked upon his persecutor with a smile of**

**ineffable love and tender compassion, as though he would gather him to**

**his bosom and comfort him for his misery. It was more than the criminal**

**could bear. Hatred, and revenge, and anger he could repay in kind, but**

**against love and meekness like this he had no weapons, and his heart**

**was conquered. He fell at the feet of the saint and washed them with**

**his tears, as he entreated forgiveness for his cruelty, and vowed a**

**lifelong loyalty to his service. And from that moment all trouble with**

**that criminal was over. He followed the saint about like a loving and**

**faithful dog, eager to do or to be anything the other might desire. And**

**when the time of his imprisonment was over, and the gates of his prison**

**were opened for his release, he could not be induced to go, because he**

**could not bear to leave the man who had saved him by love.**

**Of such a nature is kingship in this kingdom of heaven.**

**Each soul can make the application for itself, without need of comment**

**from me.**

**In Matt. 5, 6, and 7, we have the King of this kingdom describing the**

**characteristics of His kingdom and giving the laws for His subjects.**

**"Blessed are the poor in spirit," He says, "for theirs is the kingdom**

**of heaven." Not the rich, or great, or wise, or learned, but the poor**

**in spirit, the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, those who mourn,**

**and those who hunger and thirst, those who are persecuted, and reviled,**

**and spoken evil against, all such belong to this kingdom. Gentleness,**

**yieldingness, meekness, charity, are the characteristics of these**

**kings, and they reign in the power of them.**

**One Christian asked another, "How can I make people respect me?" "I**

**would command their respect," was the reply. And this meant, not that**

**he should stand up and say in tones of authority, "Now I command you**

**all to respect me," but that he should so act, and live, and be, that**

**no one could help respecting him. Men sometimes win an outward show of**

**respect and submission by an over-bearing tyranny, but he who would**

**rule the heart of his subjects must try other methods.**

**Our Lord developed this thought to some who wished to share His throne.**

**He called them to Him, and said, "Ye know that they which are accounted**

**to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great**

**ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you:**

**but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: and**

**whosoever of you will be the chiefest shall be servant of all. For even**

**the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to**

**give his life a ransom for many."**

**From the human standpoint, that man alone reigns who is able to**

**exercise lordship over those around him. From the divine standpoint the**

**soul that serves is the soul that reigns. Not he who demands most,**

**receives this inward crowning, but he who gives up most.**

**What grander kingship can be conceived of than that which Christ sets**

**forth in the sermon on the mount, "But I say unto you, that ye resist**

**not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to**

**him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law and take**

**away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel**

**thee to go a mile, go with him twain."**

**Surely only a soul that is in harmony with God can mount such a throne**

**of dominion as this!**

**But this is our destiny. We are made for this purpose. We are born of a**

**kingly race, and are heirs to this ineffable kingdom; "heirs of God and**

**joint heirs with Christ."**

**Would that we could realize this; and could see in every act of service**

**or surrender to which we might find ourselves called, an upward step in**

**the pathway that leads us to our kingdom and our throne!**

**I mean this in a very practical sense. I mean that the homely services**

**of our daily lives, and the little sacrifices which each day demands,**

**will be, if faithfully fulfilled, actual rounds in the ladder by which**

**we are mounting to our thrones. I mean that if we are faithful over the**

**"few things" of our earthly kingdom, we shall be made ruler over the**

**"many things" of the heavenly kingdom.**

**He that follows Christ in this ministry of service and of suffering,**

**will reign with Him in the glory of supreme self-sacrifice, and will be**

**the "chiefest" in His divine kingdom of love. Knowing this, who would**

**hesitate to "turn the other cheek," since by the turning a kingdom is**

**to be won and a throne is to be gained?**

**Joseph was a type of all this. In slavery and in prison he reigned a**

**king, as truly as when seated on Pharaoh's throne or riding in**

**Pharaoh's chariot. (See Gen. 39:6, 22, 23.) He became the greatest by**

**being the least, the chiefest by being servant of all.**

**Dear reader, art thou reigning after this fashion, and in this sort of**

**a kingdom? Art thou the greatest in thy little world of home, or**

**church, or social circle by being the least, and chiefest by being the**

**servant of all? If not, thy kingdom is not Christ's kingdom, and thy**

**throne is not one shared by Him.**

**To enter into the secrets of this interior kingdom and to partake of**

**its heavenly power, is no notional victory, no fancied supremacy. It is**

**a real and actual reigning, which will cause thee as a matter of fact**

**to "rise superior" to the world and the things of it, and to walk**

**through it independent of its smiles or frowns, dwelling in a region of**

**heavenly peace and heavenly triumph which earth can neither give nor**

**take away. "For the kingdom of God is not in word but in power." It is**

**not a talk but a fact; and those who are in it recognize their kingship**

**and prove it by reigning.**

**But perhaps thou wilt say, "How can I enter into this kingdom, if I am**

**not already in?" Let our Lord himself answer thee: "At the same time**

**came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the**

**kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set**

**him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be**

**converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the**

**kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this**

**little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."**

**It is a kingdom of childlike hearts, and only such can enter it.**

**To be a "little child" means simply to be one. I cannot describe it**

**better than this. We all have known little children in our lives, and**

**have delighted ourselves in their simplicity and their trustfulness,**

**their light-hearted carelessness, and their unquestioning obedience to**

**those in authority over them. And to be the greatest in this divine**

**kingdom means to have the most of this guileless, tender, trustful,**

**self-forgetting, obedient heart of the child.**

**"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the**

**kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in**

**heaven."**

**It is not saying, but doing, that will avail us here. We must be a**

**child, or we cannot sit on the child's throne. And to be a child means**

**to do the Father's will, since the very essence of true childhood is**

**the spirit of obedience united to the spirit of trust.**

**Become a little child, then, by laying aside all thy greatness, all thy**

**self-assertion, all thy self-dependence, all thy wisdom, and all thy**

**strength, and consenting to die to thy own self-life, be born again**

**into the kingdom of God. The only way out of one life into another is**

**by a death to one and a new birth into the other. It is the old story,**

**therefore, reiterated so often and in so many different ways, of**

**through death to life. Die, then, that you my live. Lose your own life**

**that you may find Christ's life. The caterpillar can only enter into**

**the butterfly's kingdom by dying to its caterpillar life, and emerging**

**into the resurrection life of the butterfly; and just so can we also**

**only enter into the kingdom of God by the way of a death out of the**

**kingdom of self, and an emergence into the resurrection life of Christ.**

**Let everything go, then, that belongs to the natural; all your own**

**notions, and plans, and ways, and thoughts; and accept in their stead**

**God's plans, and ways, and thoughts. Do this faithfully and do it**

**persistently, and you shall come at last to sit on His throne, and to**

**reign with Him in an interior kingdom which shall break in pieces and**

**consume all other kingdoms, and shall stand for ever and ever.**

**There is no other way. This kingdom cannot be entered by pomp, and**

**show, and greatness, and strength; but by littleness, and helplessness,**

**and childlikeness, and babyhood, and death. He that humbleth himself,**

**and he only, shall be exalted here; and to mount the throne with Christ**

**requires that we shall first have followed Him in the suffering, and**

**loss, and crucifixion. If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with**

**Him. Not as an arbitrary reward for our suffering, but as the result**

**that will follow in the very nature of things. Christ's loss must**

**necessarily bring Christ's gain, Christ's death must bring Christ's**

**resurrection, and to follow Him in the regeneration, will surely and**

**inevitably bring the soul that follows to His crown and His throne.**

**In a volume of sermons for children I have found a vivid illustration**

**of this royal kingdom:--**

**"A little fellow from one of the Refuges in England had risked his life**

**to save one of his comrades, and England's Queen had sent him a medal**

**by the hand of one of England's earls. The little fellow was held**

**forward by his comrades to receive it, for he was shy and nervous and**

**tried to sidle away.**

**"Look at the noble chairman; he had driven down from his proper place**

**in the House of Lords, where were gathered earls and dukes, and the men**

**who had done well as lawyers, and judges, and statesmen, and warriors,**

**and the Princes of the royal blood. Yet, all peer though he was, he was**

**moved to the sincerest depths of his being as he murmured, `I have the**

**honor,' and pinned the life-saving medal on the child's jacket. His**

**heart was full. He paused to swallow down something that would rise in**

**his throat before he could go on.**

**"There is the `glory and honor' of successful statesmen, and warriors,**

**and lawyers, but the glory of self-forgetful saving of life is a glory**

**that excelleth, and that was the wondrous glory won by this boy. He had**

**plunged into the stream and shared a drowning boy's risk, and that**

**little hand, look at it there, steadying him by holding the table, had**

**come out holding the saved.**

**"Why has self-forgetfulness such mighty power? How was it that a**

**twelve-year-old boy could bow down an audience of grown men before him?**

**What gave to that brow, that its stubby crown of carroty hair, a glory**

**and honor more than the lustre of gold and jewels? Why was it that that**

**small body in its little breeches and jacket, wiping its tears on the**

**rough little sleeve, could grip thousands of hearts and hold them all,**

**and make them for the time loyal members of his kingdom?**

**"Why was all this so?**

**"It was so because that little boy in his measure had been like Christ,**

**in the self-forgetful spirit of sacrifice for others. He had a bit of**

**the same beauty we are all made on purpose to worship; the glory before**

**which angels give a great shout, and all the company of heaven fall**

**down and adore, saying with a loud voice, `Worthy is the Lamb that was**

**slain!'"**

**The "Lamb that was slain" is the mightiest King the world has ever**

**known, and all who partake of His spirit share in His kingdom.**

**And since this kingdom is not a place, but is character, those who have**

**not the character cannot by any possibility be in it.**

**We pray daily, "Thy kingdom come." Do we know what we are praying for?**

**Do we comprehend the change it will make in us if it comes in us? Are**

**we willing to be so changed?**

**What is the kingdom of God but the rule of God? And what is the rule of**

**God but the will of God? Therefore when we pray, "Thy will be done on**

**earth as it is in heaven," we have touched the secret of it all.**

**A horde of savages might conquer a civilized kingdom by sheer brute**

**force; but if they would conquer the civilization of that kingdom, they**

**could only do so by submitting to its control. And just so is it with**

**the kingdom of heaven. It yields its sceptre to none but those who**

**render obedience to its laws.**

**"To him that overcometh will I give to sit with me in my throne, even**

**as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne."**

**"He always reigns who sides with God," says an old writer. And again,**

**"He who perfectly accepts the will of God, dwells in a perpetual**

**kingdom."**

**Art thou reigning after this fashion and in this sort of a kingdom?**

**Art thou the "chiefest" by being the "servant of all"?**

**Art thou a king over thy circumstances, or do thy circumstances reign**

**over thee?**

**Dost thou triumph over thy temptations, or do they triumph over thee?**

**Canst thou sit on an inward throne in the midst of outward defeat and**

**loss?**

**Canst thou conquer by yielding, and become the greatest by being the**

**least?**

**If thou canst answer Yes to all these questions, then thou art come**

**into thy kingdom; and whatever thy outward lot may be, or the**

**estimation in which men may hold thee, thou art in very truth among the**

**number of those concerning whom our Lord declares "the same shall be**

**called greatest in the kingdom of heaven."**

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**Chapter 20**

**THE CHARIOTS OF GOD**

**FOUNDATION TEXT.--Psalm 68:17.**

**Chariots are for conveyance and progress. Earthly chariots carry the**

**bodies of those who ride in them over all intervening distances or**

**obstacles to the place of their destination, and God's chariots carry**

**their souls. No words can express the glorious places to which that**

**soul shall arrive who travels in the chariots of God. And our verse**

**tells us they are "very many." All around us on every side they wait**

**for us; but we, alas! we do not always see them. Earth's chariots are**

**always visible, but God's chariots are invisible.**

**2 Kings 6:14-17.**

**The king of Syria came up against the man of God with horses and**

**chariots that were visible to every one, but God had chariots that**

**could be seen by none save the eye of faith. The servant of the prophet**

**could only see the outward and visible, and he cried, as so many have**

**done since, "Alas, my Master! how shall we do?" But the prophet himself**

**sat calmly within his house without fear, because his eyes were opened**

**to see the invisible. And all that he asked for his servant was, "Lord,**

**I pray thee open his eyes that he may see."**

**This is the prayer we need to pray for ourselves and for one another,**

**"Lord, open our eyes that we may see." For the world all around us is**

**full of God's horses and chariots, waiting to carry us to places of**

**glorious victory.**

**But they do not look like chariots. They look instead like enemies,**

**sufferings, trials, defeats, misunderstandings, disappointments,**

**unkindnesses. They look like Juggernaut cars of misery and**

**wretchedness, that are only waiting to roll over us and crush us into**

**the earth; but they really are chariots of triumph in which we may ride**

**to those very heights of victory for which our souls have been longing**

**and praying.**

**Deut. 32:12, 13.**

**If we would "ride on the high places of the earth" we must get into the**

**chariots that can take us there; and only the "chariots of God" are**

**equal to such lofty riding as this.**

**Isa. 58:14.**

**We may make out of each event in our lives either a Juggernaut car to**

**crush us, or a chariot in which to ride to heights of victory. It all**

**depends upon how we take them; whether we lie down under our trials and**

**let them roll over and crush us, or whether we climb up into them as**

**into a chariot, and make them carry us triumphantly onward and upward.**

**2 Kings 2:11, 12.**

**Whenever we mount into God's chariots the same thing happens to us**

**spiritually that happened to Elisha. We shall have a translation. Not**

**into the heavens above us, as Elisha did, but into the heaven within**

**us, which after all is almost a grander translation than his. We shall**

**be carried up away from the low earthly groveling plane of life, where**

**everything hurts and everything is unhappy, up into the "heavenly**

**places in Christ Jesus," where we shall ride in triumph over all below.**

**Eph. 2:6.**

**These "heavenly places" are interior, not exterior, and the road that**

**leads to them is interior also. But the chariot that carries the soul**

**over this road is generally some outward loss, or trial or**

**disappointment; some chastening that does not indeed seem for the**

**present to be joyous, but grievous; but that nevertheless afterward**

**yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them that are**

**exercised thereby.**

**Heb. 12:5-11.**

**Look upon these chastenings, no matter how grievous they may be for the**

**present, as God's chariots sent to carry your souls into the "high**

**places" of spiritual achievement and uplifting, and you will find that**

**they are after all "paved with love."**

**Canticles 3:9, 10.**

**Your own individual chariot may look very unlovely. It maybe a**

**cross-grained relative or friend; it may be the result of human malice,**

**or cruelty, or neglect; but every chariot sent by God must necessarily**

**be paved with love, since God is love, and God's love is the sweetest,**

**softest, tenderest thing to rest one's self upon that was ever found by**

**any soul anywhere. It is His love indeed that sends the chariot.**

**Hab. 3:8, 12, 13.**

**Here the prophet tells us that it was God's displeasure against the**

**obstacles which beset the path of His people that made Him come to**

**their rescue, riding in His "chariots of salvation." Everything becomes**

**a "chariot of salvation" when God rides upon it.**

**The "clouds" that darken our skies and seem to shut out the shining of**

**the sun of righteousness are, after all, if we only knew it, His**

**chariots, into which we may mount with Him, and "ride prosperously"**

**over all the darkness.**

**Ps. 45:3, 4; Ps. 18:10; Deut. 33:26.**

**A late writer has said that we cannot, by even the most vigorous and**

**toilsome efforts, sweep away the clouds, but we can climb so high above**

**them as to reach the clear atmosphere overhead; and he who rides with**

**God rides upon the heavens far above all earth-born clouds.**

**Ps. 68:32-34.**

**This may sound fanciful, but it is really exceedingly practical when we**

**begin to act it out in our daily lives.**

**I knew a lady who had a very slow servant. She was an excellent girl in**

**every other respect, and very valuable in the household, but her**

**slowness was a constant source of irritation to her mistress, who was**

**naturally quick, and who always chafed at slowness. The lady would**

**consequently get out of temper with the girl twenty times a day, and**

**twenty times a day would repent of her anger, and resolve to conquer**

**it, but in vain. Her life was made miserable by the conflict. One day**

**it occurred to her that she had for a long while been praying for**

**patience, and that perhaps this slow servant was the very chariot the**

**Lord had sent to carry her soul over into patience. She immediately**

**accepted it as such, and from that time used the slowness of her**

**servant as a chariot for her soul. And the result was a victory of**

**patience that no slowness of anybody was ever after able to disturb.**

**Another instance: I knew a sister at one of our conventions who was put**

**to sleep in a room with two others on account of the crowd. She wanted**

**to sleep, but they wanted to talk, and the first night she was greatly**

**disturbed, and lay there fretting and fuming long after the others had**

**hushed and she might have slept. But the next day she heard something**

**about God's chariots, and that night she accepted these talking sisters**

**as her chariots to carry her over into sweetness and patience, and she**

**lay there feeling peaceful and at rest. When, however, it grew very**

**late, and she knew they all ought to be sleeping, she ventured to say**

**slyly, "Sisters, I am lying here riding in a chariot," and the effect**

**was instantaneous in producing perfect quiet. Her chariot had carried**

**her over to victory, not only inwardly, but at last outwardly as well.**

**If we would ride in God's chariots, instead of in our own, we should**

**find this to be the case continually.**

**Isa. 31:1-3; Ps. 20:7, 8.**

**Our constant temptation is to trust in the "chariots of Egypt." We can**

**see them; they are tangible and real, and they look so substantial;**

**while God's chariots are invisible and intangible, and it is hard to**

**believe they are there. Our eyes are not opened to see them.**

**2 Kings 19:23.**

**We try to reach the high places with the "multitude of our chariots."**

**We depend first on one thing, and then on another, to advance our**

**spiritual condition and to gain our spiritual victories. We "go down to**

**Egypt for help." And God is obliged often to destroy all our own**

**chariots before he can bring us to the point of mounting into His.**

**Micah 5:10; Hag. 2:22.**

**We lean too much upon a dear friend to help us onward in the spiritual**

**life, and the Lord is obliged to separate us from that friend. We feel**

**that all our spiritual prosperity depends on our continuance under the**

**ministry of a favorite preacher, and we are mysteriously removed. We**

**look upon our prayer-meeting or our Bible-class as the chief source of**

**our spiritual strength, and we are shut up from attending it. And the**

**"chariot of God," which alone can carry us to the places where we hoped**

**to be taken by the instrumentalities upon which we have been depending,**

**is to be found in the very deprivations we have so mourned over. God**

**must burn up with the fire of His love every chariot of our own that**

**stands in the way of our mounting into His.**

**Isa. 66:15, 16.**

**Let us be thankful, then, for every trial that will help to destroy our**

**chariots, and will compel us to take refuge in the chariot of God,**

**which stands ready and waiting beside us.**

**Ps. 62:5-8.**

**We have to be brought to the place where all other refuges fail us,**

**before we can say, "He only." We say, "He and--something else." "He,**

**and my experience," or "He, and my church relationships," or "He, and**

**my Christian work"; and all that comes after the "and" must be taken**

**away from us, or must be proved useless before we can come to the "He**

**only." As long as visible chariots are at hand, the soul will not mount**

**into the invisible ones.**

**Ps. 68:4.**

**If we want to ride with God "upon the heavens," we have to be brought**

**to an end of all riding upon the earth.**

**Ps. 68:24.**

**To see God's "goings," we must get into the "sanctuary" of his**

**presence; and to share in His "goings" and "go" with Him, we must**

**abandon all earthly "goings."**

**Prov. 20:24; Ps. 17:5; Ps. 40:1, 2.**

**When we mount into God's chariot our goings are "established," for no**

**obstacles can hinder its triumphal course. All losses therefore are**

**gains that bring us to this.**

**Phil. 3:7-9.**

**Paul understood this, and he gloried in the losses which brought him**

**such unspeakable gain.**

**2 Cor. 12:7-10.**

**Even the "thorn in the flesh," the messenger of Satan sent to buffet**

**him, became only a chariot to his willing soul, that carried him to**

**heights of triumph which he could have reached in no other way. To**

**"take pleasure" in one's trials, what is this but turning them into the**

**grandest of chariots?**

**Joseph had a revelation of his future triumphs and reigning, but the**

**chariots that carried him there looked to the eye of sense like the**

**bitterest failures and defeats. It was a strange road to a kingdom,**

**through slavery and a prison, and yet by no other road could Joseph**

**have reached his triumph. His dream, Gen. 37:5-10; His chariots, Gen.**

**37:19, 20, 27, 28; 39:19, 20; How he rode in his chariots, Gen. 39:1-6,**

**21-23; His triumph, Gen. 43:38-43.**

**And now a word as to how one is to mount into these chariots.**

**My answer would be simply this: Find out where God is in each one of**

**them, and hide yourself in Him. Or, in other words, do what the little**

**child does when trouble comest, who finds its mother and hides in her**

**arms. The real chariot after all that takes us through triumphantly is**

**the carrying of God.**

**Isa. 46:4.**

**The baby carried in the chariot of its mother's arms rides triumphantly**

**through the hardest places, and does not even know they are hard.**

**Isa. 63:9.**

**And how much more we, who are carried in the chariot of the "arms of**

**God"!**

**Get into your chariot, then. Take each thing that is wrong in your**

**lives as God's chariot for you. No matter who the builder of the wrong**

**may be, whether men or devils, by the time it reaches your side it is**

**God's chariot for you, and is meant to carry you to a heavenly place of**

**triumph. Shut out all the second causes, and find the Lord in it. Say,**

**"Lord, open my eyes that I may see, not the visible enemy, but thy**

**unseen chariots of deliverance."**

**Accept His will in the trial, whatever it may be, and hide yourself in**

**His arms of love. Say, "Thy will be done; Thy will be done!" over and**

**over. Shut out every other thought but the one thought of submission to**

**His will and of trust in His love. Make your trial thus your chariot,**

**and you will find your soul "riding upon the heavens" with God in a way**

**you never dreamed could be.**

**I have not a shadow of doubt that if all our eyes were opened today we**

**would see our homes, and our places of business, and the streets we**

**traverse, filled with the "chariots of God." There is no need for any**

**one of us to walk for lack of chariots. That cross inmate of your**

**household, who has hitherto made life a burden to you, and who has been**

**the Juggernaut car to crush your soul into the dust, may henceforth be**

**a glorious chariot to carry you to the heights of heavenly patience and**

**longsuffering. That misunderstanding, that mortification, that**

**unkindness, that disappointment, that loss, that defeat, all these are**

**chariots waiting to carry you to the very heights of victory you have**

**so longed to reach.**

**Mount into them, then, with thankful hearts, and lose sight of all**

**second causes in the shining of His love who will "carry you in His**

**arms" safely and triumphantly over it all.**

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**Chapter 21**

**"WITHOUT ME YE CAN DO NOTHING"**

**CONCERNING THE LIFE OF DIVINE UNION IN ITS PRACTICAL ASPECTS.**

**Not long ago I was driving with a Quaker preacher through our beautiful**

**Philadelphia Park, when our conversation turned on the apparent**

**fruitlessness of a great deal of the preaching in the church at the**

**present time. We had spoken, of course, of the foundation cause in the**

**absence of the power of the Holy Ghost, but we still felt that this**

**could not account for it all, as we both of us knew many preachers**

**really baptized with the Spirit, who yet seemed to have no fruit to**

**their ministry. And then I suggested that one reason might be in the**

**fact that so many ministers, when preaching or talking on religious**

**subjects, put on a different tone and manner from the one they**

**ordinarily use, and by this very manner remove religion so far from the**

**range of ordinary life, as to fail of gaining any real hold on the**

**hearts of the men and women whose whole lives are lived on the plane of**

**ordinary and homely pleasures and duties. "Now, for instance," I said,**

**"if in thy preaching from the Friends' gallery thee could use the same**

**tone and manner as thy present one, how much more effectual and**

**convincing thy preaching would be." "Oh, but I could not do that," was**

**the reply, "because the preacher's gallery is so much more solemn a**

**place than this."**

**"But why is it more solemn?" I asked. "Is it not the presence of God**

**only that makes the gallery or the pulpit solemn, and have we not the**

**presence of God equally here? Is it not just as solemn to live in our**

**everyday life as it is to preach, and ought we not to do the one to His**

**glory just as much as the other?" And then I added, as the subject**

**seemed to open out before me, "I verily believe a large part of the**

**difficulty lies in the unscriptural and unnatural divorce that has been**

**brought about between our so-called religious life and our so-called**

**temporal life; as if our religion were something apart from ourselves,**

**a sort of outside garment that was to be put on and off according to**

**our circumstances and purposes. On Sundays, for instance, and in**

**church, our purpose is to seek God, and worship and serve Him, and**

**therefore on Sundays we bring out our religious life and put it on in a**

**suitably solemn manner, and live it with a strained gravity and decorum**

**which deprives it of half its power. But on Mondays our purpose is to**

**seek our own interests and serve them, and so we bring out our temporal**

**life and put it on with a sense of relief, as from an unnatural**

**bondage, and live it with ease and naturalness, and consequently with**

**far more power."**

**The thoughts thus started remained with me and gathered strength. Not**

**long afterward I was present at a meeting where the leader opened with**

**reading John 15, and the words, "Without me ye can do nothing," struck**

**me with amazement. Hundreds of times before I had read those words, and**

**had thought that I understood them thoroughly. But now it seemed almost**

**as though they must have been newly inserted in the Bible, so ablaze**

**were they with wondrous meaning.**

**"There it is," I said to myself, "Jesus himself said so, that apart**

**from Him we have no real life of any kind, whether we call it temporal**

**or spiritual, and that, therefore, all living or doing that is without**

**Him is of such a nature that God, who sees into the realities of**

**things, calls it `nothing.'" And then the question forced itself upon**

**me as to whether any soul really believed this statement to be true;**

**or, if believing it theoretically, whether any one made it practical in**

**their daily walk and life. And I saw, as in a flash almost, that the**

**real secret of divine union lay quite as much in this practical aspect**

**of it as in any interior revealings or experiences. For if I do**

**nothing, literally nothing, apart from Christ, I am of course united to**

**Him in a continual oneness that cannot be questioned or gainsaid; while**

**if I live a large part of my daily life and perform a large part of my**

**daily work apart from Him, I have no real union, no matter how exalted**

**and delightful my emotions concerning it may be.**

**It is to consider this aspect of the subject, therefore, that the**

**present paper is written. For I am very sure that the wide divorce made**

**between things spiritual and things temporal, of which I have spoken,**

**has done more than almost anything else to hinder a realized interior**

**union with God, and to put all religion so outside of the pale of**

**common life as to make it an almost unattainable thing to the ordinary**

**mass of mankind. Moreover it has introduced an unnatural constraint and**

**stiltedness into the experience of Christians that seems to shut them**

**out from much of the free, happy, childlike ease that belongs of right**

**to the children of God.**

**I feel, therefore, that it is of vital importance for us to understand**

**the truth of this matter.**

**And the thought that makes it clearest to me is this, that the fact of**

**our oneness with Christ contains the whole thing in a nutshell. If we**

**are one with Him, then of course in the very nature of things we can do**

**nothing without Him. For that which is one cannot act as being two. And**

**if I therefore do anything without Christ, then I am not one with Him**

**in that thing, and like a branch severed from the vine I am withered**

**and worthless. It is as if the branch should recognize its connection**

**with and dependence upon the vine for most of its growth, and**

**fruit-bearing, and climbing, but should feel a capacity in itself to**

**grow and climb over a certain fence or around the trunk of a certain**

**tree, and should therefore sever its connection with the vine for this**

**part of its living. Of course that which thus sought an independent**

**life would wither and die in the very nature of things. And just so is**

**it with us who are branches of Christ the true vine. No independent**

**action, whether small or great, is possible to us without withering and**

**death, any more than to the branch of the natural vine.**

**This will show us at once how fatal to the realized oneness with**

**Christ, for which our souls hunger, is the divorce I have spoken of. We**

**have all realized, more or less, that without Him we cannot live our**

**religious life, but when it comes to living our so-called temporal**

**life, to keeping house or transacting business, or making calls, or**

**darning stockings, or sweeping a room, or trimming a bonnet, or**

**entertaining company, who is there that even theoretically thinks such**

**things as these are to be done for Christ, and can only be rightly done**

**as we abide in Him and do them in His strength?**

**But if it is Christ working in the Christian who is to lead the**

**prayer-meeting, then, since Christ and the Christian are one, it must**

**be also Christ working in and through the Christian who is to keep the**

**house and make the bargain; and one duty is therefore in the very**

**essence of things as religious as the other. It is the man that makes**

**the action, not the action the man. And as much solemnity and sweetness**

**will thus be brought into our everyday domestic and social affairs as**

**into the so-called religious occasions of life, if we will only**

**"acknowledge God in all our ways," and do whatever we do, even if it be**

**only eating and drinking, to His glory.**

**If our religion is really our life, and not merely something extraneous**

**tacked on to our life, it must necessarily go into everything in which**

**we live; and no act, however human or natural it may be, can be taken**

**out of its control and guidance.**

**If God is with us always, then He is just as much with us in our**

**business times and our social times as in our religious times, and one**

**moment is as solemn with His presence as another.**

**If it is a fact that in Him we "live and move and have our being," then**

**it is also a fact, whether we know it or not, that without Him we**

**cannot do anything. And facts are stubborn things, thank God, and do**

**not alter for all our feelings.**

**In Psalm 127:1, 2, we have a very striking illustration of this truth.**

**The Psalmist says, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain**

**that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but**

**in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat**

**the bread of sorrows; for so He giveth His beloved sleep." The two**

**things here spoken of as being done in vain, unless the Lord is in the**

**doing of them, are purely secular things, so called; simple business**

**matters on the human plane of life. And whatever spiritual lesson they**

**were intended to teach gains its impressiveness only from this, that**

**these statements concerning God's presence in temporal things were**

**statements of patent and incontrovertible facts.**

**In truth the Bible is full of this fact, and the only wonder is how any**

**believer in the Bible could have overlooked it. From the building of**

**cities down to the numbering of the hairs of our head and the noting of**

**a sparrow's fall, throughout the whole range of homely daily living,**

**God is declared to be present and to be the mainspring of it all.**

**Whatever we do, even if it be such a purely physical thing as eating**

**and drinking, we are to do for Him and to His glory, and we are**

**exhorted to so live and so walk in the light in everything, as to have**

**it made manifest of our works, temporal as well as spiritual, that**

**"they are wrought in God."**

**There is unspeakable comfort in this for every loving Christian heart,**

**in that it turns all of life into a sacrament, and makes the kitchen,**

**or the workshop, or the nursery, or the parlor, as sweet and solemn a**

**place of service to the Lord, and as real a means of union with Him, as**

**the prayer-meeting, or the mission board, or the charitable visitation.**

**A dear young Christian mother and housekeeper came to me once with a**

**sorely grieved heart, because of her engrossing temporal life. "There**

**seems," she said, "to be nothing spiritual about my life from one**

**week's end to the other. My large family of little children are so**

**engrossing that day after day passes without my having a single moment**

**for anything but simply attendance on them and on my necessary**

**household duties, and I go to bed night after night sick at heart**

**because I have felt separated from my Lord all day long, and have not**

**been able to do anything for Him." I told her of what I have written**

**above, and assured her that all would be changed if she would only see**

**and acknowledge God in all these homely duties, and would recognize her**

**utter dependence upon Him for the doing of them. Her heart received the**

**good news with gladness, and months afterward she told me that from**

**that moment life had become a transformed and glorified thing, with the**

**abiding presence of the Lord, and with the sweetness of continual**

**service to Him.**

**Another Christian, a young lady in a fashionable family, came to me**

**also in similar grief that in so much of her life she was separated**

**from God and had no sense of His presence. I told her she ought never**

**to do anything that could cause such a separation; but she assured me**

**that it was impossible to avoid it, as the things she meant were none**

**of them wrong things. "For instance," she said, "it is plainly my duty**

**to pay calls with my mother, and yet nothing seems to separate me so**

**much from God as paying calls." "But how would it be," I asked, "if you**

**paid the calls as service to the Lord and for His glory?" "What!" she**

**exclaimed, "pay calls for God! I never heard of such a thing." "But why**

**not?" I asked; "if it is right to pay calls at all it ought to be done**

**for God, for we are commanded whatsoever we do to do it for His glory,**

**and if it is not right you ought not to do it. As a Christian," I**

**continued, "you must not do anything that you cannot do for Him." "I**

**see! I see!" she exclaimed, after a little pause, "and it makes all**

**life look so different! Nothing can separate me from Him that is not**

**sin, but each act done to His glory, whatever it may be, will only draw**

**me closer and make His presence more real."**

**These two instances will illustrate my meaning. And I feel sure there**

**are thousands of other burdened and weary lives that would be similarly**

**transformed if these truths were but realized and acted on.**

**An old spiritual writer says something to this effect, that in order to**

**become a saint it is not always necessary to change our works, but only**

**to put an interior purpose towards God in them all; that we must begin**

**to do for His glory and in His strength that which before we did for**

**self and in self's capacity; which means, after all, just what our Lord**

**meant when He said, "Without me ye can do nothing."**

**There is another side of this truth also which is full of comfort, and**

**which the Psalmist develops in the verses I have quoted. "It is vain,"**

**he says, "to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of**

**sorrows." Or, in other words, "What is the use of all this worry and**

**strain? For the work will after all amount to nothing unless God is in**

**it, and if He is in it, what folly to fret or be burdened, since He of**

**course, by the very fact of His presence, assumes the care and**

**responsibility of it all."**

**Ah, it is vain indeed, and I would that all God's children knew it!**

**We mothers at least ought to know it, for our own ways with our**

**children would teach us something of it every day we live, if we had**

**but the "eyes to see."**

**How many mothers have risen early, and sat up, late, and eaten the**

**bread of sorrows, just that they might give sleep to their beloved**

**children. And how grieved their hearts would have been if, after all**

**their pains, the children had refused to rest. I can appeal to some**

**mother hearts, I am sure, as thoroughly understanding my meaning.**

**Memories will arise of the flushed and rosy boy coming in at night,**

**tired with his play or his work, with knees out and coat torn, and of**

**the patient, loving toil to patch and mend it all, sitting up late and**

**rising early, that the dearly loved cause of all the mischief might**

**rest undisturbed in childhood's happy sleep. How "vain," and worse than**

**vain, would it have been for that loved and cared-for darling to have**

**himself also sat up late, and risen early, and eaten the bread of**

**sorrows, when all the while his mother was doing it for him just that**

**he might not have it to do.**

**And if this is true of mothers, how much more true must it be of Him**

**who made the mothers, and who came among us in bodily form to bear our**

**burdens, and carry our sorrows, and do our work, just that we might**

**"enter into His rest."**

**Beloved, have we entered into this rest?**

**"For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own**

**works as God did from His." That is, he has learned at last the lesson**

**that without Christ or apart from Him he can do nothing, but that he**

**can do all things through Christ strengthening him; and therefore he**

**has laid aside all self-effort, and has abandoned himself to God that**

**He may work in him both to will and to do of His good pleasure. This**

**and this only is the rest that remaineth for the people of God.**

**Scientific men are seeking to resolve all forces in nature into one**

**primal force. Unity of origin is the present cry of science. Light,**

**heat, sound are all said to be the products of one force differently**

**applied, and that force is motion. All things, say the scientists, can**

**be resolved back to this. Whether they are right or wrong I cannot say;**

**but the Bible reveals to us one grand primal force which is behind**

**motion itself, and that is God-force. God is at the source of**

**everything, God is the origin of everything, God is the explanation of**

**everything. Without Him was not anything made that was made, and**

**without Him is not anything done that is done.**

**Surely, then, it is not the announcement of any mystery, but the simple**

**statement of a simple fact, when our Lord says, "Without me ye can do**

**nothing."**

**Even of Himself He said, "I can of mine own self do nothing," and He**

**meant that He and His Father were so one that any independent action**

**was impossible. Surely it is the revelation of a glorious necessity**

**existing between our souls and Christ that He should say we could do**

**nothing without Him; for it means that He has made us so one with**

**Himself that independent action is as impossible with us as towards**

**Him, as it was with Him as towards His Father.**

**Dear Christian, dost thou not catch a glimpse here of a region of**

**wondrous glory?**

**Let us believe, then, that without Him we can literally do nothing. We**

**must believe it, for it is true. But let us recognize its truth, and**

**act on it from this time forward. Let us make a hearty renunciation of**

**all living apart from Christ, and let us begin from this moment to**

**acknowledge Him in all our ways, and do everything, whatsoever we do,**

**as service to Him and for His glory, depending upon Him alone for**

**wisdom, and strength, and sweetness, and patience, and everything else**

**that is necessary for the right accomplishing of all our living.**

**As I said before, it is not so much a change of acts that will be**

**necessary, as a change of motive and of dependence. The house will be**

**kept, or the children cared for, or the business transacted, perhaps,**

**just the same as before as to the outward, but inwardly God will be**

**acknowledged, and depended on, and served; and there will be all the**

**difference between a life lived at ease in the glory of His presence,**

**and a life lived painfully and with effort apart from Him. There will**

**result also from this bringing of God into our affairs a wonderful**

**accession of divine wisdom in the conduct of them, and a far greater**

**quickness and dispatch in their accomplishment, a surprising increase**

**in the fertility of resource, an ease in apprehending the true nature**

**and bearing of things, and an enlargement on every side that will amaze**

**the hitherto cramped and cabined soul.**

**I mean this literally. I mean that the house will be kept more nicely**

**and with greater ease, the children will be trained more swiftly, the**

**stockings will be darned more swiftly, the guest will be entertained**

**more comfortably, the servants will be managed more easily, the bargain**

**will be made more satisfactorily, and all life will move with far more**

**sweetness and harmony. For God will be in every moment of it, and where**

**He is all must go well.**

**Moreover the soul itself, in this natural and simple way, will acquire**

**such a holy habit of "abiding in Christ" that at last His presence will**

**become the most real thing in life to our consciousness, and an**

**habitual, silent, and secret conversation with Him will be carried on**

**that will yield a continual joy.**

**Sometimes the child of God asks eagerly and hungrily, "What is the**

**shortest and quickest way by which I can reach the highest degree of**

**union and communion with God, possible to human beings in this life?"**

**No shorter or quicker way can be found than the one I have been**

**declaring. By the homely path of everyday duties done thus in God and**

**for God, the sublimest heights are reached. Not as a reward, however,**

**but as an inevitable and natural result, for if we thus abide in Him**

**and refuse to leave Him, where He is there shall we also be, and all**

**that He is will be ours.**

**If, then, thou wouldst know, beloved reader, the interior divine union**

**realized in thy soul, begin from this very day to put it outwardly in**

**practice as I have suggested. Offer each moment of thy living and each**

**act of thy doing to God, and say to Him continually, "Lord, I am doing**

**this in Thee and for Thy glory. Thou art my strength, and my wisdom,**

**and my all-sufficient supply for every need. I depend only upon Thee."**

**Refuse utterly to live for a single moment or to perform a single act**

**apart from Him. Persist in this until it becomes the established habit**

**of thy soul. And sooner or later thou shalt surely know the longings of**

**thy soul satisfied in the abiding presence of Christ, thy indwelling**

**Life.**

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**Chapter 22**

**"GOD WITH US"; OR, THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-NINTH PSALM**

**"Thus doth thy hospitable greatness lie**

**Around us like a boundless sea;**

**We cannot lose ourselves where all is home,**

**Nor drift away from Thee."**

**Very few of us understand the full meaning of the words in Matt. 1:23,**

**"They shall call His name Emmanuel; which being interpreted is, God**

**with us." In this short sentence is revealed to us the grandest fact**

**the world can ever know; that God, the Almighty God, the Creator of**

**Heaven and earth, is not a far-off Deity, dwelling in a Heaven of**

**unapproachable glory, but is living with us right here in this world,**

**in the midst of our poor, ignorant, helpless lives, as close to us as**

**we are to ourselves. This seems so incredible to the human heart that**

**we are very slow to believe it; but that the Bible teaches it as a**

**fact, from cover to cover, cannot be denied by any honest mind. In the**

**very beginning of Genesis we read of the "presence of the Lord God**

**amongst the trees of the garden." And from that time on He is revealed**

**to us always as in the most familiar and daily intercourse with His**

**people everywhere.**

**In Exodus we find Him asking them to make Him a "sanctuary, that He**

**might dwell among them." He is recorded as having "walked" with them in**

**the wilderness, and as "taking up His abode" with them in the promised**

**land. He taught them to rely on Him as an ever-present Friend and**

**Helper, to consult Him about all their affairs, and to abandon the**

**whole management of their lives to Him. And finally He came in Christ**

**in bodily form and dwelt in the world as a man among men, making**

**Himself bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, taking upon Him our**

**nature, and revealing to us, in the most tangible and real way**

**possible, the grand, and blessed, and incomprehensible fact that He**

**intended to be with us always, even unto the end of the world.**

**Whoever will believe this fact with all their hearts will find in it**

**the solution of every difficulty of their lives.**

**I remember when I was a little girl and found myself in any trouble or**

**perplexity, the coming in of my father or mother on the scene would**

**always bring me immediate relief. The moment I heard the voice of one**

**of them saying, "Daughter, I am here," that moment every burden dropped**

**off and every anxiety was stilled. It was their simple presence that**

**did it. They did not need to promise to relieve me, they did not need**

**to tell me their plans of relief; the simple fact of their presence was**

**all the assurance I required that everything now would be set straight**

**and all would go well for me, and my only interest after their arrival**

**was simply to see how they would do it all. Perhaps they were**

**exceptional parents, to have created such confidence in their**

**children's hearts. I think myself they were. But as our God is**

**certainly an exceptional God, the application has absolute force, and**

**His presence is literally all we need. It would be enough for us, even**

**if we had not a single promise nor a single revelation of His plans.**

**How often in the Bible He has stilled all questions and all fears by**

**the simple announcement, "I will be with thee"; and who can doubt that**

**in these words He meant to assure us that all His wisdom, and love, and**

**omnipotent power would therefore, of course, be engaged on our side?**

**Over and over again in my childhood have the magic words, "Oh, there is**

**mother!" brought me immediate relief and comfort; and over and over**

**again in my later years have almost the same words reverently spoken,**

**"Oh, there is God!" brought me a far more blessed deliverance. With Him**

**present, what could I have to fear? Since He has said, "I will never**

**leave thee nor forsake thee," surely I may boldly say, "The Lord is my**

**helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." I remember to**

**this day the inspiring sense of utter security that used to come to me**

**with my earthly father's presence. I never feared anything when he was**

**by. And surely with my Heavenly Father by, there can be no possible**

**room for fear.**

**It is because of its practical help and comfort, therefore, that I**

**desire to make this wonderful fact of "Emmanuel, God with us," clear**

**and definite, for I am very sure but few, even of God's own children,**

**really believe it. They may say they do, they may repeat a thousand**

**times in the conventional, pious tone considered suitable to such a**

**sentiment, "Oh, yes, we know that God is always present with us,**

**but---- And in this "but" the whole story is told. There are no "buts"**

**in the vocabulary of the soul that accepts His presence as a literal**

**fact. Such a soul is joyously triumphant over every suggestion of fear**

**or of doubt. It has God, and that is enough for it. His presence is its**

**certain security and supply, always, and for everything.**

**Let me, then, beg my readers to turn with me for a while to the 139th**

**Psalm, where we shall find a most blessed revelation of this truth.**

**The central thought of the Psalm is to be found in verses 7 to 12,**

**"Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy**

**presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed**

**in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning,**

**and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand**

**lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the**

**darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea,**

**the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day:**

**the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. For thou hast**

**possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb."**

**I cannot conceive of a more definite or sweeping declaration of His**

**continual presence with us, wherever we may be or whatever we may do,**

**than is contained in this passage. People talk about seeking to get**

**into the presence of the Lord, but here we see that they cannot get out**

**of it; that there is no place in the whole universe where He is not**

**present; neither heaven, nor hell, nor the uttermost parts of the sea;**

**and no darkness so great as to hide for one moment from Him. And the**

**reason of this is, that He "has possessed our reins," which means that**

**He is not only with us, but within us, and consequently must accompany**

**us wherever we ourselves go.**

**We must accept it as true, therefore, that the words of our Lord, "Lo,**

**I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," were the**

**expression, not of a beautiful sentiment merely, but of an**

**incontrovertible fact. He is with us, and we cannot get away from Him.**

**We may be in such thick darkness as to be utterly unable to see Him,**

**and may think, probably often have thought, that, therefore, He does**

**not see us. But our Psalm assures us that the darkness hideth not from**

**Him, and that, in fact, darkness and light are both alike to Him. We**

**are as present to His view and as plainly seen when our own souls are**

**in the depths of spiritual darkness, as when they are basking in the**

**brightest light. The darkness may hide Him from us, but it does not**

**hide us from Him. Neither does any apparent spiritual distance or**

**wandering take us out of His presence; not even if we go into the**

**depths of sin in our wandering. In the uttermost parts of the sea, or**

**wherever we may be, He is ever present to hold and to lead us. There is**

**not a moment nor a place where we can be left without His care.**

**There are times in our lives when delirium makes us utterly unaware of**

**the presence of our most careful and tender nurses. A child in delirium**

**will cry out in anguish for its mother, and will harrow her heart by**

**its piteous lamentations and appeals, when all the while she is holding**

**its fevered hand, and bathing its aching head, and caring for it with**

**all the untold tenderness of a mother's love. The darkness of disease**

**has hidden the mother from the child, but has not hidden the child from**

**the mother.**

**And just so it is with our God and us. The darkness of our doubts or**

**our fears, of our sorrows or our despair, or even of our sins, cannot**

**hide us from Him, although it may, and often does, hide Him from us. He**

**has told us that the darkness and the light are both alike to Him; and**

**if our faith will only lay hold of this as a fact, we will be enabled**

**to pass through the darkest seasons in quiet trust, sure that all the**

**while, though we cannot see nor feel Him, our God is caring for us, and**

**will never leave nor forsake us.**

**Whether, however, this abiding presence of our God will be a joy to us**

**or a sorrow, will depend upon what we know about Him. If we think of**

**Him as a stern tyrant, intent only on His own glory, we shall be afraid**

**of His continual presence. If we think of Him as a tender, loving**

**Father, intent only on our blessing and happiness, we shall be glad and**

**thankful to have Him thus ever with us. For the presence and the care**

**of love can never mean anything but good to the one beloved.**

**The Psalm we are considering shows us that the presence of our God is**

**the presence of love, and that it brings us an infinitude of comfort**

**and rest. He says in verses 1 to 5, "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and**

**known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising; thou**

**understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying**

**down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in**

**my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset**

**me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me."**

**Our God knows us and understands us, and is acquainted with all our**

**ways. No one else in all the world understands us. Our actions are**

**misinterpreted, it may be, and our motives misjudged. Our natural**

**characteristics are not taken into account, nor our inherited**

**tendencies considered. No one makes allowances for our ill health; no**

**one realizes how much we have to contend with. But our Father knows it**

**all. He understands us, and His judgment of us takes into account every**

**element, conscious or unconscious, that goes to make up our character**

**and to control our actions. Only an all-comprehending love can be just,**

**and our God is just. No wonder Faber can say:--**

**"There is no place where earth's sorrows**

**Are more felt than up in Heaven;**

**There is no place where earth's failings**

**Have such kindly judgment given."**

**Some of you have been afraid of His justice, perhaps, because you**

**thought it would be against you. But do you not see now that it is all**

**on your side, just as a mother's justice is, because "He knoweth our**

**frame and remembereth that we are dust"? No human judge can ever do**

**this; and to me this comprehension of God is one of my most blessed**

**comforts. Often I do not understand myself; all within looks confused**

**and hopelessly tangled. But then I remember that He has searched me,**

**and that He knows me and understands the thoughts which so perplex me,**

**and that, therefore, I may just leave the whole miserable tangle to Him**

**to unravel. And my soul sinks down at once, as on downy pillows, into a**

**place of the most blissful rest.**

**Then further, because of this complete knowledge and understanding of**

**our needs, what comfort it is to be told that He knows our downsitting**

**and our uprising; that He compasses our path, and takes note of our**

**lying down. Just what a mother does for her foolish, careless,**

**ignorant, but dearly loved little ones, this very thing does our God**

**for us. When a mother is with her children she thinks of their comfort**

**and well-being always before her own. They must have comfortable seats**

**where no draught can reach them, no matter what amount of discomfort**

**she may herself be compelled to endure. Their beds must be soft and**

**their blankets warm, let hers be what they may. Their paths must be**

**smooth and safe, even though she is obliged herself to walk in rough**

**and dangerous ways. Her own comfort, as compared with that of her**

**children, is of no account in a loving mother's eyes. And surely our**

**God has not made the mothers in this world more capable of a**

**self-sacrificing love than He is Himself. He must be better and greater**

**on the line of love and self-sacrifice than any mother He ever made.**

**Then, since He has assured us that He knows our downsitting and our**

**uprising, that He compasses our path and our lying down, we may be**

**perfectly and blessedly sure that in even these little details of our**

**lives we get the very best that His love, and wisdom, and power can**

**compass. I mean this in a very literal sense. I mean that He cares for**

**our literal seats and our literal beds, and sees that we, each one,**

**have just that sort of a seat or that sort of a bed which is best for**

**us and for our highest development. And just on this last point is**

**where He is so much better than any mother can be. His love is a wise**

**love, that sees the outcome of things, and cares more for our highest**

**good than for that which is lower. So that, while a mother's weak love**

**cannot see beyond the child's present comfort, and cannot bear to**

**inflict or allow any discomfort, the strong, wise love of our God can**

**bear to permit the present discomfort, for the sake of the future glory**

**that is to result therefrom.**

**At home and abroad, therefore, let us commit the choosing of our seats,**

**and of our beds, and of all the other little homely circumstances of**

**our daily lives and surroundings, to the God who has thus assured us**

**that He knows all about every one of them.**

**For we are told in our Psalm that He "besets" our path. We have some of**

**us known what it was to be "beset" by unwelcome and unpleasant people**

**or things. But we never have thought, perhaps, that we were beset by**

**God, that He loves us so that He cannot leave us alone, and that no**

**coldness nor rebuffs on our parts can drive Him away. Yet it is**

**gloriously true! And, moreover, He besets us "behind" as well as**

**before. Just as a mother does. She goes after her children and picks up**

**all they have dropped, and clears away all the rubbish they have left**

**behind them. We mothers begin this in the nursery with the blocks and**

**playthings, and we go on with it all our lives long; seeking**

**continually to set straight that which our children have left crooked**

**behind them; often at the cost of much toil and trouble, but always**

**with a love that makes the toil and trouble nothing in comparison to**

**caring for the children we love. What good mother ever turned away the**

**poor little tearful darling who came with a tangled knot for her**

**unraveling, or refused to help the eager rosy boy to unwind his**

**kite-strings? Suppose it has been their own fault that the knots and**

**tangles have come, still her love can sympathize with and pity the very**

**faults themselves, and all the more does she seek to atone for them.**

**All this and more does our God do for us from our earliest infancy,**

**long even before we know enough to be conscious of it, until the very**

**end of our earthly lives. We have seen Him before us perhaps, but we**

**have never thought of Him as behind us as well. Yet it is a blessed**

**fact that He is behind us all the time, longing to make crooked things**

**straight, to untangle our tangled skeins, and to atone continually for**

**the wrong we have done and the mistakes we have made. If any of us,**

**therefore, have that in our past which has caused us anxiety or**

**remorse, let us lift up our heads in a happy confidence from**

**henceforth, that the God who is behind us will set it all straight**

**somehow, if we will but commit it to Him, and can even make our very**

**mistakes and misdoings work together for good. Ah! it is a grand thing**

**to be "beset" by God.**

**Then again what depths of comfort there are in verses 14 to 16: "I will**

**praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are**

**Thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not**

**hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the**

**lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being**

**unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in**

**continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."**

**One of the things which often troubles us more than we care to confess,**

**is our dislike of the way we have been put together. Our mental or**

**moral "make-up" does not suit us. We think if we had only been created**

**with less of this or more of that, if we were less impulsive or more**

**enthusiastic, if we had been made more like someone else whom we**

**admire, that then our chances of success would have been far greater;**

**that we could have served God far more acceptably; and could have been**

**more satisfactory in every way to ourselves and to Him. And we are**

**tempted sometimes to think that with our miserable make-up, it is**

**hopeless to expect to please Him.**

**If we really realized that God Himself had made us, we should see the**

**folly of all this at once, but we secretly feel as if somehow He had**

**not had much hand in the matter, but as if we had been put together in**

**a haphazard sort of way, that had left our characters very much to**

**chance. We believe in creation in the general, but not in the**

**particular, when it comes to ourselves. But in this Psalm we see that**

**God has presided over the creation of each one of us, superintending**

**the smallest details; even, to speak figuratively, writing down what**

**each "member" was to be, when as yet there was none of them. Therefore**

**we, just as we are naturally, with just the characteristics that inhere**

**in us by birth, are precisely what God would have us to be, and were**

**planned out by His own hand to do the especial work that He has**

**prepared for our doing. I mean, of course, our natural characteristics,**

**not the perversion of them by sin on our parts.**

**There is something very glorifying to the Creator in this way of**

**looking at it. Genius always seeks expression, and seeks, too, to**

**express itself in as great a variety of forms and ways as possible. No**

**true artist repeats himself, but each picture he paints, or statue he**

**carves, is a new expression of his creative power. When we go to an**

**exhibition of pictures, we should feel it a lowering of art if two were**

**exactly alike; and just so is it with us who are "God's workmanship."**

**His creative power is expressed differently in each one of us. And in**

**the individual "make-up" which sometimes so troubles us, there is a**

**manifestation of this power different from every other, and without**

**which the day of exhibition, when we are, each one, to be to the praise**

**of His glory, would be incomplete. All He asks of us is that, as He has**

**had the making of us, so He may also have the managing, since He alone**

**understands us, and is, therefore, the only one who can do it.**

**The man who makes an intricate machine is the best one to manage it and**

**repair it; any one else who meddles with it is apt to spoil it. And**

**when we think of the intricacy of our inward machinery and the**

**continual failure of our own management of it, we may well be thankful**

**to hand it all over to the One who created it, and to leave it in His**

**hands. We may be sure He will then make the best out of us that can be**

**made, and that we, even we, with our "peculiar temperaments," and our**

**apparently unfortunate characteristics, will be made vessels unto**

**honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use, and fitted to every**

**good work.**

**I met once with a saying in an old Quaker writer which I have never**

**forgotten: "Be content to be just what thy God has made thee." It has**

**helped me to understand the point upon which I am dwelling; and I feel**

**sure contentment with our own "make-up" is as essential a part of our**

**submission to God as contentment with any other of the circumstances of**

**our daily life. If we did not each one of us exist just as we are by**

**nature, then one expression of God's creative power would be missing,**

**and one part of His work would be left undone. And besides, to complain**

**of ourselves is to complain of the One who has made us, and cannot but**

**grieve Him. Let us be content, then, and only see to it that we let the**

**Divine Potter make out of us the very best He can, and use us according**

**to His own good pleasure.**

**Verses 17 and 18 bring out another view of God's continual presence**

**with us, and that is, that He is always thinking about us, and that His**

**thoughts are kind and loving thoughts, for the Psalmist calls them**

**precious. "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! How great**

**is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number**

**than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee."**

**So many people are tempted to think that God is not paying any**

**attention to them. They think that their interests and their affairs**

**are altogether beneath His notice, and that they are too unworthy to**

**hope for His attention. But they wrong Him grievously by such thoughts.**

**A mother pays as much attention to her smallest infant as to her oldest**

**children, and is as much interested in its little needs and pleasures**

**as in theirs. I am not sure but she is more. Her thoughts dwell around**

**the one who needs them most; and He who made the mother's heart will**

**not Himself be less attentive to the needs and pleasures of the meanest**

**and most helpless of His creatures. He even hears the young lions when**

**they cry, and not a sparrow can fall to the ground without Him;**

**therefore, we, who are of more value than many sparrows, need not be**

**afraid of a moment's neglect.**

**In fact, the responsibilities of creating anything require an**

**unintermitting care of it on the part of the Creator; and it is the**

**glory of omnipotence that it can attend at once to the smallest details**

**and to the grandest operations as well.**

**"For greatness which is infinite makes room**

**For all things in its lap to lie;**

**We should be crushed by a magnificence**

**Short of infinity."**

**I do not know why it is that we consider a man or woman weak who**

**attends to large affairs to the neglect of little details, and then**

**turn around and accuse our God of doing this very thing. But if any of**

**my readers have hitherto been guilty of this folly, let it end now and**

**here, and let each one from henceforth believe, without any**

**questioning, that always and everywhere the "Lord thinketh upon me."**

**The remainder of the Psalm develops the perfect accord of thought**

**between the soul and God, where this life of simple faith has been**

**entered upon. Having learned the transforming fact of God's continual**

**presence and unceasing care, the soul is brought into so profound a**

**union with Him as to love what He loves, and hate what He hates; and**

**eagerly appeals to Him to search it, and try it, that there may be no**

**spot left anywhere in all its being which is out of harmony with Him.**

**In the sunlight of His presence darkness must flee, and the heart will**

**soon feel that it cannot endure to have any corner shut away from His**

**shining; for in His presence is "fulness of joy," and at His right hand**

**"there are pleasures forevermore."**

**An old woman, living in a rather desolate part of England, made**

**considerable money by selling ale and beer to chance travelers who**

**passed her lonely cottage. But her conscience troubled her about it.**

**She wanted to be a Christian and to go to Heaven when she died, but she**

**had an inward feeling that if she did become a Christian she would have**

**to give up her profitable business, and this she thought would be more**

**than she could do; so that between the two things she was brought into**

**great conflict.**

**But one night, at the meeting she attended, a preacher from a distance**

**told about the sweet and blessed fact of God's continual presence with**

**us, and of the joy this was sure to bring when it was known. Her soul**

**was enraptured at the thought of such a possibility for her, and**

**forgetting all about the beer, she began at once with a very simple**

**faith to claim it as a blessed reality. Over and over again she**

**exclaimed in her heart, as the preacher went on with his sermon, "Why,**

**Lord Jesus, I didn't know as thee wast always with me! Why, Lord, how**

**good it is to know that I have got thee all the time to live with me**

**and take care of me! Why, Lord, I sha'n't never be lonely no more!" And**

**when the meeting closed and she took her way home across the moors, all**

**the time the happy refrain went on, "Ah, Lord Jesus, thee art going**

**home with me tonight. Never mind, Lord Jesus, old Betty won't never let**

**thee go again now, I knows I have got thee!"**

**As her faith thus laid hold of the fact of His presence she began to**

**rejoice in it more and more, until finally, when she had reached her**

**cottage door, her soul was full of delight. As she opened the door, the**

**first object her eyes rested upon was a great pot of ale on the table**

**ready for selling. At once it flashed into her mind, "The Lord will not**

**like to have that ale in the house where He lives," and her whole heart**

**responded eagerly, "That ale shall go." She knew the pot was heavy, and**

**she kneeled beside it saying, "Lord, thee hast come home with me, and**

**thee art going to live with me always in this cottage, and I know thee**

**don't like this ale. Please give me strength to tip it over into the**

**road." Strength was given, and the ale was soon running down the lane.**

**Then the old woman came back into her cottage, and kneeling down again**

**thanked the Lord for the strength given, and added, "Now, Lord, if**

**there is anything else in this cottage that thee does not like, show it**

**to me, and it shall be tipped out too."**

**Is not this a perfect illustration of the close of our Psalm? "Do not I**

**hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that**

**rise up against thee? I hate them with a perfect hatred; I count them**

**mine enemies. Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my**

**thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the**

**way everlasting."**

**Just as light drives out darkness, so does the realized presence of God**

**drive out sin, and the soul that by faith abides in His presence knows**

**a very real and wonderful deliverance.**

**And now I trust that some will ask, "How can I find this presence to be**

**real to myself?" I will close, therefore, with a few practical**

**directions.**

**First, convince yourself from the Scriptures that it is a fact. Facts**

**must always be the foundation of our experiences, or the experiences**

**are worthless. It is not the feeling that causes the fact, but the fact**

**that produces the feeling. And what every soul needs in this case first**

**of all, is to be convinced beyond question, from God's own words about**

**it, that His continual presence with us is an unalterable fact.**

**Then, this point having been settled, the next thing to do is to make**

**it real to ourselves by "practising His presence," as an old writer**

**expresses it, always and everywhere, and in everything. This means**

**simply that you are to obey the Scripture command, and "in all your**

**ways acknowledge Him," by saying over each hour and moment, "The Lord**

**is here," and by doing everything you do, even if only eating and**

**drinking, in His presence and for Him. Literally, "whether, therefore,**

**ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."**

**By this continual "practice of His presence," the soul at last acquires**

**a habit of faith; and it becomes, finally, as difficult to doubt His**

**presence as it was at first to believe it.**

**No great effort is required for this, but simply an unwavering faith.**

**It is not studied reasonings or elaborate meditations that will help**

**you here. The soul must recognize, by an act of simple faith, that God**

**is present, and must then accustom itself to a continual conversation**

**with Him about all its affairs, in freedom and simplicity. He does not**

**require great things of us. A little remembrance of His presence, a few**

**words of love and confidence, a momentary lifting of the heart to Him**

**from time to time as we go about our daily affairs, a constant appeal**

**to Him in everything as to a present and loving friend and helper, an**

**endeavor to live in a continual sense of His presence, and a letting of**

**our hearts "dwell at ease" because of it,--this is all He asks; the**

**least little remembrance is welcome to Him, and helps to make His**

**presence real to us.**

**Whoever will be faithful in this exercise will soon be led into a**

**blessed realization of all I have been trying to tell in this book, and**

**of far more that I cannot tell; and will understand in a way beyond**

**telling, those wonderful words concerning our Lord, "They shall call**

**His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."**

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**93. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=2Cor&scrCh=6&scrV=17#vii-p25.1**

**94. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=2Cor&scrCh=6&scrV=18#vii-p25.2**

**95. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=2Cor&scrCh=12&scrV=7#xxii-p46.1**

**96. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=Gal&scrCh=5&scrV=6#vii-p23.1**

**97. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=Eph&scrCh=2&scrV=6#xiii-p11.1**

**98. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=Eph&scrCh=2&scrV=6#xxii-p12.1**

**99. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=Eph&scrCh=2&scrV=10#iii-p23.1**

**100. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=Eph&scrCh=4&scrV=29#xiii-p14.5**

**101. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=Eph&scrCh=4&scrV=32#xiii-p14.11**

**102. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=Eph&scrCh=6&scrV=12#xiii-p11.2**

**103. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=Phil&scrCh=2&scrV=13#vii-p25.3**

**104. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=Phil&scrCh=3&scrV=7#xxii-p44.1**

**105. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=Phil&scrCh=4&scrV=6#xiii-p14.18**

**106. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=Phil&scrCh=4&scrV=7#xiii-p14.19**

**107. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=1Tim&scrCh=2&scrV=9#xiii-p14.3**

**108. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=1Tim&scrCh=2&scrV=10#xiii-p14.4**

**109. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=Heb&scrCh=3&scrV=5#x-p22.1**

**110. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=Heb&scrCh=3&scrV=6#x-p22.2**

**111. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=Heb&scrCh=8&scrV=6#xii-p7.1**

**112. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=Heb&scrCh=10&scrV=22#vii-p26.1**

**113. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=Heb&scrCh=10&scrV=23#vii-p26.2**

**114. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=Heb&scrCh=12&scrV=5#xxii-p14.1**

**115. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=Heb&scrCh=13&scrV=21#vii-p28.1**

**116. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=Jas&scrCh=1&scrV=5#xiii-p3.4**

**117. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=Jas&scrCh=1&scrV=6#xiii-p3.5**

**118. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=Jas&scrCh=1&scrV=6#xiii-p3.6**

**119. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=Jas&scrCh=1&scrV=7#xiii-p3.7**

**120. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=Jas&scrCh=4&scrV=4#xiii-p14.16**

**121. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=1Pet&scrCh=2&scrV=19#xiii-p14.10**

**122. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=1Pet&scrCh=3&scrV=3#xiii-p14.1**

**123. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=1Pet&scrCh=3&scrV=4#xiii-p14.2**

**124. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=2Pet&scrCh=3&scrV=18#xi-p4.1**

**125. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=1John&scrCh=1&scrV=9#xv-p11.1**

**126. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=1John&scrCh=1&scrV=9#xv-p14.1**

**127. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=1John&scrCh=2&scrV=15#xiii-p14.15**

**128. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=1John&scrCh=5&scrV=14#vii-p14.1**

**129. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=1John&scrCh=5&scrV=15#vii-p14.2**

**130. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=Rev&scrCh=1&scrV=5#xxi-p21.1**

**131. file://localhost/ccel/s/smith\_hw/secret/cache/secret.html3?scrBook=Rev&scrCh=1&scrV=6#xxi-p21.2**