

POCKET DEVOTIONS SERIES

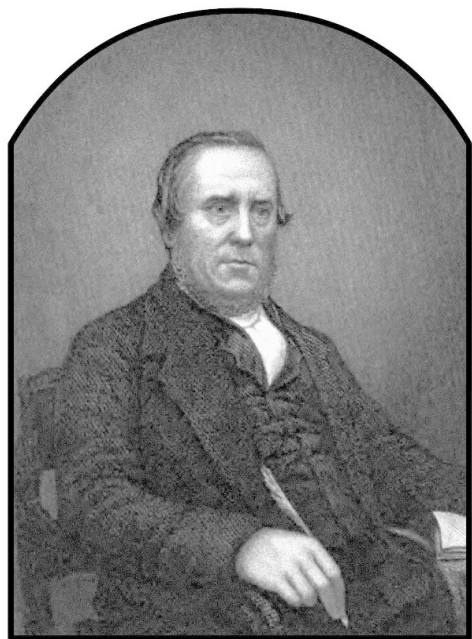
COMMUNION MEDITATIONS



7 POCKET
DEVOTIONS
SERIES

James Smith

COMMUNION
MEDITATIONS



James Smith,

COMMUNION MEDITATIONS

or

THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME

by
James Smith

NEW EDITION



2024

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Communion Meditations, or This Do In Remembrance of Me
Smith, James (1802-1862)

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PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

The Lord's Supper is a special aspect of worship for Christ's church. It is not merely a time when we remember His death on behalf of sinners, but it is also an occasion when we feed by faith upon the Lord Jesus Christ. By His Spirit, He is present with us at the meal, and our partaking of the elements is an outward expression of the actions and attitude of our own soul towards Him.

Historically, Christians have always been careful about how they approach the Lord's Table. They have always sought to prepare their hearts in readiness for the meal. Here, at the Table, they are conscious that the Lord comes to have spiritual dealings with them, and they have yearned to improve such seasons for their own sanctification and growth.

Pastor James Smith wrote these short devotions in order to help the Lord's people with their communion preparations. These meditations are designed to fix the believer's thoughts on various aspects of Christ's sacrifice, the present state of their walk with Him, and the true condition of their own hearts. They are ideal for use in the days prior to partaking of the Lord's Supper, but can also be profitably used as part of one's daily devotional routine.

COMMUNION MEDITATIONS

In this new edition, only a few minor alterations were made to Pastor Smith's original work. Bible references have been added to the text in those places where quotes and allusions to the Scriptures occur. Some punctuation has also been updated and a small number of very long sentences have been broken up into smaller ones. On rare occasions, words with archaic meanings have been replaced with a modern equivalent, and British spelling has been preferred throughout.

Extra material has also been included in this new edition which may be of interest to the reader. This includes a short biography of Pastor Smith, a timeline of his life and a list of his major works. Most of this information has been gleaned from his autobiography *Marvellous Mercy*. Above the title of each devotion is also an additional Bible passage. This serves as a suggested Scripture reading which may be read prior to the devotion itself.

Dear reader, be wary of carelessly participating at the Lord's Table. Our Saviour has instituted this ordinance for the benefit of our own souls, and we must not meet Him there heedlessly! May this little work of *Communion Meditations* help prepare your hearts for a time of sweet fellowship with Him at His table!

THE PUBLISHER
December 2024

THE FEAST

*In this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all
people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the
lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines
on the lees well refined.*

Isaiah 25:6

THE LORD'S SUPPER is a feast — a feast on a sacrifice. Jesus made it. Jesus presides at it. Jesus constitutes it. At the Lord's table we have to do with Jesus. With Jesus only. He is to be the object of our faith, the subject of our meditation. Jesus is always present at His table. He allows no one to preside but Himself. He feasts with us. He rejoices over us. He delights in us. Like Joseph's brethren, we feast with our elder Brother, and before the Egyptians of this world, "He is not ashamed to call us brethren," (Heb. 2:11). Like penitent and pardoned prodigals, we sit down with our heavenly Father, rejoicing with Him.

It is a feast of love. Love thought of it. Love provided it. Love invites us to it. Love inclines us to accept the invitation. Love brings us in, and points us to our place. Everything is pervaded with love. If I look at the Head of the table, I see the personification of infinite love. If I look around on the guests, I see the Lord's loved ones, each loving Him, and loving each other. If I look into my own heart, there is not a good desire, a holy wish, a scriptural prayer, a sweet

emotion, or a pleasurable sensation, but flows from God's most free and unmerited love.

Blessed Jesus, I praise Thee for the institution of the holy supper! I will come to Thy table, to Thy feast of love, that I may realize Thy presence, offer my petitions, and enjoy Thy favour.

*Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us,
therefore let us keep the feast.
1 Corinthians 5:7-8*



THE PROVISION

This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

Luke 22:19-20

WE COME TO THE Lord's table, to feed on Jesus, on Jesus alone. Not on our frames or feelings. Not on our doings or sufferings. Not on our vows or professions. No, but on Jesus only. His body is represented by the bread — His body, on which our sins were laid, in which our sins were punished, by the sacrifice of which our sins were put away. His body is the food of our faith. His body is offered to and accepted by God, for the expiation of our offences. He was bruised for our iniquities (Isa. 53:5). He died for our sins (1 Cor. 15:3). He put away our sins by the sacrifice of Himself (Heb. 9:26).

His blood is represented by the wine. The blood is the life (Lev. 17:11). He laid down His life for us (1 John 3:16). He poured out His soul unto death (Isa. 53:12). Nothing will satisfy the thirst of faith but the blood of Jesus. Nothing will quench the fiery law in the heart but the blood of Jesus. Nothing will silence and pacify the sinner's conscience but the blood of Jesus. As hungry, we feed on our Saviour's broken body. As thirsty, we drink His precious blood.

Here is a whole Christ — a perfect Saviour. Here is nourishment for the soul, of which, if a man partake, he shall live forever. If I partake of the elements alone, they do me no good. But if, while partaking of the elements, I partake of Christ by faith, I am strengthened, quickened, and nourished up into everlasting life.

Precious, precious Saviour! I will come to Thy table that I may feed on Thy flesh and blood, so shall I live forever. Blessed Spirit, ever reveal and endear Jesus to me, when I come to this feast of love. O for heartfelt communion with God, at His own table!

Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.
John 6:54-55



THE GUESTS

*Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it,
and gave it to his disciples.*

Matthew 26:26

THE ONLY WELCOME guests at the Lord's table, are true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ — such as have been convinced of sin, are heartily sorry for sin, and who flee to Jesus to be saved from sin. It was sin that tortured and put the Lord Jesus to death. It is His love to sinners that is commemorated in the Supper. But who can commemorate that love aright, that does not mourn over sin? And who is it that mourns over sin but true believers? Faith is the root of evangelical repentance. "Without faith it is impossible to please God," (Heb. 11:6). If therefore we have not faith, we have no qualification for enjoying the Lord's Supper.

The faith required, supposes a knowledge of Christ, personal application to Christ, and confidence in Christ. Every believer, though his faith may be weak, though his fears may be many, though his heart exercises may be very distressing, yet every believer is invited by Jesus, and every believer should accept the invitation of Jesus. It is not my feelings, or my good works, that form my qualification, or give me a right to this feast of love. It is my faith. The faith that leads me to think of Christ, to prefer Christ to all other, and that renders Christ precious to my soul, is

that, and that alone, which warrants me to seek fellowship with Christ in this ordinance. Where there is faith in Christ, there will be love to Christ, and where there is love to Christ, there will be pleasure in remembering Christ. As, therefore, we meet to remember Jesus, faith which worketh by love is a necessary qualification.

Holy Spirit, quicken, strengthen, and increase my faith, that I may be strong in faith, giving glory to God.

*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.*

John 14:21



THE DESIGN

*This do in remembrance of me....For as often as ye eat
this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show
the Lord's death till he come.
1 Corinthians 11:24,26*

JESUS LOVES US to think of Him. He wishes to be remembered by us. He instituted this ordinance on purpose to bring before us His sufferings and death, and to give us an opportunity to meet as His disciples, and unitedly remember Him. Here we should remember, what Jesus was, as the only-begotten of the Father — what Jesus *became*, as our substitute and Saviour — what Jesus *did*, to satisfy the claims of law and what Jesus *suffered*, to meet the demands of justice. We must remember the *love*, which induced Him to engage for us — the *pity*, that brought Him into the world to suffer, bleed, and die for us — and the *grace*, which led Him to make over all His merits to us.

Blessed Jesus, may I ever remember Thy “glorious nativity, and circumcision, Thy baptism, fasting, and temptation, Thy agony, and bloody sweat, Thy cross and passion!” But, for this especial purpose, may I come to Thy table, and unite with Thy people in showing forth Thy death, until Thou shalt come again the second time without sin unto salvation (Heb. 9:28), or send and fetch me to Thy Father’s house, that

I may see Thee, and remember Thee without interruption forever.

Christian brother, forget not that the design of the Supper is to afford thee a special opportunity to remember Jesus. Fix, therefore, thy thoughts on Him, and when they wander, bring them back to the subject, and rejoice in the thought that, while thou art remembering Jesus, He is remembering thee.

Blessed Saviour, send the Spirit, as the Remembrancer, to remind us of Thee, lead us to Thee, and glorify Thee before us. O that my thoughts may be filled with Christ, until I see Him face to face!

*We will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember
thy love more than wine: the upright love thee.*

Song of Solomon 1:4



THE STARTLING TESTIMONY

*Whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup
of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of
the body and blood of the Lord.*

1 Corinthians 11:27

THE LORD'S SUPPER should always be received with reverence. The body and blood of Jesus are figuratively set before us. We are reminded of Gethsemane and Calvary, and we show forth the Lord's death. If, therefore, with a light, vain, carnal mind, we sit down at the Lord's Table, we are guilty of trifling with the sufferings and death of Christ.

We must discern the Lord's body and blood by faith. We must distinguish between a common meal and this divinely instituted ordinance. We must attend to it as an act of obedience. We must seek to have communion with Christ in His sufferings. We must esteem it a high and holy privilege. If we do not, we are guilty of profaning sacred things, and of treating the body and blood of Christ with disrespect. The reference is not to a sense of personal unworthiness, but of unworthy acting when at the holy Supper. Eating and drinking for carnal purposes, we eat and drink condemnation to ourselves.

Let us, therefore, with lowliness of mind, with deep reverence of soul, and with a spirit of devotion, come to the Lord's Table. And there, though we have

to mourn over our own hardness, coldness, wandering thoughts, and distressing exercises of soul, we shall not eat and drink unworthily. Without heartfelt repentance toward God, and living faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, we have no right to the Lord's Supper, but with these we are welcome, accepted of God, and free from all condemnation.

But let all triflers beware. Let all carnal persons stand aloof. For such have no warrant to come to this ordinance. They can have no fellowship with Christ in it, nor can they derive any benefit from it. Stand aloof then —

*For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth
and drinketh damnation to himself, not
discerning the Lord's body.
1 Corinthians 11:29*



THE EXAMINATION

*Let a man examine himself, and so let him
eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.*

1 Corinthians 11:28

HE THAT WOULD not be deceived must carefully and prayerfully examine himself in the light of God's holy word. When we remember that the heart is deceitful above all things (Jer. 17:9), that many have lived and died under deception, and that Satan the great deceiver is always busy practising deception upon us, no arguments can be required to prove the necessity of self-examination. The question to be decided is, "*Am I in Christ?*" or, "*Is Christ in me?*" If I am not united to Christ, I cannot have communion with Christ. If Christ does not live in me, I am dead in trespasses and sins. Take which view you will, there is no qualification for fellowship with Christ at His table.

Let me then put a few questions to my conscience, as in the sight of God, and may the Holy Spirit enable me rightly to answer them. Have I been thoroughly convinced of my lost state as a sinner in the sight of God? Have I felt the depravity of my heart, and mourned over the pollution of my nature? Have I fled to Christ as a poor, helpless, naked sinner, for a free and full salvation? Have I committed my soul into the hands of Jesus, to be saved by Him alone? Am I expecting to be saved simply on the ground of

what the Lord Jesus did and suffered? Is Christ precious to my soul? Am I panting and praying for holiness? If so, I am scripturally qualified to eat of that bread and drink of that cup. But, if I have none of these evidences, the Lord's Table is no place for me. First, let me be reconciled to God, exercise faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, experience that I am led by the Spirit of God, and then I am a welcome guest.

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

2 Corinthians 13:5



THE JUDGMENT

*If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.
1 Corinthians 11:31*

EVERY CHRISTIAN is required to sit in judgment on himself, and that not merely once, but often. The bar of equity is set up in an enlightened conscience, God's law is written on the mind, and the statute-book is put into our hands, that so we may judge ourselves.

Let us compare our conduct with God's word. Does it correspond with it? Let us compare our motives with God's requirements. Why do I this? Is it out of love to Jesus? Is it that I may glorify God? Is it a simple act of obedience to the divine will? Or am I doing it to pacify my conscience, to plead at God's throne, or to rest on for my acceptance with God? Unless I am resting on Christ alone for my acceptance with God — unless my motive is simply to please God — unless I adorn in my daily conduct the gospel I profess — I cannot pronounce myself a disciple of Christ, a child of God, or a proper person to unite with the Lord's people in the feast of love.

There can be no faith in Jesus without love to Him. Nor can there be any love to Him without keeping His word. Hence He says, "If a man love Me, He will keep My words; and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make Our abode with him," (John 14:23). Happy is the man who is

acquitted and justified by an enlightened and honest conscience. Miserable is the man whose conscience condemns him in his religious duties. "If our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God," (1 John 3:20-21).

Gracious Lord, give me a tender conscience, cleanse me from all sin, grant me a sense of my justification before Thee, and so may I come to Thy table.

*But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord,
that we should not be condemned with the world.*

1 Corinthians 11:32



THE COMMAND

Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing.

2 Corinthians 6:17

THE LORD REQUIRES His people to be separate from the world, to withdraw from all intimate fellowship with the wicked. They are not of the world, even as Christ was not of the world (John 17:16). Jesus gave Himself for them, that He might deliver them from this present evil world (Gal. 1:4). We may be in the world, as the physician is in the hospital, endeavouring to benefit those about us. Or, like the merchant doing business in the rain, he does not neglect his business for fear of a wetting, nor stay in the shower when his business is done. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world; if any one love the world, the love of the Father is not in him," (1 John 2:15).

Our affections are to be set, not on earthly, but on heavenly things. "They that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit," (Rom. 8:5). If we enjoy worldly society, if we prize worldly pleasure, if we set our hearts on worldly pleasure, if we set our hearts on worldly prosperity, we are not walking worthy the vocation wherewith we are called (Eph. 4:1). We are not making Jesus our example, nor are we obeying the command of our heavenly Father.

The world is our Lord's enemy. It lieth in the wicked one (1 John 5:19). It is under the influence of the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience (Eph. 2:2).

May the Lord so sanctify our hearts that we may have no relish for the vanities of time, but manifest that we are dead to the world and alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. O for that fellowship with our risen Lord, that will raise us above the world, and keep us distinct from it, to His glory!

*Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works
of darkness, but rather reprove them.*

Ephesians 5:11



THE PROMISE

*I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you,
and ye shall be my sons and daughters,
saith the Lord Almighty.
2 Corinthians 6:17-18*

PRECIOUS PROMISE THIS! He who forsakes the world for the Lord's sake will be received by Him — lovingly received. Received as the child of adopting love. Received to a father's arms and a father's heart. Received to sweetest fellowship and purest joys. God will receive us when the world frowns on us. "*I will be a Father unto you.*" All that a father can do, God will do, and ten thousand times more. He will wipe our tears, soothe our sorrows, sanctify our pains, carry our burdens, and supply all our needs.

We shall be His sons and daughters. He will take care of our education, for we shall be taught of the Lord (Isa. 54:13). He will provide us a princely portion, for we shall be joint heirs with Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:17). He will bestow upon us unsearchable riches, even an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us (1 Pet. 1:4). Never, never can we lose by leaving the world for the Lord. He has promised us a hundredfold in the present life, and in the world to come life everlasting (Luke 18:30). Now, the precious gospel is the title deeds of our glorious inheritance,

the Holy Spirit is the witness of our adoption (Rom. 8:15), the arm of Jesus is our support and stay, and all things are working together for our good (Rom. 8:28).

Farewell, then, vain world, from henceforth my heart, my talents, my all are the Lord's. I will aim 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 (2 Cor. 4:18). I will look to God as my Father, plead the promise at His throne, imitate Jesus as my example, and hasten to Heaven as my home.

Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

Galatians 4:6



THE PROHIBITION

Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Romans 12:2

THE CHRISTIAN IS Christ's loving epistle to a fallen world. He is to tell of a Saviour's love, breathe the Saviour's spirit, testify of the Saviour's merit, and deliver the Saviour's invitation. He is not to conform himself to the world, but endeavour to conform the world to the will of his Lord. How very inconsistent to be one day at the Lord's Table, showing forth the Lord's death; and another standing up in the giddy dance, to the sound of jovial music. How incongruous, to be spending the morning in reading God's blessed book, and bowing the knee at His throne, and in the evening sitting down to cards, chess, or some trifling amusement. How improper when required to visit the sick, the fatherless, and widows in their affliction (James 1:27), to spend our time in worldly parties, and our money in adorning the person.

Oh, how much conformity to the world there is among many professors of that religion which requires us to mortify the flesh, with its passions and lusts! How many are overcome by the fashions, pleasures, and gay amusements of the world, who ought to have the world under their feet, and eternal glory

in their eye. “Marvel not,” said Jesus, “if the world hate you, for ye know that it hated Me before it hated you,” (John 15:18). But how can it hate those who conform to it, and so much resemble it? It cannot. It does not.

There is not that distinction between professors and the world, which there ought to be. If we were the temples of the Holy Ghost — if Christ dwelt in us — if we lived in close fellowship with God — could we be so conformed to the world as many of us are?

Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

James 1:27



THE QUESTION

Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?

John 21:15

JESUS PROPOSES A solemn, and a searching question. Do you love Me? He desires our love. He values our love. He is jealous of our love. Can we wonder at it? Do we not give Him much cause for it? We give the things of time so much of our thoughts, of our time, and of our affections, that it is no wonder, if Jesus asks us, whether we really love Him.

But pointing to the *things* of time, He asks, “Do you love Me more than these — your business, your profits, and your pleasures?” Pointing to *persons* about us, He asks, “Do you love Me more than your mother, father, brother, sister, or friend?” Or, “do you love Me more than those undecided persons whom you condemn, or those lukewarm professors of whom I disapprove, or those wanderers, who are like sheep going astray, or those imperfect ones of whom you complain, or those weak ones whom you are tempted to despise?”

Beloved, Jesus wants your answer. He is looking and waiting for it. Answer His question in your closet on your knees, and let the frequency and fervency of your prayers say how much you love Him. Answer it in your family, and let the consistency of your walk, the holiness of your life, and your

anxiety to bring all about you to His cross, say how much you love Him. Answer it in the church, and let the regularity, earliness, and constancy of your attendance on all the means of grace, say how much you love Him. Answer it at His table, and let your tears for sin, your sighs for holiness, and your prayers for usefulness, say how much you love Him.

Holy Spirit, shed abroad the love of Jesus in my heart, that I may love with such fervour, and serve Him with such diligence, that there may be no cause for this question in my case.

*Jesus saith unto him the third time, Simon,
son of Jonas, lovest thou me?
John 21:17*



THE PROOF OF LOVE

*If any man will come after me, let him deny himself,
and take up his cross, and follow me.*

Matthew 16:24

HOW MANY TALK of love, who never feel it. How many profess to feel it, who never prove it. Love to Jesus is the root of all acceptable obedience. Love is powerful. The love of Jesus is especially so. If the love of Jesus influences my heart, I shall be willing to do anything for Him, to give anything to Him, and to deny myself anything for Him.

My nature is constantly making demands, which are contrary to my profession, but my nature must be denied. Nature lusts for evil things, profane things, foolish things, but nature must be denied. I must deny my pride — no, it shall not rule. I must deny my natural temper — no, it shall not reign. I will not do this. Why? It would displease my Saviour. I will avoid that. Why? I fear it will grieve the Holy Spirit. I will attempt to accomplish the other difficult duty. Why? I think it will honour my heavenly Father.

The man who practises self-denial out of love, will be sure to be a happy man. It will be difficult at first, but easier afterwards. Let the passions rule, allow each one to have its way, and we must be unhappy. But there is a cross — to do that, crosses my will, my prejudices, my natural inclinations. I very much

dislike to do it. It is heavy, it is rough, it will make persons talk. But Jesus wishes you to do it. Jesus bids you to do it. Then I will do it. I remember how He denied Himself for me, what a cross He carried for me. O yes! If Jesus wishes me, if my precious Saviour bids me, it shall be done. Anything, everything for Him.

My soul, take up thy cross daily, and imitate Jesus. Cross thy lusts, thy carnal inclinations, thy natural appetites, and present thy body a living sacrifice to Him.

*If any man will come after me, let him deny himself,
and take up his cross daily, and follow me.*

Luke 9:23



THE CONFLICT

We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Ephesians 6:12

EVERY CHRISTIAN is a soldier, and the soldier of the cross is always engaged in war. We have to do battle with all the corruptions that are in our own hearts with all the old evil habits and customs of our former lives — with all the carnal principles that are in the world — and especially with Satan, the enemy of all righteousness.

He is to be continually watched and resisted. If he comes as a serpent, craftily and cunningly, to deceive us, or as a roaring lion, to terrify and affright us, we must withstand him. He will tempt us to sin, and if we yield, he will immediately turn round and accuse us of the sin. He will represent sin as a trifle, to induce us to tamper with it, or as too great to be pardoned, that we may despair of being justified from it. He will try to prejudice us against our fellow-believers, that he may mar our enjoyments, and prevent our fellowship with them. He will misrepresent God, to induce us to indulge hard thoughts of Him, and misapply the word of God, to fill us with levity or gloom.

We must be always on the alert, or we shall be overcome and led astray. Our only security is in close walking with God, watching unto prayer, having constantly to do with the blood of Christ, and God's most holy word. If we once give way to his temptations, wander to a distance from God, neglect the Bible and the open fountain, he will soon prevail against us.

Let us therefore cleave unto the Lord, seek wisdom from above, and endeavour to resist him, steadfast in the faith. We have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. Let us put on the whole armour of God, and fight till we gain the victory.

*Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift
you as wheat: But I have prayed for
thee that thy faith fail not.*

Luke 22:31-32



THE OBLIGATION

*Brethren, we are debtors.**Romans 8:12*

HUMAN NATURE DOES not like to be under obligation, but grace renders even this sweet. We were under an obligation to obey the law in all its righteous requirements, and to suffer its penalty with all its dreadful results. But Jesus came and obeyed the law for us in His life, and He paid the penalty for us in His death. So that now, we are not under the law but under grace (Rom. 6:14). The yoke that we could not bear is taken away, and a soft and easy yoke is substituted in its room (Matt. 11:30). We are debtors to Jesus. How much we owe Him! Unless we knew exactly the weight of misery from which He has saved us, and the amount of happiness to which He will raise us, we cannot tell how much we owe Him. What can we now claim as our own? He purchased our persons, and therefore has a just right to all our services.

We should think nothing difficult that we do for Him, nor consider anything hard that we suffer for Him. We owe Him our all. If He asks our love, let us love Him. If He asks our company, let us give it Him. If He asks our obedience, let us render it to Him. If He see fit to afflict and try us, let us meekly yield, and pray for grace to acquiesce in His will. Everywhere, and always, let us remember, I am the property of

Jesus. He has a right to my person, my property, my time, my talents, and my all (1 Cor. 6:20). And let us consider it our highest honour to be employed for Him, to be allowed to do anything for Him. We are His debtors, and as honest men, we should at least acknowledge our debts, and try to please the One who has paid such a price for us, and set such a glorious eternity before us. Whether therefore we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, let us do all to the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31).

*Shall we sin, because we are not under the
law, but under grace? God forbid.*

Romans 6:15



THE THANKSGIVING

*In everything give thanks, for this is the will
of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*

1 Thessalonians 5:18

GOD WILLS THAT we should be thankful, and therefore He has given us so much to be thankful for. Where can we look, and not see something to be thankful for? If we look at our country, at our home, at our persons, at our privileges, or at our prospects, each and all call upon us to be thankful. Has the Father given us His only-begotten Son, to be our Saviour, sacrifice, and Intercessor, and shall we not thank Him? Has He enrolled our names in His book of life (Rev. 21:27), placed us for security in the omnipotent hand of Jesus (John 10:28), and assured us by His hallowed lips, that it is His good pleasure to give us the kingdom (Lk. 12:32), and shall we not be thankful?

Has Jesus laid down His life for us, made over His righteousness to us, and taken us into union with Himself, and shall we not be thankful? Has the Holy Spirit created us anew, revealed Jesus to us, cleared up our interest in Him, and led us to enjoy all the privileges of His people, and shall we not be thankful? Are the people of God our people — are the promises of God our portion — are all the trials of time overruled for our good — and is heaven, with all its glory,

peace and blessedness, ours forever — and shall we not be thankful?

Never, never, never, should one complaining word be uttered by us. Never, never, should one murmuring thought be encouraged by us, but by day and by night, at home and abroad, everywhere, and in all things, we should give thanks. O for a grateful heart, a thankful spirit!

My soul, often look back to the rock whence thou wast hewn (Isa. 51:1), down into the hell merited by thy sins, and up to the heaven prepared for thy reception, and thus kindle afresh the fire of gratitude within thee.

Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 5:20



THE REMINDING

*Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price:
therefore glorify God in your body, and in
your spirit, which are God's.
1 Corinthians 6:19-20*

NOT YOUR OWN. No. God claims you, for He chose you for His own. "Not your own." No. Jesus claims you. He bought you with His own precious blood. "Not your own." No. When you first exercised faith in Jesus, you unreservedly gave yourself away to Him. "Not your own." No. When you publicly professed your faith in Jesus, you called saints and angels to witness that you were His. "Not your own." No. Every time you have sat down at the Lord's Table, you have acknowledged that you were His. Let then your daily walk say, "Not my own." Let the walls of your closet echo, "Not my own." Let the church of Christ bear witness that you consider that you are not your own. But if you are not your own, you are the Lord's, and it is yours to acknowledge His right in you, and His title to you.

Reader, have you enjoyed the presence of the Lord today? If you have not, and yet have the life of God in your soul, except you are in a backsliding state, you are crying out tonight, "Oh that I knew where I might find Him!"

Glorify Him in your body. Let your dress, your ornaments, your meals, your every exercise say, "I

must glorify God.” Glorify Him in your spirit, in your temper, disposition, and conversation. Let God’s glory be the one great end for which you live. Let God’s glory be the object at which you aim. This will preserve you from temptation, prove the truth of your Christianity, and refute all the accusations Satan may bring against you. Honour the Lord in your life, and the Lord will honour you both in life and death, in time and eternity. O for grace daily to realize the fact, “I am the Lord’s,” and daily to pursue this one object, even His glory!

Spirit of God, influence me day by day, in all places, in all the company I keep, and in all I do, to aim distinctly and directly at the glory of Jesus!

For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s.

Romans 14:7-8



THE REQUEST

Son, go work today in my vineyard.

Matthew 21:28

YOUNG CHRISTIAN, GOD is thy Father. Thy Father has a vineyard, and there is much to be done in it. He asks thy assistance. He speaks lovingly, He asks, when He may command. He says, "Son, go work today in My vineyard." He only asks thee to do a day's work, and a short day too. There is an eternity of rest for thee, when the brief working day of life is over. Go work then. Go at once. Go teach those poor children, and tell them of thy Saviour's love. Go visit that poor widow, and tell her of the widow's God. Go feed those hungry ones left fatherless in the world, and feed them for Jesus' sake. Go and circulate those tracts, which are full of the good news from a far country. Go speak of Jesus, write of Jesus, spread by all means in thy power the knowledge of Jesus.

Do something to lessen earth's misery. Do something to heighten heaven's joy. Do something to hasten the glorious consummation, when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea (Hab. 2:14). Do something for Jesus every day. At least speak one word for Jesus each day. Pluck up some weed of error or sin, sow some grains of incorruptible seed in some heart, if it be possible. If you work for God, you will have the

company of God, as saith the prophet, “Thou meetest him that worketh righteousness, that rejoiceth in thy ways,” (Isa. 64:5).

Much time is lost. This can never be recovered. Only a small portion of time remains, therefore double thy diligence. Go kneel at the throne of grace, and pray, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” (Acts 9:6). Rise, look about thee, and thy work will soon be made plain. There is plenty to do, and much that will never be done, except you do it. Work, then, while it is day. The night cometh (John 9:4).

Be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

1 Corinthians 15:58



THE UNITY

*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond
nor free, there is neither male nor female:
for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.
Galatians 3:28*

YOUNG CHRISTIANS SHOULD never lose sight of the fact, that the church of Christ is one. Differ as we may in doctrine, in rites, or in reference to church government, still wherever there is the grace of God, there is union to Christ, and Christ is the centre of union in His church. It is our duty to love all that love Jesus, and to have fellowship with all that have fellowship with Christ.

Nothing should separate us in affection from each other that does not separate us from Christ. We have one Shepherd, and form but one flock (John 10:16). We have one foundation, and form one glorious building (Eph. 2:20-21). We have one parent stem, and form one living vine (John 15:5). We have one Father, and form one beloved family (Eph. 4:6). We are espoused to one husband, and constitute the one mystical bride of Christ (Rev. 21:2). In the church all differences should be done away, all distinctions should be levelled, for we are all one in Christ Jesus.

Let us look upon our brethren as in Christ, as members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones, and remember that Christ loves all His children alike, with an infinite, tender, and eternal love. If prejudice

is produced in our minds against anyone, let us bear in mind that Jesus is not prejudiced, though we are, and perhaps holds sweet and intimate communion with the person to whom we may be tempted not to speak. If I love Jesus, I must love all Jesus loves, and if I am one with Jesus, I must strive to be one with all that are united to Him.

O for more unity in God's church! May every one of us strive and pray for unity. Spirit of unity and love, work mightily in my heart, and let me realize union with all who are united to Jesus!

*As the body is one, and hath many members, and all
the members of that one body, being many,
are one body: so also is Christ.
1 Corinthians 12:12*



THE EVIDENCE

*We know that we have passed from death unto life,
because we love the brethren.*

1 John 3:14

THE EVIDENCES OF the Christian are sometimes obscured. His heart is hard, his affections are chilled, his faith is feeble, his prospects are dull, and the winds of temptation blow and howl around him. Doubts and fears will spring up, and perhaps he questions his state. *Am I alive unto God, or am I still dead in trespasses and sins?* This is the momentous question he cannot satisfactorily answer.

Under these circumstances, he casts his eye around on the church of Jesus. He views it in contrast with the world. He looks upon it as far better, and more privileged than himself, and while so doing, he feels love to that church working in his heart. Yes, he does love the church of Christ. He does love those who believe in Jesus, and resemble Him. And he loves them more in proportion as they are like Him. This is his evidence, perhaps it is now his only discoverable evidence, but it is enough. He must have passed from death to life, if he really loves the brethren. I cannot love the likeness of Christ, if I do not love Christ Himself. "He that loveth Him that begat, loveth Him also that is begotten of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when

we love God, and keep His commandments,” (1 John 5:11).

My brother, are you in darkness, in doubt, in uncertainty as to your state? Look at this evidence. You have this, have you not? You love the children of God and desire to be numbered with them, sharing in all their duties and privileges, joys and sorrows. Let this then comfort thee: thy adoption is certain.

My soul, I charge thee to love all that love Jesus, overlook all differences of creed or course, fix thy eye on the image of Jesus, and wherever that is, there fix thy love.

*Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God,
and everyone that loveth is born of
God, and knoweth God.
1 John 4:7*



THE NEW COMMANDMENT

*A new commandment I give unto you, That ye
love one another; as I have loved you,
that ye also love one another.*

John 13:34

THE GREAT EVIDENCE of vital religion is love, and the great command of Jesus is love. He wishes us to be like Himself. He says, "Do as I have done. Do as I do. Look at My love, and imitate it." Jesus loves all His people with a love stronger than death. He loves them not for what they are, or for what they have, or for what they do, but independent of the whole. And He would have us love one another, simply because we are His, and for His sake.

A Christian may be poor, illiterate, uncouth, a stranger to all the customs of the society in which I move, but I must love him for all that. He may be compassed with infirmities, and have much that is unlovely about him. But if I can discern the grace of God in him, I must love him notwithstanding that His views of doctrine may differ from mine, his views of gospel ordinances may be opposite to mine or his experience in many points may be unlike mine. Still, if there is one feature of the likeness of Jesus about him, I must not only tolerate him, or bear with him, but *I must love him*. Christ requires me to do so. I must distinguish between his person and his imperfections, and love the one, while I protest

against the other. But we do not come up to the requirement, unless we love as Jesus loved, with a love as pure, as constant, as strong — or until we see in ourselves a living, walking exposition of the 13th chapter of Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians.

Spirit of the loving Jesus, descend on us, and fill us with love to all, and every one, that loves our Saviour's name. Give me to love all that Jesus loves, and to love them as He loves them.

*This is his commandment, That we should believe on
the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one
another, as he gave us commandment.*

1 John 3:23



THE WILL OF GOD

This is the will of God, even your sanctification.

1 Thessalonians 4:3

EVERY CHRISTIAN should prefer God's will to his own, and whenever he can ascertain what is God's will on any point, he should endeavour to carry it out. It is God's will that we should be holy. To this end He chose us in Christ, that we should be holy and blameless before Him in love (Eph. 1:4). To this end we were redeemed, that we may be a peculiar people, zealous of good works (Titus 2:14). To this end we were regenerated, created anew in Christ unto good works (Eph. 2:10). Therefore the command is, "Be ye holy, for I am holy," (1 Peter 1:15-16).

God wishes us to be separate from the world, for sanctification is separation — separation from the world, for the worship, service, and honour of God. Let us therefore keep ourselves distinct from the world, turning our back on its pleasures, amusements, and pursuits, and endeavour to carry out the admonition of the apostle, "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God," (1 Cor. 10:31).

Let us so live, so walk, so speak, and so act, as to convince all about us that we are the Lord's, set apart for Him, delighting to serve Him, diligently obeying Him, and aiming in all things to please Him. What-

ever will deepen our sanctification, increase our conformity to Christ, and widen separation from this present evil world, let us diligently pursue. And whatever will conform us to the world, fix our affections on the world, or carnalize our minds, let us carefully avoid.

Like Caleb of old, may we have another spirit in us, that we may follow the Lord fully (Numb. 14:24). The Lord loves to see us decided for Him, devoted to Him, and acting like Him. Let us, therefore, imitate God, as His tenderly-beloved children, and seek in all things to resemble Him.

As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:

But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.

1 Peter 1:14-15



THE GARMENT

*Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder.
Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be
clothed with humility: for God resisteth the
proud, and giveth grace to the humble.*

1 Peter 5:5

WE ARE REQUIRED to *be* humble, and to *appear* humble. For as the garment is first seen, so should our humility always appear. How much we have to humble us, and keep us low before the Lord!

If we look to the rock whence we were hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence we were digged (Isa. 51:1), we should be humbled. If we look back on the days of our unregeneracy, spent in sin and folly, we should be humbled. If we reflect on our ingratitude, inactivity, and numerous imperfections manifested by us since the Lord has called us by His grace, we should be humbled. If we look to Gethsemane, or to Calvary, and consider ourselves as the cause of the Redeemer's agonies and bitter death, we should be humbled. Or, if we look forward to the glorious heaven provided by free grace for such poor, vile, and unworthy creatures, we should be humbled. Each and every one of these views is enough to lay us in the dust, and keep us in the dust, if properly realized by us.

We ought to be humble, for our God is humble. For “though the Lord be high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly,” (Ps. 138:6). Our Saviour is humble. He said, “I am meek and lowly of heart,” (Matt. 11:29). The doctrines of the gospel are humbling, for they make man nothing, and Jesus all in all. Grace is naturally humbling, so that if we have much grace, we shall have great humility. God loves humility. Saints admire humility. Heaven is the home of humility. And solid happiness springs from humility.

Let us, then, encourage humbling views of ourselves, and while we walk humbly with our God, let us wear the garment of humility before our fellow men. Precious Lord Jesus, let me daily walk with Thee, in holy fellowship and communion. This will produce and preserve profound humility in my soul.

*Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory,
but in lowliness of mind let each esteem
other better than themselves.*

Philippians 2:3



TRUTHFULNESS

*Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man
truth with his neighbour, for we are
members one of another.
Ephesians 4:25*

EVERY CHRISTIAN should be truthful. Many professors we know are not. Some jest with lies, and lie in jest — this is wicked. Some exaggerate and so misrepresent — this is sinful. Some lie in business for the sake of gain, and so deceive the ignorant and unwary — this is iniquitous. The exhortation is, “put away lying,” and put it so far away that it may never be found again. “Speak every man truth with his neighbour.”

Do you speak of a friend? Be sure what you say is truth. Do you speak of an enemy, or one against whom you are prejudiced? Be doubly careful, the temptation may be strong to conceal something, or to give a colouring to something. Speak only the truth. Do you relate an occurrence? Do it correctly. Do you state a fact? Do it precisely. Speak the truth always, on every subject to everyone.

When God speaks of the seven things that are abominable to Him, He places lying second, “A proud look, a *lying tongue*.” (Prov. 6:17) Speak the truth lovingly if possible. Remember, no liar goes to heaven. “All liars shall have their portion in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone,” (Rev. 21:8).

Oh, that we may all be so taught of God, and so resemble the God of truth, as to say with David, “I hate and abhor lying,” (Ps. 119:163). Some are specially tempted to this sin. Such should daily pray against it, set a watch before their mouth, and whenever they fall into it, confess it before God with shame and sorrow, imploring forgiveness and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.

Lord, make me strictly truthful, in all I say, in all I do, wherever I am. May I ever speak as in the presence of the God of truth, and as one that must give an account to God for every lying word.

*For he said, Surely they are my people, children that
will not lie: so he was their Saviour.*

Isaiah 63:8



THE DAILY GUIDE

*Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever
ye do, do all to the glory of God.*

1 Corinthians 10:31

EVERY CHRISTIAN should keep his body under control. So did Paul: “I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway,” (1 Cor. 9:27). The animal appetites must not rule. Many, who are not gluttons, eat too much. And many, who are not drunkards, drink too much. They eat simply for enjoyment and to gratify a natural propensity, and they drink for the same purpose.

Let the young Christian take this inspired rule to his table, and it will preserve him from many a snare, and keep him from yielding to many a temptation. Let him ask, “How can I glorify my God, in partaking of this food? How can I glorify my God, in partaking of this drink?” Many appear to live simply to eat, drink, dress, sleep, and take their pleasure. The Christian should eat, drink, and dress to live — and eat, drink, and dress in that manner which will honour God most. What a preservative to many professors, who have fallen by little and little, would this text have been.

My dear young friend, let me entreat you to keep this text before your eye. Write it upon the table of

your heart. If tempted by loose professors to smoke, or take another glass, or indulge in cards, chess or worldly games, ask thyself, "Can I do this to the glory of God? Will it glorify God for me to do it, or to abstain? Ought I to be led by those present or try to lead them myself? Should I not let my light shine here, bear my testimony for my Lord, and show that I do walk by the precepts of my God?" Beware of the first step. Yield once and you are sure to be tempted to yield again. Never walk on the margin of your Christian liberty, but walk circumspectly.

*Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in
the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks
to God and the Father by him.
Colossians 3:17*



PRAYER

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.

Ephesians 6:18

YOUNG CHRISTIANS should be much in prayer. Not only at stated times and set periods, but always should we pray. Cultivate the habit of ejaculatory prayer. This kind of prayer rises in the heart and darts upward to God, without preface or conclusion. You have so many dangers to face, so many foes to conquer, so many evils to avoid, so many duties to perform, so many privileges to enjoy, and so many blessings to crave, that you never can want matter for prayer.

Every trial should be taken to the Lord, that He may sanctify it. Every mercy, that He may sweeten it. Every burden, that He may carry it. And every want, that He may supply it. We should pray for ourselves and for others, for the body and the soul, for the present and the future. Not only should we pray but we should watch for answers, look for blessings, expect divine interferences. Specially should we pray for the saints — for the sick and poor of the Lord's flock, for the diligent and devoted, for all classes and all cases. The Lord loves to hear us pray for each other. When we intercede for the saints, we are engaged in the same blessed work as the Lord Jesus

Himself. We must persevere in prayer. Many will be our discouragements. Many and various our temptations, but nothing must be allowed to wrest this weapon out of our hands. "In everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto the Lord," (Php. 4:6).

Be much with God in private prayer, and He will be much with you in labour, in conflict, in trials, and in troubles. Prayer brings God and the soul together, and keeps them together. Make everything matter for prayer, and you will never want matter for praise.

*I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up
holy hands, without wrath and doubting.*

1 Timothy 2:18



THE BIBLE

Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

John 5:39

AS THE BIBLE is God's word, by which He speaks to us, and one special medium through which He holds communion with us, it should be constantly, carefully, and prayerfully read. We should read every part of God's word. We should pray over every portion we read, for only the Spirit who indited it can fully explain and apply it.

In reading the Scriptures, we should always be on the lookout for Jesus, for they testify of Him. Sometimes they speak plainly of Him, and sometimes in dark sentences. In one place He is prefigured, or typified. In another place He is clearly set before us. The Scriptures without Christ would be like the world without the sun, or like paradise without the tree of life. They testify of the glory of His person, the nature and perfection of His work, the depth and constancy of His love, His bright and blessed example, His glorious offices and relationships, His first advent to put away sin, and His second advent to receive His people to Himself. The spiritual mind will find Christ in all parts of the word, but the carnal mind will scarcely discover Him anywhere.

Let the word of God then, be our daily study, the man of our counsel, the map of our journey, the rule

of our lives, the food of our souls, the weapon of our defence, and our glorious heritage. Let us read it devoutly, examine it carefully, believe it heartily, make use of it constantly, and ever hold it fast as an invaluable possession.

Blessed Spirit, do Thou unfold the Scriptures to my mind, apply them to my heart, and make them the food of my soul. Lord Jesus, open Thou my understanding, that I may understand the Scriptures.

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

Romans 15:4



FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

1 John 1:7

LIGHT IS THE emblem of truth, purity, and happiness. To walk in the light, therefore, is to walk under the influence of the truth, in the practice of holiness, and enjoying the privileges of the gospel. God is in the light, influenced, if one may so speak, by the truth, holiness, and happiness of His nature. If we, therefore, pursue our Christian course, under the same influence, He treats us as His friends, and holds sweet and pleasant fellowship with us. His thoughts, as expressed in His word, are directed into our hearts by His Holy Spirit, and our thoughts ascend to Him in prayer and praise. We realise that God is with us, that God is at peace with us and that God loves us, and we enjoy God's company, are at peace with Him, and feel our hearts ascending in love to Him.

Under these circumstances, though we sin daily, sin in all we say or do, no guilt rests upon our consciences, or agitates our minds. The blood of Jesus Christ daily, yea, constantly, cleanses us from all sin, so that to use Paul's words, "We have no more conscience of sins." (Heb. 10:2) We are conscious that we sin, and sorrow on account of it, but there is no sense

of condemnation for sin, for our enjoyment of our justification continues, though we know we sin. Yea, while we confess our sins, we feel that they are pardoned, that we are accepted in the Beloved (Eph. 1:6), are passed from death unto life, and shall never come into condemnation (John 5:24).

Let us therefore walk in the light of God's truth, in the way of God's commandments, and expect to realize sweet and soul satisfying communion with Him. Oh for closer and more intimate fellowship with God, that so we may be holy, useful, and happy!

If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.

1 John 1:6



THE WITNESSING

Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD.

Isaiah 43:10

EVERY BELIEVER is to be a witness for God. He is led to prove the truth, power, and blessedness of religion for himself, and then he is required to bear witness of it to others. The written word is the Bible of the church, but the church herself is the Bible of the world. Therefore, it was said of the Corinthians, that they were “known and read of all men,” (2 Cor. 3:2). In us, the world should see the transforming power, elevating purity, and true dignity of real religion. Therefore, we are exhorted, “as the elect of God, to put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, and longsuffering,” (Col. 3:12). Our lives should be a witness for God in the world, in the family, and in the church. But not only our lives, but with our tongues we should bear witness for Him. We should speak of the glorious honour of His majesty, and talk of His power, to make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, and to declare His greatness (Ps. 145:12).

Every believer has the witness in Himself (1 John 5:10), and should therefore witness to the freeness, greatness, and power of God’s love. His witness should be plain, clear, and distinct, so that no one may mistake it, or be misled by it. It is a glorious work to witness for God, and so to witness as to impress all

around us with the importance of real religion. Alas, that any one should profess Christ, and yet not witness for Him, or so walk as to leave a false impression respecting the Saviour or His cause. Be it our concern to bear witness for Jesus wherever we are, and so to walk and speak, and pray as to win souls to Christ.

Spirit of God, witness for Christ in me, that I may witness for Christ to all around me. Oh, to bear an honest testimony for my Saviour!

*Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ
ministered by us, written not with ink, but with
the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of
stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.
2 Corinthians 3:3*



THE CAUTION

Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

Hebrews 3:12

FAITH BRINGS THEM back to God who had wandered from Him. Unbelief leads them from God who had returned to Him. Unbelief is evil, only evil. It offers the grossest insult to God, and inflicts the greatest possible injury upon us. We are therefore kindly cautioned against it. Let us beware of listening to unbelieving suggestions and of encouraging unbelieving thoughts. Confidence in God becomes us. Confident of the truth of His word, of the power of His arm, and the continuance of His love, we should exercise confidence in His promises, and under all circumstances expect their fulfilment. Let us walk with God, not withdraw from God. Let us look to God, not expect from the creatures. The Jews lost Canaan by unbelief, and many professors go back and walk no more with Jesus, in consequence of the same. "Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it," (Heb. 4:1).

The Lord our God is a jealous God. He is especially jealous of our confidence. He is grieved with our unbelief, and well He may be, for "He that believeth not God, hath made Him a liar," (1 John 5:10). Let us therefore take heed, and whenever

doubts and unbelieving fears arise, take them to the Lord, confess them as sins, and seek grace that we may trust in the Lord forever, and glorify His faithfulness by our confidence. Young people should be especially careful because of the fascinations of the world, the power of Satan, and their ignorance of the depths of depravity in their own hearts. Once give way to unbelief, and your anchor is drawn, and your vessel will become the sport of the winds and the waves. Cast not away therefore your confidence

*Wherefore, let him that thinketh he
standeth take heed lest he fall.*

1 Corinthians 10:12



THE SECRET EVIL

The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways: and a good man shall be satisfied from himself.

Proverbs 14:14

IT IS A GREAT thing to have the heart right with God, resting on His word, delighted with His love, acquiescing in His will, and aiming at His honour. Grace sets the heart right, but we too often neglect to seek grace to keep it right. Then we backslide, or slide back from God, and get cold, formal, and worldly. And so sure as this is the case, our comforts wither, our joys decline, our faith becomes feeble, and our love grows cold. Then we are irritable, fretful, foolish, and carnal. We cannot enjoy worldly things with the worldling, nor do we enjoy spiritual things with the saints. We have to work without help, suffer without succour, and attend ordinances without enjoyment. We are filled with our own ways, and when depressed, dissatisfied, and miserable, the Lord asks that cutting question, "Hast thou not procured this unto thyself?" (Jer. 2:17). Nor will there be peace or comfort, until, with a broken heart and a humbled spirit, we say, "I will go and return to my first husband, for then it was better with me than now," (Hos. 2:7).

Reader, beware of heart backsliding. It generally begins in the closet. Its commencement is in the withdrawal of the affections from God, and fixing

them upon some earthly object, and its end is being filled with our own ways. Hast thou backslidden? Let me entreat thee to take with thee words and return unto the Lord (Hos. 14:2). He invites, He exhorts, He entreats thee to come back to Him. He will receive thee graciously, pardon thee fully, love thee freely, and restore the joys of His salvation to thee. Arise, go at once to His throne. He is waiting to be gracious. He is exalted to show mercy unto thee (Isa. 30:18).

Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he a pleasant child? For since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the LORD.

Jeremiah 31:20



THE PROSPECT

*I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine
until that day when I drink it new with
you in my Father's kingdom.
Matthew 26:29*

AND WHO ARE the righteous? Not the perfect, but they who, believing in Jesus, have His obedience placed to their account, and are justified in His name (Php. 3:9). For every believer, Jesus lived and obeyed the law. For every believer, Jesus died and paid the penalty of the law. For every believer, Jesus is gone into heaven to plead His perfect work and precious blood. As one with Christ — as interested in all that was done by Christ — as pleaded for by Christ, we are righteous before God. God treats us as righteous, and His grace or favour is like a shield, to ward off the arrows of the enemy, to protect and keep us safe.

My soul, art thou in Christ? Is the glorious righteousness of Jesus thine? Art thou relying on the life and death of Jesus alone for acceptance and eternal life? If so, thou art safe. Thy God has given thee the shield of His salvation, and His grace will be thy constant guard.

Precious Lord Jesus, I bless Thee for Thy life and death. I praise Thee for Thy glorious righteousness, without which I must appear naked before God, to my everlasting confusion and condemnation.

Holy Father, I bless Thee, I praise Thee for Thy grace — that grace which has distinguished me in times past, which is my comfort tonight, and which will preserve me to Thy kingdom and glory. Compassed with Thy favour! Oh, what a privilege! Compassed with Thy favour as with a shield! Oh, what security! Bless me, O my heavenly Father, bless me with a grateful heart, with a confiding spirit, with a soul set upon Thy glory, and the extension of Thy blessed, Thy beloved cause! O that I could praise and adore Thee as I would!

For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

Romans 14:7-8



THE PROPER POSITION

*Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth,
and keepeth his garments, lest he walk
naked, and they see his shame.*

Revelation 16:15

IF THE CHRISTIAN is a servant, he should be prepared for the coming of his absent Master. If a bride, he should be ever anticipating the coming of the Bridegroom. We should be distinct from the world, testifying to it, that the works thereof are evil (John 7:7). We should be employing every talent we have for our Lord's honour, and be on the watch for His sudden appearing. He will come as a thief.

No one can calculate when (Matt. 24:36). Nor ought we to attempt. We have nothing to do with the time of His coming. Our business is to be ready for it. Our garments should be daily washed, and made white in the blood of the Lamb. Our loins should be girt about with His truth (Eph. 6:14). Our opposition to all evil should be calm and constant. Our work in the Lord's vineyard should be regularly performed. Our affections should be set on things above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God (Col. 3:1). Our union to Christ should be realized, and constant communion with Christ should be maintained. In a word, our object should be to live for Christ, and as much like Christ as we possibly can. Not sleeping as

do some, not idling as do others, not conforming ourselves to the world as do too many, but wakeful, watchful, and prayerful, doing the will of God from the heart (Eph. 6:6).

Reader, we must part. Shall we sit down with our Lord at His table in His kingdom? Shall we meet there happy in His love, clothed in His righteousness, to glorify His dear name forever? Shall we? In order that we may, let us make our calling and our election sure (2 Pet. 1:10). Let us live on Christ, live for Christ, live like Christ, and live looking and longing for the glorious appearing of Christ (Titus 2:13).

And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

1 John 2:28



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

James Smith (1802-1862) was a 19th century English Baptist pastor who became a prolific and much-loved devotional author. Called to the ministry in his mid-20s, he served as pastor of two churches in Cheltenham over a period of 12 years. In 1841 he accepted a call to the New Park Street chapel in London - the church which Charles Spurgeon would later pastor for almost 40 years. Health issues eventually forced him to leave London in 1850, and he eventually returned to Cheltenham to pastor a third church in the area from 1852 until his death. In total, he authored more than 50 books, along with numerous tracts and articles for various Christian periodicals and magazines.

Smith's writings were full of Christ, and he sought to magnify and exalt His precious Saviour in every book. He aimed to not only cultivate a genuine love for the Lord Jesus in the hearts of his readers, but to see such love for Christ manifested in their everyday lives. In the preface to his popular *The Believer's Daily Remembrancer*, he wrote:

"In this little work, I aim to speak in the closet, in the cottage, in the kitchen, and even in the field, to the different classes of the Lord's family; endeavouring to draw them nearer to their God and gracious Father. My desire is to

promote the power of godliness; and these little pieces are written to convince, comfort, and correct; to fan the flame of devotion, and to produce holiness of heart and life...Habitual dependence upon God for all we need, acknowledging the hand of God in all we receive, and walking with God, notwithstanding all that may happen to us below, enter into the very vitals of genuine Christianity; and it is only while we are thus acting that we enjoy peace with God, and walk in the comforts of the Holy Ghost.”

Most Christian authors would naturally have similar desires. But whereas many are able to speak about the Christian life in theory, Smith had first-hand experience of the truths that he wrote about. In God’s providence, he learnt them by passing through his own fiery trials. Smith’s father died while he was still an infant, and as a young child he was pressed into the workforce to help his mother support the family. As an apprentice and employee, he battled with the opposition that he received from ungodly co-workers. As a father of at least seven children, he saw three of them die at an early age. As a pastor, he experienced the hatred, slander and nastiness that sometimes comes from professing Christians, and he went through more than one bitter church split. Nor was he exempt from health and financial worries either. In addition to all this, Smith endured the normal internal battles against sin that plague every

believer, while also bearing the heavy burden for the souls of others that accompanies a faithful ministry.

Not surprisingly, Smith's writings began to resonate with other readers who were enduring similar trials. Through his pen, they were being comforted with the same comfort that he himself had received from God (2 Cor. 1:4). Before long, Smith's books began to spread throughout England and eventually around the world. Many wrote to him, expressing gratitude for the tremendous help they had received, or explaining how God had used his writings to awaken unbelieving friends and relatives. Hungry souls were being fed, and for a while, his writings were even more popular than those of Charles Spurgeon. Sadly, his works are now largely unknown by most 21st century Christians, but it is hoped that as more of them are reprinted, the Lord will again use them to exalt Christ and bless the souls of His beloved saints.

Further information about Pastor James Smith can be found in his autobiography, *Marvellous Mercy, as Displayed in the Life and Experience of the Author, James Smith of Cheltenham*. The first edition contains a record of his life up until August 1861, and was published prior to his death in December of the following year. In a subsequent printing in 1864, his son Joseph Smith, provided some additional details about Pastor Smith's final months.

Brief Timeline

- 1802 Born in Old Brentford, Middlesex (19th November).
- c.1812 Taken from school to work in a soap factory to help his widowed mother earn an income for the family.
- c.1816 Commenced work as an apprentice fell-monger (tanner and dealer of sheepskins).
- 1819 Conversion (28th February).
- 1820 Publicly baptized (31st March) and received into church membership (2nd April).
- 1824 Marriage to Ann Cook (29th August).
- 1825 Moves to Chertsey for work purposes as his employer's fell-monger business begins to expand (April).
- 1826 Preaches publicly for the first time at Alton from Ps. 9:18 (19th November). It was his 24th birthday. Preaches twice more that same day from Zech. 9:10 and Zech. 13:1.
- 1827 Brentford church sets him apart for the ministry of the word (March), and he begins preaching in various places as needed.
- 1828 Accepts an invitation to preach for a 12 month trial period at Cheltenham, with the possibility of becoming the church's pastor. During this time he faced severe opposition from some in the church, and a number of members decided to leave.

- 1829 Ordained as pastor of Bethel Chapel in Cheltenham (26th May) and the church continues to grow, despite ongoing controversies. Members with hyper-calvinistic and antinomian views become increasingly critical of his ministry and message. In order to divert his mind from these trials, Smith begins to write, print and circulate gospel tracts.
- c.1830 Death of daughter Mercy.
- 1831 Death of 19-month-old daughter Anne after a three day illness (13th Jan.)
- 1833 Death of son Charles.

Comes to believe in the universal offer of the gospel to all lost sinners, and determines to start calling them to repent and believe in the gospel, and offer them the Lord Jesus as Saviour. Previously, he held the view that gospel invitations should only be made to sinners who had been made to feel their need of Christ. He anticipates further opposition from the church as a result.
- 1835 The church situation deteriorates further and he resigns as pastor of Bethel Chapel. A number of members also leave, and he begins preaching among them at a local gallery for the next three months.
- 1836 Becomes pastor of the newly-formed Salem Baptist Chapel in Cheltenham (1st January). Though the original premises could seat 600 people, the congregation numbered more than 1200 within just 2 years and the building had to be enlarged.

COMMUNION MEDITATIONS

- 1841 Resigns as pastor of Salem Chapel (9th November) and accepts a call to New Park Street Chapel, London. He describes the London church as 'in a very low state, and the congregation very small,' but between 400 and 500 new members would be added to the church during his pastorate.
- 1850 Resigns as pastor of New Park Street Chapel (February) due to ongoing lung and asthma problems. Commences a two year trial at Byrom Street Chapel in Liverpool (August) which only lasts until the end of the year.
- 1851 Invited to oversee the church at Shrewsbury for 12 months (February).
- 1852 Returns to Cheltenham to pastor a church which was meeting in Ebenezer Chapel (February). This church, which had formed in 1843 from previous members of Salem Chapel, was now itself in danger of disbanding. It recovered under Smith's ministry and would soon become Cambray Baptist Church.
- 1861 Suffers a sudden stroke and paralysis (September), which prevents any further work as a preacher or writer.
- 1862 Death at the age of 60 years (15th December)

List of Published Works

- 1836 Parental Solitude
- 1838 Jehovah Revealed as the Object of Faith and Hope
- 1839 Messenger of Mercy, A
- 1840 Minister's Pocket Companion, The
- 1842 Believer's Daily Remembrancer, The (Pastor's Morning Visit)*
- 1845 Book That Will Suit You, The*
Church As It Ought to Be, The
Love of Christ [Set Forth], The*
- 1846 Believer's Daily Remembrancer, The (Pastor's Evening Visit)
Christian's Railway and Steamboat Companion
Way of Salvation Set Forth, The
- 1847 Voice of Mercy in the House of Affliction, The
- 1848 Green Pastures for the Lord's Household
- 1849 Manna in the Wilderness
Sinner's Guide to God and Glory, The
Streams in the Desert
- 1850 Daily Bible Readings for the Lord's Household
Rainbow of the Covenant, The*
Refreshing Dew-Drops
Selection of Spiritual Poetry, A
- 1852 Book That You Want, The
Still Waters*
- 1854 Precious Things From the Everlasting Hills
- 1855 Better Land, The

COMMUNION MEDITATIONS

Sabbath Readings
Welcome to Jesus

- 1856 Early and Latter Rain, The
Good Seed for the Lord's Field
Our Heavenly Father
Sacramental Meditations
- 1857 Bread From Heaven
Christ Alone
- 1858 Great Comforter, The
Light for Dark Days
Sunny Subjects for All Seasons
- 1859 Book You Will Like, A
Evening Sacrifice, The
Important Questions
Morning Sacrifice, The
Pearls from the Ocean
Words of Comfort
- 1860 Fruit From the Tree of Life
Gleams of Grace
Good News for All
Rills from the Rock of Ages
- 1861 Glad Tidings of Good Things
Pleading Saviour, The
- 1862 Marvellous Mercy
- 1863 Believer's Triumph, The
- 1865 Bright Rays and Reviving Showers
- 1867 Food for the Soul

**Exact year of publication unknown.* Given dates indicate the year in which the book was first published, and are not necessarily the same year in which they were written.

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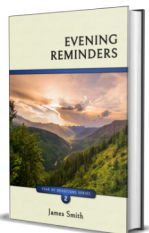


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