

Holiness

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I. Sin

A. Proof text.

1. ***[1 John 3:4]- Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.***

B. Attaining right views about Christian holiness.

1. Examining the vast and solemn subject of sin.
2. Wrong views about holiness are generally traceable to wrong views about human corruption.
3. A right knowledge of sin lies at the root of all saving Christianity.
 - a. Without it such doctrines as justification, conversion, sanctification, are “words and names” which convey no meaning to the mind.
4. The first thing God does is to send light into his heart, and show him that he is a guilty sinner.
 - a. ***[2 Corinthians 4:6]- For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.***

C. Sin defined.

1. The fault and corruption of the nature of every man that is naturally engendered of the offspring of Adam; whereby man is very far gone (*quam longissime* is the Latin) from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always against the spirit; and, therefore, in every person born into the world, it deserveth God’s wrath and damnation.
2. That vast moral disease which affects the whole human race, of every rank, and class, and name, and nation, and people, and tongue; a disease from which there never was but one born of woman that was free.
3. A sin consists in doing, saying, thinking, or imagining, anything that is not in perfect conformity with the mind and law of God.
4. Sin is “*the transgression of the law.*”
 - a. ***[1 John 3:4]- Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.***
5. A man may break God’s law in heart and thought, when there is no overt and visible act of wickedness.
 - a. ***[Matthew 5:21-28]- Ye have heard that it was said of them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing. Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.***
 - b. “*A man may smile and smile, and be a villain.*” - William Shakespeare *Hamlet*
6. There are sins of omission as well as commission.
 - a. Leaving undone the things we ought to do and doing the things we ought not to do.

- b. *[Matthew 25:41- 42]- Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:*
 - c. *"Lord, forgive me all my sins, and specially my sins of omission."* - Archbishop Usher before his death.
- 7. There are sins of ignorance.
 - a. *[Leviticus 4:1]- Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a soul shall sin through ignorance against any of the commandments of the LORD concerning things which ought not to be done, and shall do against any of them:*
 - b. *[Leviticus 5:14-15]- And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, If a soul commit a trespass, and sin through ignorance, in the holy things of the LORD; then he shall bring for his trespass unto the LORD a ram without blemish out of the flocks, with thy estimation by shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary, for a trespass offering.*
 - c. *[Numbers 15:25-29]- And the priest shall make an atonement for all the congregation of the children of Israel, and it shall be forgiven them; for it is ignorance: and they shall bring their offering, a sacrifice made by fire unto the LORD, and their sin offering before the LORD, for their ignorance: And it shall be forgiven all the congregation of the children of Israel, and the stranger that sojourneth among them; seeing all the people were in ignorance. And if any soul sin through ignorance, then he shall bring a she goat of the first year for a sin offering. And the priest shall make an atonement for the soul that sinneth ignorantly, when he sinneth by ignorance before the LORD, to make an atonement for him; and it shall be forgiven him. Ye shall have one law for him that sinneth through ignorance, both for him that is born among the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them.*
 - d. *[Luke 12:48]- But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.*

D. The origin and source of sin.

- 1. The sinfulness of man does not begin from without, but from within.
- 2. It is not the result of bad training in early years. It is not picked up from bad companions and bad examples.
- 3. Sin is a family disease, which we all inherit from our first parents, Adam and Eve, and with which we are born.
 - a. *[John 3:6]- That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*
 - b. *[Ephesians 2:3]- Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*
 - c. *[Romans 8:7]- Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*
 - d. *[Mark 7:1]- Then came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem.*

E. The extent and scope of sin.

- 1. *[Genesis 6.5]- And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*
- 2. *[Jeremiah 17:9]- The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*
- 3. Sin is a disease which pervades and runs through every part of our moral constitution and every faculty of our minds.
 - a. The understanding, the affections, the reasoning powers, the will, and the conscience.

- b. *[Isaiah 1:6]- From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.*
 - c. In spiritual things he is utterly “dead,” and has no natural knowledge, or love, or fear of God.
 - d. The best things are so interwoven and intermingled with corruption, that the contrast only brings out into sharper relief the truth and extent of the fall.
 - e. Every part of the world bears testimony to the fact that sin is the universal disease of all mankind.
 - f. *[Jeremiah 17:9]- The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*
- F. The guilt, vileness, and offensiveness of sin in the sight of God.
- 1. Mortal man can at all realize the exceeding sinfulness of sin in the sight of that holy and perfect One with whom we have to do.
 - a. God is that eternal Being who “chargeth His angels with folly,” and in whose sight the very “heavens are not clean.” He is One who reads thoughts and motives as well as actions, and requires “truth in the inward parts.”
 - 1.) *[Job 15:15,18]- Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight. Which wise men have told from their fathers, and have not hid it:*
 - 2.) *[Psalm 51.6]- Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.*
 - b. We are born in sin, surrounded by sinners, living in a constant atmosphere of weakness, infirmity, and imperfect- can form none but the most inadequate conceptions of the hideousness of evil.
 - 1.) *[Jeremiah 44:4]- Howbeit I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, saying, Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate.*
 - 2.) *[Habakkuk 1:13]- Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?*
 - 3.) *[James 2:10]- For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.*
 - 4.) *[Ezekiel 18.4]- Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.*
 - 5.) *[Romans 6:23]- For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*
 - 6.) *[Romans 2:16]- In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.*
 - 7.) *[Mark 9:44]- Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.*
 - 8.) *[Psalm 9:17]- The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.*
 - 9.) *[Matthew 25:46]- And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.*
 - 10.) *[Revelation 21:27]- And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.*
 - c. The fulness of sin is so overwhelming and unanswerable in the cross and passion of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - 1.) *[Matthew 27:46]- And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*
 - 2.) “The anthem in heaven will be, What hath God wrought!” – George Whitfield

G. The deceitfulness of sin.

1. To regard sin as less sinful and dangerous than it is in the sight of God; and in their readiness to extenuate it, make excuses for it, and minimize its guilt.
2. We do not sufficiently realize the extreme subtlety of our soul's disease. We are too apt to forget that temptation to sin will rarely present itself to us in its true colors,
3. Sin comes to us, like Judas, with a kiss; and like Joab, with an outstretched hand and flattering words.
4. The forbidden fruit seemed good and desirable to Eve; yet it cast her out of Eden.
5. The walking idly on his palace roof seemed harmless enough to David; yet it ended in adultery and murder.
6. Sin rarely seems sin at first beginnings.
7. Let us then watch and pray, lest we fall into temptation.
8. We may give wickedness smooth names, but we cannot alter its nature and character in the sight of God.
9. ***[Hebrews 3.13]- But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.***

H. Application.

1. Observe what deep reasons we all have for humiliation and self-abasement.
 - a. Let us sit down before the picture of sin displayed to us in the Bible, and consider what guilty, vile, corrupt creatures we all are in the sight of God.
 - b. What need we all have of that entire change of heart called regeneration, new birth, or conversion!
 - c. What a mass of infirmity and imperfection cleaves to the very best of us at our very best!
 - 1.) ***[Hebrews 12:14]- Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:***
 - d. What cause we have to cry with the publican, every night in our lives, when we think of our sins of omission as well as commission.
 - 1.) ***[Luke 18:13]- And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.***
 - 2.) *"The remembrance of our misdoings is grievous unto us; the burden is intolerable. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; for Thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive us all that is past."* - The General Confession from the Book of Common Prayer, 1662
 - 3.) *"Let the holiest and best things we do be considered. We are never better affected unto God than when we pray; yet when we pray, how are our affections many times distracted! How little reverence do we show unto the grand majesty of God unto whom we speak! How little remorse of our own miseries! How little taste of the sweet influence of His tender mercies do we feel! Are we not as unwilling many times to begin, and as glad to make an end, as if in saying, 'Call upon Me,' He had set us a very burdensome task? It may seem somewhat extreme, which I will speak; therefore, let every one judge of it, even as his own heart shall tell him, and not otherwise; I will but only make a demand! If God should yield unto us, not as unto Abraham - If fifty, forty, thirty, twenty - yea, or if ten good persons could be found in a city, for their sakes this city should not be destroyed; but, and if He should make us an offer thus large, search all the generations of men since the fall of our father Adam, find one man that hath done one action which hath passed from him pure, without any stain or blemish at all; and for that one man's only action neither man nor angel should feel the torments which are prepared for both. Do you think that this ransom to deliver men and angels could be found to be among the sons of men? The best things which we do have somewhat in them to be pardoned."* - Thomas Hooker *Learned Discourse of Justification*

2. Observe how deeply thankful we ought to be for the glorious Gospel of the grace of God.
 - a. We need not be afraid to look at sin, and study its nature, origin, power, extent, and vileness, if we only look at the same time at the Almighty medicine provided for us in the salvation that is in Jesus Christ.
 - b. Though sin has abounded, grace has much more abounded.
 - 1.) ***[Romans 5:20]- Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:***
 - 2.) In the everlasting covenant of redemption, to which Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are parties.
 - 3.) In the Mediator of that covenant, Jesus Christ the righteous, perfect God and perfect Man in one Person.
 - 4.) In the work that He did by dying for our sins and rising again for our justification.
 - 5.) In the offices that He fills as our Priest, Substitute, Physician, Shepherd, and Advocate.
 - 6.) In the precious blood He shed which can cleanse from all sin.
 - 7.) In the everlasting righteousness that He brought in.
 - 8.) In the perpetual intercession that He carries on as our Representative at God's right hand.
 - 9.) In His power to save to the uttermost the chief of sinners, His willingness to receive and pardon the vilest, His readiness to bear with the weakest.
 - 10.) In the grace of the Holy Spirit which He plants in the hearts of all His people, renewing, sanctifying and causing old things to pass away and all things to become new.
3. Practical uses to which the whole doctrine of sin may be profitably turned in the present day.
 - a. A Scriptural view of sin is one of the best antidotes to that vague, dim, misty, hazy kind of theology which is so painfully current in the present age.
 - 1.) ***[1 Timothy 1:8]- But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully;***
 - 2.) ***[Romans 3.20]- Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.***
 - 3.) ***[Romans 7:7]- What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.***
 - 4.) Let us bring the law to the front and press it on men's attention.
 - a.) Let us expound and beat out the Ten Commandments.
 - b.) Let us show the length, and breadth, and depth, and height of their requirements.
 - c.) This is the way of our Lord in the Sermon on the Mount.
 - b. A Scriptural view of sin is one of the best antidotes to the extravagantly broad and liberal theology which is so much in vogue at the present time.
 - 1.) The tendency of modern thought is to reject dogmas, creeds, and every kind of bounds in religion.
 - 2.) Everything forsooth is true, and nothing is false!
 - 3.) Everybody is right, and nobody is wrong!
 - 4.) Everybody is likely to be saved, and nobody is to be lost!
 - 5.) The Atonement and Substitution of Christ, the personality of the devil, the miraculous element in Scripture, the reality and eternity of future punishment, all these mighty foundation-stones are coolly tossed overboard.
 - c. A right view of sin is the best antidote to that sensuous, ceremonial, formal kind of Christianity.
 - 1.) Music, and flowers, and candles, and incense, and banners, and processions, and beautiful vestments, and confessionals, and man-made ceremonies of a semi-Romish character, may do well enough for him under certain conditions.

- 2.) But once let him “awake and arise from the dead,” and he will not rest content with these things.
- d. A right view of sin is one of the best antidotes to the overstrained theories of Perfection.
 - 1.) If those who press on us perfection mean nothing more than an all-round consistency, and a careful attention to all the graces which make up the Christian character, reason would that we should not only bear with them, but agree with them entirely.
 - 2.) But if men really mean to tell us that here in this world a believer can attain to entire freedom from sin, live for years in unbroken and uninterrupted communion with God, and feel for months together not so much as one evil thought, I must honestly say that such an opinion appears to me very unscriptural.
 - 3.) *“Christ alone is without sin; and that all we, the rest, though baptized and born again in Christ, offend in many things; and if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”*
 - 4.) *“There be imperfections in our best works: we do not love God so much as we are bound to do, with all our hearts, mind, and power; we do not fear God so much as we ought to do; we do not pray to God but with many and great imperfections. We give, forgive, believe, live, and hope imperfectly; we speak, think, and do imperfectly; we fight against the devil, the world, and the flesh imperfectly. Let us, therefore, not be ashamed to confess plainly our state of imperfections.”*
- e. A Scriptural view of sin will prove an admirable antidote to them low views of personal holiness.
 - 1.) Christ -like charity, kindness, good-temper, unselfishness, meekness, gentleness, good-nature, self-denial, zeal to do good, and separation from the world, are far less appreciated than they ought to be.
- f. The cure is to be found in a clearer apprehension of the nature and sinfulness of sin.
 - 1.) *[Galatians 2:20]- 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.*
 - 2.) *[2 Corinthians 3:18]- But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

II. Sanctification

A. Proof text.

1. *[John 17:17]- Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*
2. *[1 Thessalonians 4.3]- For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:*

B. The true nature of sanctification.

1. That inward spiritual work which the Lord Jesus Christ works in a man by the Holy Ghost, when He calls him to be a true believer.
2. He not only washes him from his sins in His own blood, but He also separates him from his natural love of sin and the world, puts a new principle in his heart, and makes him practically godly in life.
3. The instrument by which the Spirit effects this work is generally the Word of God, though He sometimes uses afflictions and providential visitations “*without the Word.*”
 - a. *[1 Peter 3:1]- Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;*

- b. *“There is mention in the Scripture of a twofold sanctification, and consequently in a twofold holiness. The first is common unto persons and things, consisting of the peculiar dedication, consecration, or separation of them unto the service of God, by His own appointment, whereby they become holy. Thus the priests and Levites of old, the ark, the altar, the tabernacle, and the temple, were sanctified and made holy; and, indeed, in all holiness whatever, there is a peculiar dedication and separation unto God. But in the sense mentioned, this was solitary and alone. No more belonged unto it but this sacred separation, nor was there any other effect of this sanctification. But, secondly, there is another kind of sanctification and holiness, wherein this separation to God is not the first thing done or intended, but a consequent and effect thereof. This is real and internal, by the communicating of a principle of holiness unto our natures, attended with its exercise in acts and duties of holy obedience unto God. This is that which we inquire after.” - John Owen Works on the Holy Spirit*
4. The Lord Jesus has undertaken everything that His people’s souls require; not only to deliver them from the guilt of their sins by His atoning death, but from the dominion of their sins, by placing in their hearts the Holy Spirit; not only to justify them, but also to sanctify them.
- [1 Corinthians 1:30]- But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:*
 - [John 17:19]- And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.*
 - [Ephesians 5:25]- Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;*
 - [Titus 2:14]- Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*
 - [1 Peter 2:24]- 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.*
 - [Colossians 1:22]- In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:*
 - [Hebrews 2:11]- For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,*
5. Propositions defining the exact nature of sanctification.
- Sanctification is the invariable result of that vital union with Christ which true faith gives to a Christian.
 - [John 15:5]- I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*
 - [James 2:17-20]- Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?*
 - [Titus 1:1]- Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness;*
 - [Galatians 5:6]- For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.*
 - [1 John 1:7]- But 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 3:3]- And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.*
 - Sanctification is the outcome and inseparable consequence of regeneration.
 - [1 John 2:29]- If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.*

- 2.) *[1 John 3:9-14]- Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.*
 - 3.) *[1 John 5:4-18]- For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing 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. If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death. We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.*
- c. Sanctification is the only certain evidence of that indwelling of the Holy Spirit which is essential to salvation.
 - 1.) *[Romans 8:9,14]- But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*
 - 2.) *[Galatians 5:22,25]- But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.*
 - d. Sanctification is the only sure mark of God's election.
 - 1.) *[1 Peter 1.2]- Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.*
 - 2.) *[2 Thessalonians 2:13]- But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:*
 - 3.) *[Romans 8:29]- For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*
 - 4.) *[Ephesians 1:4]- According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:*

- 5.) *[1 Thessalonians 1:3,4]- Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.*
- e. Sanctification is a thing that will always be seen.
- 1.) *[Luke 6:44]- For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.*
 - 2.) *[Matthew 25:37]- Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?*
- f. Sanctification is a thing for which every believer is responsible.
- 1.) *[Matthew 16:26]- For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*
- g. Sanctification is a thing that admits of growth and degrees.
- 1.) *[John 17:17]- Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*
 - 2.) *[1 Thessalonians 4:3]- For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:*
 - 3.) *[2 Peter 3:18]- But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*
 - 4.) *[1 Thessalonians 4:1]- Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.*
- h. Sanctification is a thing that depends greatly on a diligent use of Scriptural means.
- 1.) Bible-reading, private prayer, regular attendance on public worship, regular hearing of God's Word, and regular reception of the Lord's Supper.
 - 2.) Our God is a God who works by means, and He will never bless the soul of that man who pretends to be so high and spiritual that he can get on without them.
- i. Sanctification is a thing that does not prevent a man having a great deal of inward spiritual conflict.
- 1.) The struggle within the heart between the old nature and the new, the flesh and the spirit, which are to be found together in every believer.
 - a.) *[Galatians 5:17]- For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*
 - 2.) Struggles are healthy symptoms of our condition, and prove that we are not dead, but alive.
 - 3.) A true Christian is one who has not only peace of conscience, but war within.
 - a.) *[Romans 7:22]- For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:*
 - b.) *[Song of Solomon 6:13]- Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies.*
 - 4.) *"The infection of nature doth remain in them that are regenerated." – 13th Article of Religion*
 - 5.) *"Although baptized and born again in Christ, we offend in many things; and if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." – 15th Article of Religion*
 - a.) *"The devil's war is better than the devil's peace. Suspect dumb holiness. When the dog is kept out of doors he howls to be let in again." - "Contraries meeting, such as fire and water, conflict one with another. - When Satan findeth a sanctified*

heart, he tempteth with much importunity. Where there is much of God and of Christ, there are strong injections and firebrands cast in at the windows, so that some of much faith have been tempted to doubt.” – Samuel Rutherford Trial of Faith

- j. Sanctification is a thing which cannot justify a man, and yet it pleases God.
 - 1.) *[Romans 3:20-28]- Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.*
 - 2.) *[Hebrews 13:16]- But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.*
 - 3.) *[Colossians 3:20]- Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.*
 - 4.) *[1 John 3:22]- And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.*
- k. Sanctification is a thing that will be found absolutely necessary as a witness to our character in the great Day of Judgment.
 - 1.) *[John 5:29]- And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.*
 - 2.) *[2 Corinthians 5:10]- For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*
 - 3.) *[Revelation 20:13]- And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.*
- l. Sanctification is absolutely necessary in order to train and prepare us for heaven.
 - 1.) Heaven is essentially a holy place; its inhabitants are all holy; its occupations are all holy.
 - 2.) To be really happy in heaven, it is clear and plain that we must be somewhat trained and made ready for heaven while we are on earth.
 - 3.) No man can possibly be happy in a place where he is not in his element, and where all around him is not congenial to his tastes, habits, and character.
 - 4.) When an eagle is happy in an iron cage, when a sheep is happy in the water, when an owl is happy in the blaze of noonday sun, when a fish is happy on the dry land - then, and not till then, will I admit that the unsanctified man could be happy in heaven.
 - a.) *“There is no imagination wherewith man is besotted, more foolish, none so pernicious, as this, - that persons not purified, not sanctified, not made holy in their life, should afterwards be taken into that state of blessedness which consists in the enjoyment of God. Neither can such persons enjoy God, nor would God be a reward to them. - Holiness indeed is perfected in heaven: but the beginning of it is invariably confined to this world.” – John Owen on Holy Spirit, Works*

C. The visible marks of sanctification.

1. True sanctification then does not consist in talk about religion.
 - a. *[John 3:18]- He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*
2. True sanctification does not consist in temporary religious feelings.
 - a. *[Matthew 13:20]- But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;*
3. True sanctification does not consist in outward formalism and external devoutness.
 - a. External religiousness is made a substitute for inward holiness; and I am quite certain that it falls utterly short of sanctification of heart.
4. Sanctification does not consist in retirement from our place in life, and the renunciation of our social duties.
 - a. *[John 17:15]- I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.*
5. Sanctification does not consist in the occasional performance of right actions.
 - a. *[Mark 6:20]- For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.*
 - b. *[2 Chronicles 31:20]- And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and wrought that which was good and right and truth before the LORD his God. ****
 - c. *[Psalm 119:104,128]- Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way. Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way. ****
6. Genuine sanctification will show itself in habitual respect to God's law, and habitual effort to live in obedience to it as the rule of life.
 - a. There is no greater mistake than to suppose that a Christian has nothing to do with the law and the Ten Commandments, because he cannot be justified by keeping them.
 - 1.) *[1 Timothy 1:8]- But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully;*
 - 2.) *[Romans 7:22]- For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:*
7. Genuine sanctification will show itself in an habitual endeavour to do Christ's will, and to live by His practical precepts.
 - a. *[John 15:14]- Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*
8. Genuine sanctification will show itself in an habitual desire to live up to the standard which St. Paul sets before the Churches in his writings.
 - a. *[Galatians 6:16]- And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. ****
 - b. *[Ephesians 6:19-20]- And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak. ****
9. Genuine sanctification will show itself in habitual attention to the active graces which our Lord so beautifully exemplified, and especially to the grace of charity.
 - a. *[John 13:34-35]- A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*
 - b. *[Colossians 3:10]- And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:*

- c. *“Christ in the Gospel is proposed to us as our pattern and example of holiness; and as it is a cursed imagination that this was the whole end of his life and death: namely, to exemplify and confirm the doctrine of holiness which He taught - so to neglect His being our example, in considering Him by faith to that end, and labouring after conformity to Him, is evil and pernicious. Wherefore let us be much in the contemplation of what He was, and what He did, and how in all duties and trials He carried Himself, until an image or idea of His perfect holiness is implanted in our minds, and we are made like unto Him thereby.”* – John Owen on the Holy Ghost, Works
10. Genuine sanctification, in the last place, will show itself in habitual attention to the passive graces of Christianity.
 - a. Passive graces are those graces that are especially shown in submission to the will of God, and in bearing and for bearing towards one another.
 - b. *[1 Peter 2:21-23]- For 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: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:*
 - c. *[Galatians 5:22-23]- But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*
- D. The distinction between justification and sanctification in their similarity and difference.
1. The similarities between justification and sanctification.
 - a. Both proceed originally from the free grace of God.
 - b. Both are part of that great work of salvation, which Christ, in the eternal covenant, has undertaken on behalf of His people.
 - c. Both are to be found in the same persons. Those who are justified are always sanctified, and those who are sanctified are always justified.
 - d. Both begin at the same time.
 - e. Both are alike necessary to salvation.
 2. The differences between justification and sanctification.
 - a. Justification is the reckoning and counting a man to be righteous for the sake of another, even Jesus Christ the Lord. Sanctification is the actual making a man inwardly righteous, though it may be in a very feeble degree.
 - b. The righteousness we have by our justification is not our own, but the everlasting perfect righteousness of our great Mediator Christ, imputed to us, and made our own by faith. The righteousness we have by sanctification is our own righteousness, imparted, inherent, and wrought in us by the Holy Spirit, but mingled with much infirmity and imperfection.
 - c. In justification our own works have no place at all, and simple faith in Christ is the one thing needful. In sanctification our own works are of vast importance and God bids us fight, and watch, and pray, and strive, and take pains, and labour.
 - d. Justification is a finished and complete work, and a man is perfectly justified the moment he believes. Sanctification is an imperfect work, comparatively, and will never be perfected until we reach heaven.
 - e. Justification admits of no growth or increase: a man is as much justified the hour he first comes to Christ by faith as he will be to all eternity. Sanctification is eminently a progressive work, and admits of continual growth and enlargement so long as a man lives.
 - f. Justification has special reference to our persons, our standing in God’s sight, and our deliverance from guilt. Sanctification has special reference to our natures, and the moral renewal of our hearts.
 - g. Justification gives us our title to heaven, and boldness to enter in. Sanctification gives us our meetness for heaven, and prepares us to enjoy it when we dwell there.
 - h. Justification is the act of God about us, and is not easily discerned by others. Sanctification is the work of God within us, and cannot be hid in its outward manifestation from the eyes of men.

E. Applications

1. Let us all awake to a sense of the perilous state of many professing Christians. Without sanctification there is no salvation.
 - a. ***[Hebrews 12:14]- Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:***
2. Let us make sure work of our own condition, and never rest till we feel and know that we are “sanctified” ourselves
 - a. What are our tastes, and choices, and likings, and inclinations? This is the great testing question.
3. If we would be sanctified, our course is clear and plain - we must begin with Christ.
4. If we would grow in holiness and become more sanctified, we must continually go on as we began, and be ever making fresh applications to Christ.
 - a. ***[Ephesians 4:16]- From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.***
5. Let us not expect too much from our own hearts here below.
6. Let us never be ashamed of making much of sanctification, and contending for a high standard of holiness.
7. It will be found true that “sanctified” people are the happiest people on earth. They have solid comforts which the world can neither give nor take away.
 - a. ***[Proverbs 3:17]- Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.***
 - b. ***[Psalm 119:165]- Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.***
 - c. ***[Matthew 11:30]- For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.***
 - d. ***[Isaiah 48:22]- There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked.***

III. Holiness

A. Proof text.

1. ***[Hebrews 12:14]- Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:***

B. True practical holiness defined and explained. What sort of persons are those whom God calls holy.

1. Holiness is the habit of being of one mind with God
2. A holy man will endeavour to shun every known sin, and to keep every known commandment.
 - a. ***[Romans 7:22]- For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:***
 - b. ***[Psalm 119:128]- Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way.***
3. A holy man will strive to be like our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - a. ***[Romans 8:29]- For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.***
 - b. ***[1 John 2:6]- He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.***
 - c. ***[1 Peter 2:21]- For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:***
4. A holy man will follow after meekness, longsuffering, gentleness, patience, kind tempers, government of his tongue.

- a. *[2 Samuel 16:10]- And the king said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? so let him curse, because the LORD hath said unto him, Curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so?*
 - b. *[Numbers 12:3]- (Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)*
5. A holy man will follow after temperance and self-denial.
 - a. *[Luke 21:34]- And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.*
 - b. *[1 Corinthians 9:27]- But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*
6. A holy man will follow after charity and brotherly kindness.
 - a. *[Romans 13:8]- Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.*
 - b. *[1 Corinthians 13:1-8]- Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.*
7. A holy man will follow after a spirit of mercy and benevolence towards others.
 - a. He will not be content with doing no harm - he will try to do good.
 - b. *[Acts 9:36]- Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did.*
 - c. *[2 Corinthians 12:15]- And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.*
8. A holy man will follow after purity of heart. He will dread all filthiness and uncleanness of spirit, and seek to avoid all things that might draw him into it.
 - a. He knows his own heart is like tinder, and will diligently keep clear of the sparks of temptation.
 - b. Who shall dare to talk of strength when David can fall?
9. A holy man will follow after the fear of God.
 - a. *[Nehemiah 5.15]- But the former governors that had been before me were chargeable unto the people, and had taken of them bread and wine, beside forty shekels of silver; yea, even their servants bare rule over the people: but so did not I, because of the fear of God.*
10. A holy man will follow after humility. He will desire, in lowliness of mind, to esteem all others better than himself.
 - a. He will see more evil in his own heart than in any other in the world.
 - b. *[Genesis 18:27]- And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the LORD, which am but dust and ashes:*

- c. *[Genesis 32:10]- I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands.*
 - d. *[Job 40:4]- Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.*
 - e. *[1 Timothy 1:15]- This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.*
 - f. *"A most miserable sinner." - John Bradford*
 - g. *"Here goes an unprofitable servant." - William Grimshaw*
11. A holy man will follow after faithfulness in all the duties and relations in life.
- a. *[Colossians 3:23]- And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;*
 - b. *[Romans 12:11]- Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;*
 - c. *[Daniel 6:5]- Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God.*
 - d. *[Matthew 5:47]- And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?*
12. A holy man will follow after spiritual mindedness.
- a. He will endeavour to set his affections entirely on things above, and to hold things on earth with a very loose hand.
 - b. *[Psalm 63.8]- My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me.*
 - c. *[Psalm 119.57]- Thou art my portion, O LORD: I have said that I would keep thy words.*
13. Misconceptions.
- a. Holiness does not shut out the presence of indwelling sin.
 - 1.) *[Romans 7:21]- I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.*
 - 2.) *[Daniel 9:25]- Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.*
 - b. Holiness doesn't come to ripeness and perfection all at once, or that these graces must be found in full bloom and vigour before you can call a man holy.
 - 1.) *[Zechariah 4:10]- For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth.*
 - 2.) *[Galatians 5:17]- For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*
 - 3.) *[James 3:2]- For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.*
 - 4.) *"I do not understand how a man can be a true believer unto whom sin is not the greatest burden, sorrow, and trouble." – John Owen*
- C. Reasons why practical holiness is so important.
- 1. *[Ephesians 2:8-9]- For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.*
 - 2. We must be holy, because the voice of God in Scripture plainly commands it.
 - a. *[Matthew 5:20]- For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

- b. *[Matthew 5:48]- Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*
 - c. *[1 Thessalonians 4:3]- For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:*
 - d. *[1 Peter 1:15-16]- But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.*
- 3. We must be holy, because this is one grand end and purpose for which Christ came into the world.
 - a. *[2 Corinthians 5:15]- And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.*
 - b. *[Ephesians 5:25-26]- Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,*
 - c. *[Titus 2:14]- Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*
 - d. *[1 Peter 1:2]- Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.*
 - e. *[Romans 8:29]- For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*
 - f. *[Ephesians 1:4]- According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:*
 - g. *[Hebrews 12:10]- For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.*
- 4. We must be holy, because this is the only sound evidence that we have a saving faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - a. *“Although good works cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God’s judgment, yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith; insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree discerned by its fruits.” - 12th Article of Religion*
 - b. *[James 2:17]- Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.*
 - c. *“That man’s state is naught, and his faith unsound, that find not his hopes of glory purifying to his heart and life.” – Robert Traill*
- 5. We must be holy, because this is the only proof that we love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.
 - a. *[John 14:15,21,23]- If ye love me, keep my commandments. 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. Jesus answered and said unto him, 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.*
 - b. *[John 15:14]- Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*
- 6. We must be holy, because this is the only sound evidence that we are true children of God.
 - a. *[John 8:39,42]- They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham’s children, ye would do the works of Abraham. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.*
 - b. *[Romans 8:14]- For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*
 - c. *“Say not that thou hast royal blood in thy veins, and art born of God, except thou canst prove thy pedigree by daring to be holy.” – William Gurnall*
- 7. We must be holy, because this is the most likely way to do good to others.

- a. *[1 Peter 3:1]- Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;*
 8. We must be holy, because our present comfort depends much upon it.
 - a. *[1 John 2:3]- And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.*
 - b. *[1 John 3:19]- And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.*
 - c. *[Acts 5:41]- And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.*
 9. We must be holy, because without holiness on earth we shall never be prepared to enjoy heaven.
 - a. *[Revelation 21:27]- And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.*
- D. Application.
 1. Do you know anything of this holiness?
 - a. *[Hebrews 12:14]- Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:*
 - b. *[1 John 3:3]- And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.*
 - c. *[Matthew 6:14]- For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:*
 - d. *[John 5:40]- And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.*
 - e. *[John 3:7]- Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.*
 2. Do you think you feel the importance of holiness as much as you should?
 - a. *[Romans 7:24]- O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*
 - b. *[Philippians 3:14]- I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*
 - c. *[Hebrews 12:1]- Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,*
 - d. *[2 Corinthians 7:1]- Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*
- E. Words of advice to all who desire to be holy.
 1. Would you be holy? Would you become a new creature? Then you must begin with Christ.
 - a. *[Mark 5:26]- And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse,*
 - b. *[John 15:5]- I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*
 - c. *"Wisdom out of Christ is damning folly - righteousness out of Christ is guilt and condemnation - sanctification out of Christ is filth and sin - redemption out of Christ is bondage and slavery." – Robert Traill*
 2. Do you want to attain holiness? Do you feel this day a real hearty desire to be holy? Would you be a partaker of the Divine nature? Then go to Christ.
 - a. *[Acts 5:31]- Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.*

- b. *[John 1:12-13]- But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*
3. Would you continue holy? Then abide in Christ.
 - a. *[John 15:4-5]- Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*
 - b. *[Hebrews 12:2]- Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*
 - c. *[Philippians 4:3]- And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life.*
 - d. *[Galatians 2:20]- 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.*

IV. The Fight

A. Proof text.

1. *[1 Timothy 6:12]- Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.*

B. True Christianity is a fight.

1. There is a vast quantity of religion current in the world that is not true, genuine Christianity.
2. The true Christian is called to be a soldier, and must behave as such from the day of his conversion to the day of his death.
3. The principal fight of the Christian is with the world, the flesh, and the devil.
 - a. He must fight the flesh.
 - 1.) *[Mark 14:38]- Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.*
 - 2.) *[1 Corinthians 9:27]- But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*
 - 3.) *[Romans 7:23-24]- But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*
 - 4.) *[Galatians 5:24]- And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.*
 - 5.) *[Colossians 3:5]- Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:*
 - b. He must fight the world.
 - 1.) *[James 4:4]- Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*
 - 2.) *[1 John 2:15]- Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*
 - 3.) *[Galatians 6:14]- But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.*
 - 4.) *[1 John 5:4]- For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.*

- 5.) *[Romans 12:2]- And 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.*
- c. He must fight the devil.
 - 1.) *[Job 1:7]- And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.*
 - 2.) *[1 Peter 5:8]- Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:*
 - 3.) *[John 8:44]- Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*
 - 4.) *[Luke 22:31]- And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:*
 - 5.) *[Ephesians 6:11]- Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*
 - d. Some men may think these statements too strong.
 - 1.) *[1 Timothy 6:12]- Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.*
 - 2.) *[2 Timothy 2:3]- Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.*
 - 3.) *[Ephesians 6:11-13]- Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For 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. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*
 - 4.) *[Luke 13:24]- Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.*
 - 5.) *[John 6:27]- Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.*
 - 6.) *[Matthew 10:34]- Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.*
 - 7.) *[Luke 22:36]- Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.*
 - 8.) *[1 Corinthians 16:13]- Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.*
 - 9.) *[1 Timothy 1:18-19]- This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:*
4. It is a fight of absolute necessity.
 - a. In Christian warfare, no one can escape serving under the plea that he is “a man of peace.”
 5. It is a fight of universal necessity.
 - a. No rank, or class, or age, can plead exemption, or escape the battle.
 - b. All alike must carry arms and go to war.
 - c. All have by nature a heart full of pride, unbelief, sloth, worldliness, and sin. All are living in a world beset with snares, traps, and pitfalls for the soul.
 - d. All have near them a busy, restless, malicious devil.

- e. All, from the queen in her palace down to the pauper in the workhouse, all must fight, if they would be saved.
6. It is a fight of perpetual necessity.
 - a. It admits of no breathing time, no armistice, and no truce.
 - b. On weekdays as well as on Sundays.
 - c. In private as well as in public.
 - d. At home by the family fireside as well as abroad.
 - e. In little things like management of tongue and temper, as well as in great ones like the government of kingdoms.
 - f. The Christian's warfare must unceasingly go on.
 - g. *"Even on the brink of Jordan, I find Satan nibbling at my heels."* - A dying saint
 7. Let us take care that our own personal religion is real, genuine, and true.
 - a. The worst state of soul is "when the strong man armed keepeth the house, and his goods are at peace".
 - 1.) ***[Luke 11:21]- When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace:***
 - b. When he leads men and women "captive at his will."
 - 1.) ***[2 Timothy 2:26]- And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.***
 - c. When they make no resistance.
 - d. The worst chains are those, which are neither felt nor seen by the prisoner.
 8. We may take comfort about our souls if we know anything of an inward fight and conflict.
 - a. ***[Galatians 5:17]- For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.***
 - b. The child of God has two great marks about him.
 - 1.) He may be known by his inward warfare.
 - 2.) He may be known by his inward peace.
- C. True Christianity is the fight of faith.
1. Unlike the conflicts of the world.
 - a. It does not depend on the strong arm, the quick eye, or the swift foot.
 - b. It is not waged with carnal weapons, but with spiritual.
 - c. Faith is the hinge on which victory turns.
 - d. Success depends entirely on believing.
 2. A general faith in the truth of God's written Word is the primary foundation of the Christian soldier's character.
 - a. ***[Hebrews 11:5]- By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.***
 3. A religion without doctrine or dogma is a thing, which many are fond of talking of in the present day.
 4. Faith is the very backbone of their spiritual existence.
 5. A special faith in our Lord Jesus Christ's person, work, and office, is the life, heart, and mainspring of the Christian soldier's character.
 - a. He sees by faith an unseen Saviour, who loved him, gave Himself for him, paid his debts for him, bore his sins, carried his transgressions, rose again for him, and appears in heaven for him as his Advocate at the right hand of God.

- b. He sees his own many sins - his weak heart, a tempting world, a busy devil; and if he looked only at them he might well despair.
 - c. He sees also a mighty Saviour, an interceding Saviour, a sympathizing Saviour - His blood, His righteousness, His everlasting priesthood - and he believes that all this is his own. He sees Jesus, and casts his whole weight on Him.
 - 1.) *[Romans 8:37]- Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*
- 6. Faith admits of degrees.
 - a. All men do not believe alike, and even the same person has his ebbs and flows of faith, and believes more heartily at one time than another.
 - b. According to the degree of his faith the Christian fights well or ill, wins victories, or suffers occasional repulses, comes off triumphant, or loses a battle.
 - c. *[Ephesians 6:16]- Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.*
 - d. *[2 Timothy 1:12]- For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.*
 - e. *[2 Corinthians 4:17-18]- For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;*
 - f. *[Galatians 2:20]- 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.*
 - g. *[Galatians 6:14]- But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.*
 - h. *[Philippians 1:21]- For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*
 - i. *[Philippians 4:11,13]- Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*
- 7. The precious value of faith.
 - a. In Scripture
 - 1.) *[2 Peter 1:1]- Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:*
 - 2.) *[Hebrews 11:2-3]- For by it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.*
 - b. In church history.
 - 1.) The primitive Christians held fast their religion even unto death, and were not shaken by the fiercest persecutions of heathen Emperors.
 - 2.) Believing in an unseen Jesus was the Church's strength. They won their victory by faith.
 - c. In the Protestant Reformation.
 - 1.) Wycliffe, and Huss, and Luther, and Ridley, and Latimer, and Hooper, gallant soldiers of Christ stood firm against a host of adversaries, and were ready to die for their principles.
 - d. Recent church history.
 - 1.) Men like Wesley, and Whitfield, and Venn, and Romaine, stood alone in their day and generation, and revived English religion in the face of opposition from men high in

office, and in the face of slander, ridicule, and persecution from nine-tenths of professing Christians in our land.

- 2.) Men like William Wilberforce, and Havelock, and Hedley Vicars, witnessed for Christ in the most difficult positions, and displayed a banner for Christ even at the regimental mess-table, or on the floor of the House of Commons.
- e. Would anyone live the life of a Christian soldier?
 - 1.) Let him pray for faith. It is the gift of God; and a gift, which those who ask shall never ask for in vain.
a.) [Luke 17:5]- And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.
 - 2.) Watch jealously over your faith, if you have any. It is the citadel of the Christian character, on which the safety of the whole fortress depends.

D. True Christianity is a good fight.

1. The reasons why the Christian fight is a “good fight”.
 - a. It is fought under the best of generals.
 - 1.) The Leader and Commander of all believers is our Divine Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ - a Saviour of perfect wisdom, infinite love, and almighty power.
 - 2.) The Captain of our salvation never fails to lead His soldiers to victory. He never makes any useless movements, never errs in judgment, and never commits any mistake.
 - 3.) His eye is on all His followers, from the greatest of them even to the least. The humblest servant in His army is not forgotten.
 - 4.) The weakest and most sickly is cared for, remembered, and kept unto salvation.
 - 5.) The souls whom He has purchased and redeemed with His own blood are far too precious to be wasted and thrown away.
 - b. It is fought with the best of helps.
 - 1.) Weak as each believer is in himself, the Holy Spirit dwells in him, and his body is a temple of the Holy Ghost.
 - 2.) Chosen by God the Father, washed in the blood of the Son, renewed by the Spirit, he does not go warfare at his own charges, and is never alone.
 - 3.) God the Holy Ghost daily teaches, leads, guides, and directs him. God the Father guards him by His almighty power.
 - 4.) God the Son intercedes for him every moment, like Moses on the mount, while he is fighting in the valley below.
 - 5.) His daily provisions and supplies never fail. His commissariat is never defective. His bread and his water are sure.
 - 6.) Weak as he seems in himself, like a worm, he is strong in the Lord to do great exploits.
 - c. It is fought with the best of promises.
 - 1.) Promises sure to be fulfilled made by the One who cannot lie with power as well as will to keep His word.
 - a.) **[Romans 6:14]- For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.**
 - b.) **[Romans 16:20]- And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.**
 - c.) **[Philippians 1:6]- being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:**
 - d.) **[Isaiah 43:2]- When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.**
 - e.) **[John 10:28]- and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.**

- f.) *[John 6:37]- And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.*
 - g.) *[Hebrews 13:5]- Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have : for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*
 - h.) *[Romans 8:38]- For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,*
- d. It is fought with the best of issues and results.
- 1.) There are tremendous struggles, agonizing conflicts, wounds, bruises, watchings, fastings, and fatigue. But still every believer, without exception, is “more than conqueror through Him that loved him.”
 - a.) *[Romans 8:37]- Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*
 - 2.) No soldiers of Christ are ever lost, missing, or left dead on the battlefield. No mourning will ever need to be put on, and no tears to be shed for either private or officer in the army of Christ.
 - a.) *[John 18.9]- that the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.*
- e. It does good to the soul of him that fights it.
- 1.) The Christian warfare alone tends to call forth the best things that are left in man.
 - a.) It promotes humility and charity.
 - b.) It lessens selfishness and worldliness.
 - c.) It induces men to set their affections on things above.
 - 2.) *“I take you all to record that a life spent in the service of Christ is the happiest life that a man can spend upon earth.” – Philip Henry*
- f. It does good to the world.
- 1.) Christian soldiers; wherever they live they are a blessing.
 - 2.) They raise the standard of religion and morality.
 - 3.) They invariably check the progress of drunkenness, Sabbath breaking, profligacy, and dishonesty.
 - 4.) Even their enemies are obliged to respect them.
- g. It ends in a glorious reward for all who fight it.
- 1.) Who can tell the wages that Christ will pay to all His faithful people?
 - 2.) Who can estimate the good things that our Divine Captain has laid up for those who confess Him before men?
 - 3.) He may get little praise of man while he lives, and go down to the grave with little honour; but he shall have that which is far better, because far more enduring.
 - 4.) *[1 Peter 5:4]- And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.*

E. Application

- 1. It may be you are struggling hard for the rewards of this world. Perhaps you are straining every nerve to obtain money, or place, or power, or pleasure. If that be your case, take care. Your sowing will lead to a crop of bitter disappointment.
 - a. For your own happiness’ sake resolve this day to join the Lord’s side.
 - b. Fear not to begin and enlist under Christ’s banner.
 - c. Fear not to go on fighting, if you once enlist.

2. It may be you know something of the Christian warfare, and are a tried and proved soldier already.
 - a. If we would fight successfully we must put on the whole armour of God, and never lay it aside till we die.
 - 1.) *"In heaven we shall appear, not in armour, but in robes of glory. But here our arms are to be worn night and day. We must walk, work, sleep in them, or else we are not true soldiers of Christ."* - William Gurnall *The Christian in Complete Armour*
 - 2.) ***[2 Timothy 2:4]- No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.***
 - b. Some have seemed good soldiers for a little season, and talked loudly of what they would do, and yet turned back disgracefully in the day of battle.
 - 1.) Balaam, and Judas, and Demas, and Lot's wife.
 - c. Remember that the eye of our loving Saviour is upon us, morning, noon, and night. He will never suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear.
 - 1.) ***[Hebrews 4:14]-Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities ; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.***
 - d. Remember that thousands of soldiers before us have fought the same battle that we are fighting, and come off more than conquerors through Him that loved them.
 - 1.) ***[Hebrews 7:25]- Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.***
 - 2.) ***[Hebrews 6:12]- That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.***
 - e. Remember that the time is short, and the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.
 - 1.) A few more battles and the last trumpet shall sound, and the Prince of Peace shall come to reign on a renewed earth.
 - 2.) A few more struggles and conflicts, and then we shall bid an eternal good-bye to warfare, and to sin, to sorrow, and to death.
 - 3.) Then let us fight on to the last, and never surrender.
 - 4.) ***[Revelation 21:7]- He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.***
 - 5.) *"After this it was noised abroad that Mr. Valiant-for-truth was sent for by a summons, by the same party as the others. And he had this word for a token that the summons was true, 'The pitcher was broken at the fountain.' (Ecclesiastes 12:6) When he understood it, he called for his friends, and told them of it. Then said he, 'I am going to my Father's house; and though with great difficulty I have got hither, yet now I do not repent me of all the troubles I have been at to arrive where I am. My sword I give to him that shall succeed me in my pilgrimage, and my courage and skill to him that can get it. My marks and scars I carry with me, to be a witness for me that I have fought His battles, who will now be my rewarder.' When the day that he must go home was come, many accompanied him to the river-side, into which, as he went down, he said, 'O death where is thy sting?' And as he went down deeper, he cried, 'O grave, where is thy victory?' So he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side."* – John Bunyan *The Pilgrim's Progress*

V. The Cost

A. Proof text

1. ***[Luke 14:28]- For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?***

B. What it costs to be a true Christian.

1. The price paid for our redemption was nothing less than the death of Jesus Christ on Calvary.
 - a. *[1 Corinthians 6:20]- For ye are bought with a price : therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*
 - b. *[1 Timothy 2:6]- who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.*
2. It costs little to be a mere outward Christian.
 - a. *[Matthew 6:13-14]- Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*
3. It does cost something to be a real Christian, according to the standard of the Bible.
 - a. There are enemies to be overcome, battles to be fought, sacrifices to be made, an Egypt to be forsaken, a wilderness to be passed through, a cross to be carried, a race to be run.
 - b. It will cost him his self-righteousness.
 - 1.) *"Sir, it is harder to deny proud self than sinful self. But it is absolutely necessary."*
 - c. It will cost a man his sins.
 - 1.) *[Ezekiel 18:31]- Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?*
 - 2.) *[Daniel 4:27]- Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.*
 - 3.) *[Isaiah 1:16]- Wash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;*
 - 4.) *[Job 20:12-13]- Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth, though he hide it under his tongue; though he spare it, and forsake it not, but keep it still within his mouth;*
 - d. It will cost a man his love of ease.
 - 1.) *[Proverbs 13:4]- The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat. It will cost a man the favour of the world.*
 - 2.) *[John 15:20]- Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you ; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.*
 - 3.) *[Isaiah 53:3]- He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.*

C. The great importance to count the cost.

1. To those who know religion very well but are not rooted and grounded in it.
 - a. *[Ephesians 3:16-19]- that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.*
 - b. For want of "counting the cost" myriads of the children of Israel perished miserably in the wilderness between Egypt and Canaan.
 - c. For want of "counting the cost," many of our Lord Jesus Christ's hearers went back after a time, and "walked no more with Him."
 - 1.) *[John 6:66]- From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.*

- d. For want of “counting the cost,” King Herod returned to his old sins, and destroyed his soul.
 1.) *[Mark 6:20]- for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and a holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.*
- e. For want of “counting the cost,” Demas forsook the company of St. Paul, forsook the Gospel, forsook Christ, forsook heaven.
 1.) *[2 Timothy 4:10]- for Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica ; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.*
- f. For want of “counting the cost,” the hearers of powerful Evangelical preachers often come to miserable ends.
 1.) *[Matthew 13:21]- yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.*
- g. For want of “counting the cost,” hundreds of professed converts, under religious revivals, go back to the world after a time, and bring disgrace on religion.
 1.) *“I should be very sorry indeed if the language I have used above about revivals was misunderstood. To prevent this I will offer a few remarks by way of explanation. For true revivals of religion no one can be more deeply thankful than I am. Wherever they may take place, and by whatever agents they may be effected, I desire to bless God for them, with all my heart. “If Christ is preached,” I rejoice, whoever may be the preacher. If souls are saved, I rejoice, by whatever section of the Church the word of life has been ministered. But it is a melancholy fact that, in a world like this, you cannot have good without evil. I have no hesitation in saying, that one consequence of the revival movement has been the rise of a theological system which I feel obliged to call defective and mischievous in the extreme. The leading feature of the theological system I refer to, is this: an extravagant and disproportionate magnifying of three points in religion, - viz., instantaneous conversion - the invitation of unconverted sinners to come to Christ, - and the possession of inward joy and peace as a test of conversion. I repeat that these three grand truths (for truths they are) are so incessantly and exclusively brought forward, in some quarters, that great harm is done. Instantaneous conversion, no doubt, ought to be pressed on people. But surely they ought not to be led to suppose that there is no other sort of conversion, and that unless they are suddenly and powerfully converted to God, they are not converted at all. The duty of coming to Christ at once, “just as we are,” should be pressed on all hearers. It is the very corner-stone of Gospel preaching. But surely men ought to be told to repent as well as to believe. They should be told why they are to come to Christ, and what they are to come for, and whence their need arises. The nearness of peace and comfort in Christ should be proclaimed to men. But surely they should be taught that the possession of strong inward joys and high frames of mind is not essential to justification, and that there may be true faith and true peace without such very triumphant feelings. Joy alone is no certain evidence of grace. The defects of the theological system I have in view appear to me to be these:*
 - a.) *The work of the Holy Ghost in converting sinners is far too much narrowed and confined to one single way. Not all true converts are converted instantaneously, like Saul and the Philippian jailor.*
 - b.) *Sinners are not sufficiently instructed about the holiness of God’s law, the depth of their sinfulness, and the real guilt of sin. To be incessantly telling a sinner to “come to Christ” is of little use, unless you tell him why he needs to come, and show him fully his sins.*

- c.) *Faith is not properly explained. In some cases people are taught that mere feeling is faith. In others they are taught that if they believe that Christ died for sinners they have faith! At this rate the very devils are believers!*
 - d.) *The possession of inward joy and assurance is made essential to believing. Yet assurance is certainly not of the essence of saving faith. There may be faith when there is no assurance. To insist on all believers at once "rejoicing," as soon as they believe, is most unsafe. Some, I am quite sure, will rejoice without believing, while others will believe who cannot at once rejoice.*
 - e.) *Last, but not least, the sovereignty of God in saving sinners, and the absolute necessity of preventing grace, are far too much overlooked. Many talk as if conversions could be manufactured at man's pleasure, and as if there were no such text as this, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." (Rom. 9:16)*
- 2.) *The mischief done by the theological system I refer to is, I am persuaded, very great. On the one hand, many humble-minded Christians are totally discouraged and daunted. They fancy they have no grace because they cannot reach up to the high frames and feelings which are pressed on their attention. On the other side, many graceless people are deluded into thinking they are "converted," because under the pressure or animal excitement and temporary feelings they are led to profess themselves Christians. And all this time the thoughtless and ungodly look on with contempt, and find fresh reasons for neglecting religion altogether. The antidotes to the state of things I deplore are plain and few.*
- a.) *Let "all the counsel of God be taught" in Scriptural proportion; and let not two or three precious doctrines of the Gospel be allowed to overshadow all other truths.*
 - b.) *Let repentance be taught fully as well as faith, and not thrust completely into the background. Our Lord Jesus Christ and St. Paul always taught both.*
 - c.) *Let the variety of the Holy Ghost's works be honestly stated and admitted; and while instantaneous conversion is pressed on men, let it not be taught as a necessity.*
 - d.) *Let those who profess to have found immediate sensible peace be plainly warned to try themselves well, and to remember that feeling is not faith, and that "patient continuance in well-doing" is the great proof that faith is true. (John 8:31)*
 - e.) *Let the great duty of "counting the cost" be constantly urged on all who are disposed to make a religious profession, and let them be honestly and fairly told that there is warfare as well as peace, a cross as well as a crown, in Christ's service.*
- 3.) *I am sure that unhealthy excitement is above all things to be dreaded in religion, because it often ends in fatal, soul-ruining reaction and utter deadness. And when multitudes are suddenly brought under the power of religious impressions, unhealthy excitement is almost sure to follow. I have not much faith in the soundness of conversions when they are said to take places in masses and wholesale. It does not seem to me in harmony with God's general dealings in this dispensation. To my eyes it appears that God's ordinary plan is to call in individuals one by one. Therefore, when I hear of large numbers being suddenly converted all at one time, I hear of it with less hope than some. The healthiest and most enduring success in mission fields is certainly not where natives have come over to Christianity in a mass. The most satisfactory and firmest work at home does not always appear to me to be the work done in revivals. There are two passages of Scripture which I should like to have frequently and fully expounded in the present day by all who preach the Gospel, and specially by those who have anything to do with revivals. One passage is the parable of the sower, That parable is not recorded three times over without good reason and a deep meaning. – The other passage is our Lord's teaching about "counting the cost," and the words*

which He spoke to the “great multitudes” whom He saw following Him. It is very noteworthy that He did not on that occasion say anything to flatter these volunteers or encourage them to follow Him. No: He saw what their case needed. He told them to stand still and “count the cost.” (Luke 14:25, etc.) I am not sure that some modern preachers would have adopted this course of treatment.”

- h. For want of “counting the cost,” the children of religious parents often turn out ill, and bring disgrace on Christianity.
2. The teaching on “counting the cost”.
 - a. Our Lord Jesus Christ’s practice was in this matter?
 - 1.) ***[Luke 14:25-27]- And there went great multitudes with him : and he turned, and said unto them, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.***
 - b. The practice of the eminent and best preachers of the Gospel has been in days gone by?
 - 1.) Luther, and Latimer, and Baxter, and Wesley, and Whitfield, and Berridge, and Rowland Hill, were all keenly alive to the deceitfulness of man’s heart.
 - 2.) They knew full well that all is not gold that glitters, that conviction is not conversion, that feeling is not faith, that sentiment is not grace, that all blossoms do not come to fruit.
 - 3.) *“Be not deceived,”* was their constant cry. *“Consider well what you do. Do not run before you are called. Count the cost.”*
 - c. If we desire to do good, let us never be ashamed of walking in the steps of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- D. Hints, which may help men to count the cost rightly.
 1. Count up and compare the profit and the loss.
 - a. ***[Mark 8:36]- For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?***
 2. Count up and compare the praise and the blame.
 - a. You may possibly be blamed by man, but you will have the praise of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.
 - b. Your blame will come from the lips of a few erring, blind, fallible men and women.
 - c. Your praise will come from the King of kings and Judge of all the earth.
 - d. ***[Matthew 5:11-12]- Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.***
 3. Count up and compare the friends and the enemies.
 - a. On the one side of you is the enmity of the devil and the wicked.
 - b. On the other, you have the favour and friendship of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - c. ***[Luke 12:4-5]- And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.***
 4. Count up and compare, for another thing, the life that now is and the life to come.

- a. ***[2 Corinthians 4:17-18]- 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.***
5. Count up and compare the pleasures of sin and the happiness of God's service.
 - a. The pleasures that the worldly man gets by his ways are hollow, unreal, and unsatisfying. They are like the fire of thorns, flashing and crackling for a few minutes, and then quenched for ever.
 - 1.) ***[Job 20:5]- that the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment?***
 - 2.) ***[Ecclesiastes 7:6]- Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad ; and a gift destroyeth the heart.***
 - b. The happiness that Christ gives to His people is something solid, lasting, and substantial. It is not dependent on health or circumstances. It never leaves a man, even in death.
 - 1.) ***[John 14:27]- Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.***
6. Count up and compare the trouble that true Christianity entails, and the troubles that are in store for the wicked beyond the grave.
 - a. Bible-reading, and praying, and repenting, and believing, and holy living, require pains and self-denial.
 - b. It is all nothing compared to that "wrath to come" which is stored up for the impenitent and unbelieving.
 - c. ***[Luke 16:25]- But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.***
7. Count up and compare the number of those who turn from sin and the world and serve Christ, and the number of those who forsake Christ and return to the world.
 - a. ***[Proverbs 4:19]- The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.***
 - b. ***[Proverbs 13:15]- Good understanding giveth favor: but the way of transgressors is hard.***
 - c. ***[Proverbs 4:8]- Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honor, when thou dost embrace her.***

E. Application

1. Think seriously, whether his religion costs him anything at present.
2. Think what it cost to provide a salvation for your soul.
3. For those who have counted the cost, and taken up the cross, persevere and press on.

VI. Growth

A. Proof text

1. ***[2 Peter 3:18]- But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.***
2. ***[1 Corinthians 2:14]- But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him : neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.***

B. The reality of religious growth. There is such a thing as "growth in grace."

1. What growth in grace is not.
 - a. Not to mean a believer's interest in Christ can grow.
 - b. Not to mean that he can grow in safety, acceptance with God, or security.

- c. Not to mean that he can ever be more justified, more pardoned, more forgiven, more at peace with God, than he is the first moment that he believes.
2. What growth in grace is.
- a. Like justification of a believer is a finished, perfect, and complete work; and that the weakest saint, though he may not know and feel it, is as completely justified as the strongest.
 - 1.) *[Colossians 2:10]- And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:*
 - b. Like our election, calling, and standing in Christ admit of no degrees, increase, or diminution.
 - c. Increase in the degree, size, strength, vigour, and power of the graces which the Holy Spirit plants in a believer's heart.
 - d. Repentance, faith, hope, love, humility, zeal, courage, and the like, may be little or great, strong or weak, vigorous or feeble, and may vary greatly in the same man at different periods of his life.
 - e. Sense of sin is becoming deeper, faith stronger, hope brighter, love more extensive, spiritual-mindedness more marked.
 - f. Feeling more of the power of godliness in one's own heart.
 - g. Going on from strength to strength, from faith to faith, and from grace to grace.
 - h. Scriptural resources.
 - 1.) *[2 Thessalonians 1:3]- We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;*
 - 2.) *[1 Thessalonians 4:10]- And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more;*
 - 3.) *[Colossians 1:10]- that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;*
 - 4.) *[2 Corinthians 10:15]- not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labors; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly,*
 - 5.) *[1 Thessalonians 3:12]- And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you:*
 - 6.) *[Ephesians 4:15]- but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:*
 - 7.) *[Philippians 1:9]- And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;*
 - 8.) *[1 Thessalonians 4:1]- Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.*
 - 9.) *[1 Peter 2:2]- as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:*
 - 10.) *[2 Peter 3:18]- But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*
 - i. Growth in grace seen in the ground of fact and experience.
 - 1.) Degrees of grace in the New Testament saints whose histories are recorded.
 - 2.) The Scripture does distinctly recognise growth in the language it uses, when it speaks of "weak" faith and "strong" faith, and of Christians as "new-born babes," "little children," "young men," and "fathers"
 - a.) *[1 Peter 2:2]- as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:*

b.) *[1 John 2:12-14]- I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father. I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.*

3.) "True grace is progressive, of a spreading, growing nature. It is with grace as it is with light: first, there is the day-break; then it shines brighter to the full noon-day. The saints are not only compared to stars for their light, but to trees for their growth, (Isa. lxi. 3; Hos. xiv. 5.) A good Christian is not like Hezekiah's sun that went backwards, nor Joshua's sun that stood still, but is always advancing in holiness, and increasing with the increase of God." - Thomas Watson Body of Divinity

a.) *[Isaiah 61:3]- to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness ; that they might be called Trees of righteousness, The planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.*

b.) *[Hosea 14: 5]- I will be as the dew unto Israel : he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.*

3. Do we grow?

a. "Growth in grace" is the best evidence of spiritual health and prosperity.

1.) In a child, or a flower, or a tree, we are all aware that when there is no growth there is something wrong.

2.) *"The growth of grace is the best evidence of the truth of grace. Things that have not life will not grow. A picture will not grow. A stake in a hedge will not grow. But a plant that hath vegetative life will grow. The growing of grace shows it to be alive in the soul."* - Thomas Watson A Body of Divinity

b. "Growth in grace" is one way to be happy in our religion.

c. "Growth in grace" is one secret of usefulness to others.

1.) *"Christian, as ever you would stir up others to exalt the God of grace, look to the exercise and improvement of your own graces. When poor servants live in a family, and see the faith, and love, and wisdom, and patience, and humility of a master, shining like the stars in heaven, it draws forth their hearts to bless the Lord that ever they came into such a family. - When men's graces shine as Moses' face did, when their life, as one speaketh of Joseph's life, is a very heaven, sparkling with virtues as so many bright stars, how much others are stirred up to glorify God, and cry, 'These are Christians indeed! these are an honour to their God, a crown to their Christ, and a credit to their Gospel! Oh, if they were all such, we would be Christians too!'"* - Thomas Brooks The Unsearchable Riches of Christ

d. "Growth in grace" pleases God.

1.) *[1 Thessalonians 4:1]- Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.*

2.) *[Hebrews 13:16]- But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.*

3.) *[John 15:1,8]- I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.*

- e. "Growth in grace" is not only a thing possible, but a thing for which believers are accountable.
 - 1.) *[James 4:6]- But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.*
 - 2.) *[Psalm 35:27]- Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favor my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.*
- C. The marks of religious growth. There are marks by which "growth in grace" may be known.
1. Increased humility.
 - a. *[Job 40:4]- Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.*
 - b. *[Genesis 18:27]- And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes:*
 - c. *[Genesis 32:10]- I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands.*
 - d. *[Psalm 22:6]- But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.*
 - e. *[Isaiah 6:5]- Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.*
 - f. *[Luke 5.8]- When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.*
 - g. *[Philippians 3:12]- Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.*
 - h. *[1 Corinthians 15:9]- For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.*
 - i. *[Ephesians 3:8]- Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;*
 - j. *[1 Timothy 1:15]- This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.*
 - k. *"The right manner of growth is to grow less in one's own eyes. 'I am a worm and no man.' (Psa. xxii. 6.) The sight of corruption and ignorance makes a Christian grow into a dislike of himself. He doth vanish in his own eyes. Job abhorred himself in the dust. (Job xlii. 6.) This is good, to grow out of conceit with oneself." – Thomas Watson. A Body of Divinity*
 2. Increased faith and love towards our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - a. His faith laid hold on the atonement of Christ and gave him hope.
 - b. But as he grows in grace he sees a thousand things in Christ of which at first he never dreamed.
 - 1.) His love and power.
 - 2.) His heart and His intentions.
 - 3.) His offices as Substitute, Intercessor, Priest, Advocate, Physician, Shepherd, and Friend.
 - c. He discovers suitableness in Christ to the wants of his soul, of which the half was once not known to him.
 3. Increased holiness of life and conversation.
 - a. *[Philippians 3:13]- Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before.*

- b. *"It is a sign of not growing in grace, when we are less troubled about sin. Time was when the least sin did grieve us (as the least hair makes the eye weep), but now we can digest sin without remorse. Time was when a Christian was troubled if he neglected closet prayer; now he can omit family prayer. Time was when vain thoughts did not trouble him; now he is not troubled for loose practices. There is a sad declension in religion; and grace is so far from growing that we can hardly perceive its puke to beat."* – Thomas Watson. A Body of Divinity
 4. Increased spirituality of taste and mind.
 - a. The man whose soul is "growing" takes more interest in spiritual things every year.
 - b. The ways, and fashions, and amusements, and recreations of the world have a continually decreasing place in his heart.
 - c. Spiritual companions, spiritual occupations, spiritual conversation, appear of ever-increasing value to him.
 - d. *"If now you would be rich in graces, look to your walking. It is not the knowing soul, nor the talking soul, but the close-walking soul, the obedient soul, that is rich. Others may be rich in notions, but none so rich in spiritual experience, and in all holy and heavenly graces, as close-walking Christians."* – Thomas Watson. A Body of Divinity
 - e. *"It is a sign of not growing in grace, when we grow more worldly. Perhaps once we were mounted into higher orbits, we did set our hearts on things above, and speak the language of Canaan. But now our minds are taken off heaven, we dig our comforts out of these lower mines, and with Satan compass the earth. It is a sign we are going down hill apace, and our grace is in a consumption. It is observable when nature decays, and people are near dying, they grow more stooping. And truly when men's hearts grow more stooping to the earth, and they can hardly lift up themselves to an heavenly thought, if grace be not dead, yet it is ready to die."* – Thomas Watson. A Body of Divinity
 5. An increase of charity.
 - a. The man whose soul is "growing" is more full of love every year - of love to all men, but especially of love towards the brethren.
 - b. It will show itself passively in a growing disposition to be meek and patient toward all men, to put up with provocation and not stand upon rights, to bear and forbear much rather than quarrel.
 - c. A growing soul will try to put the best construction on other people's conduct, and to believe all things and hope all things, even to the end.
 6. An increased zeal and diligence in trying to do good to souls.
 - a. The man who is really "growing" will take greater interest in the salvation of sinners every year.
 - b. Missions at home and abroad, efforts to increase religious light and diminish religious darkness - all these things will every year have a greater place in his attention.
 - c. He will not become "weary in well-doing" because he does not see every effort succeed.
- D. The means of religious growth. There are means that must be used by those who desire "growth in grace."
 1. Every good gift is of the Father.
 - a. ***[James 1:17]- Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.***
 2. God is pleased to work by means. God has ordained means as well as ends.
 - a. *"Experience will tell every Christian that the more strictly, and closely, and constantly he walketh with God, the stronger he groweth in duty. Infused habits are advantaged by exercise. As the fire that kindled the wood for sacrifices upon the altar first came down from heaven, but then was to be kept alive by the care and labour of the priests, so the*

habits of spiritual grace are indeed infused from God, and must be maintained by daily influences from God, yet with a concurrence also of our own labours, in waiting upon God, and exercising ourselves with godliness; and the more a Christian doth so exercise himself, the more strong he shall grow.” – John Collinges Several Discourses Concerning the Actual Providence of God

- b. Many admire growth in grace in others, and wish that they themselves were like them. But they seem to suppose that those who grow are what they are by some special gift or grant from God, and that as this gift is not bestowed on themselves they must be content to sit still.
3. The means of growth.
 - a. Diligence in the use of private means of grace.
 - 1.) ***[Proverbs 13:4]- The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.***
 - 2.) Private prayer.
 - 3.) Private reading of the Scriptures.
 - 4.) Private meditation and self-examination.
 - 5.) ***[Daniel 12:4]- But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.***
 - 6.) ***[Psalm 4:4]- Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.***
 - b. Carefulness in the use of public means of grace.
 - 1.) The ordinances of regular Sunday worship
 - 2.) The uniting with God’s people in common prayer and praise.
 - 3.) The preaching of the Word, and the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper.
 - 4.) ***[Ecclesiastes 9:10]-Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.***
 - c. Watchfulness over our conduct in the little matters of everyday life.
 - 1.) Our tempers.
 - 2.) Our tongues.
 - 3.) The discharge of our several relations of life,
 - 4.) Our employment of time
 - 5.) *“He that despiseth little things, “shall fall by little and little.”*
 - d. Caution about the company we keep and the friendships we form.
 - 1.) If a professing Christian deliberately chooses to be intimate with those who are not friends of God and who cling to the world, his soul is sure to take harm.
 - 2.) It is hard enough to serve Christ under any circumstances in such a world as this. But it is doubly hard to do it if we are friends of the thoughtless and ungodly.
 - 3.) Mistakes in friendship or marriage-engagements are the whole reason why some have entirely ceased to grow.
 - 4.) ***[1 Corinthians 15:33]- Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.***
 - 5.) ***[James 4:4]- Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.***
 - 6.) *“Let them be thy choicest companions, that have made Christ their chiefest companion. Do not so much eye the outsides of men as their inside: look most to their internal worth. Many persons have their eyes upon the external garb of a professor. But give me a Christian that minds the internal worth of persons, that makes such as are most filled with the fulness of God his choicest and chiefest companions.” - Thomas Brooks The Unsearchable Riches of Christ*

- e. Care to have regular and habitual communion with the Lord Jesus.
 - 1.) The daily habit of intercourse between the believer and his Saviour, which can only be carried on by faith, prayer, and meditation.
 - 2.) Between the "Bridegroom" and his bride.
 - 3.) Between the "Head" and His members.
 - 4.) Between the "Physician" and His patients.
 - 5.) Between the "Advocate" and His clients.
 - 6.) Between the "Shepherd" and His sheep.
 - 7.) Between the "Master" and His scholars.
 - 8.) There is evidently implied a habit of familiar intercourse, of daily application for things needed, of daily pouring out and unburdening our hearts and minds.
 - 9.) *[Galatians 2:20]- 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.*
 - 10.) *[Philippians 1:21]- For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

E. Application

- 1. To the unconverted, the years are slipping away and time is flying.
 - a. Awake before it be too late; awake, and arise from the dead, and live to God.
 - b. Turn to Him who is sitting at the right hand of God, to be your Saviour and Friend.
 - c. Turn to Christ, and cry mightily to Him about your soul.
 - d. There is yet hope! He that called Lazarus from the grave is not changed.
 - e. He that commanded the widow's son at Nain to arise from his bier can do miracles yet for your soul.
 - f. Seek Him at once: seek Christ, if you would not be lost forever.
- 2. To those who ought to know something of growth in grace, but know nothing at all.
 - a. *[Zephaniah 1:12]- And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees: that say in their heart, The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil.*
 - b. Going on from year to year content with old grace, old experience, old knowledge, old faith, old measure of attainment, old religious expressions, old set phrases.
 - c. It cannot be the will of God that your soul should stand still.
 - 1.) *[James 4:6]- But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.*
 - 2.) *[Psalm 35:27]- Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favor my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.*
 - 3.) *[Philippians 4:4]- Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.*
 - 4.) *[Job 15:11]- Are the consolations of God small with thee? Is there any secret thing with thee?*
 - d. Resolve this very day that you will find out the reason of your standstill condition.
- 3. To those who are really growing in grace, but are not aware of it, and will not allow it.
 - a. Their very growth is the reason why they do not see their growth!
 - b. Their continual increase in humility prevents them feeling that they get on.
 - 1.) *"Christians may be growing when they think they do not grow." "There is that maketh himself poor, yet he is rich." (Prov. xiii. 7.) The sight that Christians have of their defects in grace, and their thirst after greater measures of grace, makes them think they do not grow. He who covets a great estate, because he hath not so much as he desires thinks himself poor." – Thomas Watson A Body of Divinity*

- 2.) *“Souls may be rich in grace, and yet not know it, not perceive it. The child is heir to a crown or a great estate, but knows it not. Moses’ face did shine, and others saw it, but he perceived it not. So many a precious soul is rich in grace, and others see it, and know it, and bless God for it, and yet the poor soul perceives it not. - Sometimes this arises from the soul’s strong desires of spiritual riches. The strength of the soul’s desires after spiritual riches doth often take away the very sense of growing spiritually rich. Many covetous men’s desires are so strongly carried forth after earthly riches, that though they do grow rich, yet they cannot perceive it, they cannot believe it. It is just so with many a precious Christian: his desires after spiritual riches are so strong, that they take away the very sense of his growing rich in spirituals. Many Christians have much worth within them, but they see it not. It was a good man that said, ‘The Lord was in this place and I knew it not.’ - Again, this ariseth sometimes from men neglecting to cast up their accounts. Many men thrive and grow rich, and yet, by neglecting to cast up their accounts, they cannot tell whether they go forward or backward. It is so with many precious souls. Again, this ariseth sometimes from the soul’s too frequent casting up of its accounts. If a man should cast up his accounts once a week, or once a month, he may not be able to discern that he doth grow rich, and yet he may grow rich. But let him compare one year with another, and he shall clearly see that he doth grow rich. - Again, this sometimes ariseth from the soul’s mistakes in casting up its accounts. The soul many times mistakes: it is in a hurry, and then it puts down ten for a hundred, and a hundred for a thousand. Look, as hypocrites put down their counters for gold, their pence for pounds, and always prize themselves above the market, so sincere souls do often put down their pounds for pence, their thousands for hundreds, and still prize themselves below the market.” - Thomas Brooks The Unsearchable Riches of Christ*
- c. Like Moses, when he came down from the mount from communing with God, their faces shine. And yet, like Moses, they are not aware of it.
- 1.) *[Exodus 34:29]- And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses’ hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him.*
- 2.) *[Matthew 25:37]- Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee ahungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?*
- d. Extremes do indeed meet strangely sometimes. The conscience-hardened sinner and the eminent saint are in one respect singularly alike. Neither of them fully realizes his own condition. The one does not see his own sin, nor the other his own grace!
- e. The sum and substance of all that I can say is to be found in two sentences: *“Go forward!”* *“Go on!”*
- f. We can never have too much humility, too much faith in Christ, too much holiness, too much spirituality of mind, too much charity, too much zeal in doing good to others. Then let us be continually forgetting the things behind, and reaching forth unto the things before.
- 1.) *[Philippians 3:13]- Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before.*
- g. Let us never measure our religion by that of others, and think we are doing enough if we have gone beyond our neighbours. This is another snare of the devil.
- 1.) *[John 21:22]- Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.*
- h. If we know anything of growth in grace, and desire to know more, let us not be surprised if we have to go through much trial and affliction in this world.

- 1.) *[Isaiah 53:3]- He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.*
- 2.) *[Hebrews 2:10]- For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*
- 3.) *[John 15:2]- Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.*
- 4.) *[Hebrews 12:11]- Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous : nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.*

VII. Assurance

A. Proof text

1. *[2 Timothy 4:6-8]- For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*

B. The Apostle Paul looking three ways - downward, backward, forward.

1. He looks downward to the grave, and he does it without fear.
 - a. *"I am ready to be offered."*
 - b. *"The time of my departure is at hand."*
2. He looks backward to his ministerial life, and he does it without shame.
 - a. *"I have fought a good fight."*
 - b. *"I have finished my course."*
 - c. *"I have kept the faith."*
3. He looks forward to the great day of reckoning, and he does it without doubt.
 - a. *"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing."*
4. The Apostle speaks without any hesitation or distrust. He regards the crown as a sure thing, as his own already.

C. An assured hope is a true and Scriptural thing.

1. A true Christian may reach such a comfortable degree of faith in Christ
 - a. He shall feel entirely confident as to the pardon and safety of his soul.
 - b. He shall seldom be troubled with doubts.
 - c. He seldom is distracted with fears.
 - d. He seldom is distressed by anxious questionings.
 - e. Though vexed by many an inward conflict with sin, shall look forward to death without trembling, and to judgment without dismay.
 - f. *"Full assurance that Christ hath delivered Paul from condemnation, yea, so full and real as produceth thanksgiving and triumphing in Christ, may and doth consist with complaints and outcries of a wretched condition for the indwelling of the body of sin."* – Samuel Rutherford *Triumph of Faith*
2. Opposition and errors concerning the doctrine of Assurance.
 - a. Church of Rome.

- 1.) The Council of Trent declares roundly that a *“believer’s assurance of the pardon of his sins is a vain and ungodly confidence.”*
 - 2.) Cardinal Bellarmine, the well-known champion of Romanism, calls it *“a prime error of heretics.”*
- b. Worldly and thoughtless Christians.
- 1.) They do not like others to feel comfortable and sure, because they never feel so themselves.
 - 2.) Ask them whether their sins are forgiven, and they will probably tell you they do not know!
- c. Some true believers who reject assurance.
- 1.) They consider it borders on presumption.
 - 2.) They seem to think it a proper humility never to feel sure, never to be confident, and to live in a certain degree of doubt and suspense about their souls.
- d. Some presumptuous persons who profess to feel a confidence for which they have no Scriptural warrant.
- 1.) *“We do not vindicate every vain pretender to ‘the witness of the spirit’; we are aware that there are those in whose professions of religion we can see nothing but their forwardness and confidence to recommend them. But let us not reject any doctrine of revelation through an over-anxious fear of consequences.”* – Thomas Robinson *The Christian System*.
 - 2.) *“True assurance is built upon a Scripture basis: presumption hath no Scripture to show for its warrant; it is like a will without seal and witnesses, which is null and void in law. Presumption wants both the witness of the Word and the seal of the Spirit. Assurance always keeps the heart in a lowly posture; but presumption is bred of pride. Feathers fly up, but gold descends; he who hath this golden assurance, his heart descends in humility.”* – Thomas Watson *A Body of Divinity*.
 - 3.) *“Presumption is joined with looseness of life; persuasion with a tender conscience; that dares sin because it is sure, this dares not for fear of losing assurance. Persuasion will not sin, because it cost her Saviour so dear; presumption will sin, because grace doth abound. Humility is the way to heaven. They that are proudly secure of their going to heaven do not so often come thither as they that are afraid of going to hell.”* – Thomas Adams *An Exposition upon the Second Epistle General of St. Peter*
 - 4.) Scriptural warrant of Assurance.
 - a.) *[Job 19:25-26]- For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:*
 - b.) *[Psalm 23:4]- Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.*
 - c.) *[Isaiah 26:3]- Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.*
 - d.) *[Isaiah 32:17]- And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever.*
 - e.) *[Romans 8:38-39]- For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*
 - f.) *[2 Corinthians 5:1,6]- For we know that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:*

- g.) *[2 Timothy 1:12]- For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.*
 - h.) *[Colossians 2:2]- that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;*
 - i.) *[Hebrews 6:11]- And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end :*
 - j.) *[Hebrews 10:22]- let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.*
 - k.) *[2 Peter 1:10]- Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:*
 - l.) *[1 John 3:14]- We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.*
 - m.) *[1 John 5:13,19]- These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God ; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.*
- 5.) Answers to error that assurance is presumption.
- a.) It can hardly be presumption to tread in the steps of Peter, and Paul, of Job, and of John. They were all eminently humble and lowly minded men, if ever any were; and yet they all speak of their own state with an assured hope.
 - b.) Surely this should teach us that deep humility and strong assurance are perfectly compatible, and that there is not any necessary connection between spiritual confidence and pride.
 - c.) *“They are quite mistaken that think faith and humility are inconsistent; they not only agree well together, but they cannot be parted.” – Robert Traill.*
 - d.) Many have attained to such an assured hope as our text expresses, even in modern times.
 - e.) It cannot be wrong to feel confidently in a matter where God speaks unconditionally, to believe decidedly when God promises decidedly - to have a sure persuasion of pardon and peace when we rest on the word and oath of Him that never changes.
- 1.) *[Matthew 8:8]- The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof : but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.*
 - 2.) *“To be assured of our salvation,” Augustine saith, “is no arrogant stoutness; it is our faith. It is no pride; it is devotion. It is no presumption; it is God’s promise.” - Bishop Jewell Defence of the Apology.*
 - 3.) *“If the ground of our assurance rested in and on ourselves, it might justly be called presumption; but the Lord and the power of His might being grounded thereof, they either know not what is the might of His power, or else too lightly esteem it, who account assured confidence thereon presumption.” – William Gouge Whole Armour of God*
 - 4.) *“Upon what ground is this certainty built? Surely not upon anything that is in us. Our assurance of perseverance is grounded wholly upon God. If we look upon ourselves, we see cause of fear and doubting; hut if we look up to God, we shall find cause enough for assurance.” - Arthur Hildersam Lectures upon the Fourth of John*
 - 5.) *“Our hope is not hung upon such an untwisted thread as, ‘I imagine so,’ or ‘It is likely’; but the cable, the strong rope of our fastened anchor, is the oath and promise of Him who is eternal verity. Our salvation is fastened with God’s*

own hand, and Christ's own strength, to the strong stake of God's unchangeable nature." – Samuel Rutherford *The Letters of Samuel Rutherford*

- f.) Paul was the last man in the world to build his assurance on anything of his own.
- 1.) ***[1 Timothy 1:15]- This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.***
 - 2.) ***[Romans 7:24]- O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?***
 - 3.) ***[Ephesians 3:8]- Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;***
 - 4.) ***[John 10:28]- and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.***
 - 5.) ***[Hebrews 6:19]- which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;***
 - 6.) *"Never did a believer in Jesus Christ die or drown in his voyage to heaven. They will all be found safe and sound with the Lamb on Mount Zion. Christ loseth none of them; yea, nothing of them. (John vi. 39.) Not a bone of a believer is to be seen in the field of battle. They are all more than conquerors through Him that loved them." (Rom. viii. 37.) – Robert Traill.*
 - 7.) ***[John 6:39]-And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.***
 - 8.) ***[Romans 8:37]- Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.***

D. A man may never arrive at this assured hope, and yet be saved.

1. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ a man must have if he is to be saved.
 - a. A man must feel his sins and lost estate.
 - b. A man must come to Jesus for pardon and salvation.
 - c. A man must rest his hope on Him, and on Him alone.
 - d. But if he only has faith to do this, however weak and feeble that faith may be, he shall not miss heaven.
2. Never let us curtail the freeness of the glorious Gospel, or clip its fair proportions.
 - a. Never let us make the gate more strait and the way narrower than pride and the love of sin have made it already.
 - b. The Lord Jesus is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.
 - c. He does not regard the quantity of faith, but the quality: He does not measure its degree, but its truth.
 - d. He will not break any bruised reed, nor quench any smoking flax.
 - e. ***[John 6:37]- All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.***
 - f. *"He that believeth on Jesus shall never be confounded. Never was any; neither shall you, if you believe. It was a great word of faith spoken by a dying man, who had been converted in a singular way, betwixt his condemnation and execution: his last words were these, spoken with a mighty shout: 'Never man perished with his face towards Christ Jesus.'" – Robert Traill.*
3. Though a man's faith be no bigger than a grain of mustard seed, if it only brings him to Christ, and enables him to touch the hem of His garment, he shall be saved.

- a. *[Luke 17:6]- And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.*
 - b. *[Romans 10:11]- For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.*
4. Bare simple faith in Christ shall save a man, though he may never attain to assurance.
 - a. I will not engage it shall bring him to heaven with strong and abounding consolations.
 - b. I will engage it shall land him safe in harbour; but I will not engage he shall enter that harbour in full sail, confident and rejoicing.
 - c. I shall not be surprised if he reaches his desired haven weather-beaten and tempest-tossed, scarcely realizing his own safety, till he opens his eyes in glory.
5. It is of great importance to keep in view this distinction between faith and assurance.
 - a. Faith, let us remember, is the root, and assurance is the flower.
 - b. Faith is that poor trembling woman who came behind Jesus in the press, and touched the hem of His garment. Assurance is Stephen standing calmly in the midst of his murderers.
 - 1.) *[Mark 5:33]- But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth.*
 - 2.) *[Acts. 7:56-57]- and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.*
 - c. Faith is the penitent thief. Assurance is Job, sitting in the dust, covered with sores,
 - 1.) *[Luke 23:42]- And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.*
 - 2.) *[Job 19:25]- For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:*
 - 3.) *[Job 13:15]- Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.*
 - d. Faith is Peter's drowning cry, as he began to sink. Assurance is that same Peter declaring before the Council.
 - 1.) *[Matthew 14:30]- But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.*
 - 2.) *[Acts 4:11-12]- This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other : for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*
 - e. Faith is the anxious, trembling voice. Assurance is the confident challenge.
 - 1.) *[Mark 9:24]- And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.*
 - 2.) *[Romans 8:33-34]- Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*
 - f. Faith is Saul praying in the house of Judas at Damascus, sorrowful, blind, and alone. Assurance is Paul, the aged prisoner, looking calmly into the grave.
 - 1.) *[Acts 9:11]- And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth,*

- 2.) *[2 Timothy 1:12]- For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.*
 - 3.) *[2 Timothy 4:8]- henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*
- g. Faith is life. How great the blessing! Who can describe or realize the gulf between life and death? Assurance is more than life. It is health, strength, power, vigour, activity, energy, manliness, and beauty.
- 1.) *[Ecclesiastes 9:4]- For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope : for a living dog is better than a dead lion.*
- h. It is not a question of “saved or not saved,” that lies before us, but of “privilege or no privilege.”
- i. It is not a question of peace or no peace, but of great peace or little peace.
- j. It is not a question between the wanderers of this world and the school of Christ: it is one that belongs only to the school: it is between the first form and the last.
- k. He that has faith does well. Happy should I be.
- 1.) They are safe.
 - 2.) They are washed.
 - 3.) They are justified.
 - 4.) They are beyond the power of hell. Satan, with all his malice, shall never pluck them out of Christ’s hand.
- l. He that has assurance does far better.
- 1.) They see more.
 - 2.) They feel more.
 - 3.) They know more.
 - 4.) They enjoy more.
 - 5.) They have more days like those spoken of in Deuteronomy, even “the days of heaven upon the earth.”
- a.) *[Deuteronomy 9:21]- that your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the Lord swore unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth.*
- 6.) *“The greatest thing that we can desire, next to the glory of God, is our own salvation; and the sweetest thing we can desire is the assurance of our salvation. In this life we cannot get higher than to be assured of that which in the next life is to be enjoyed. All saints shall enjoy a heaven when they leave this earth; some saints enjoy a heaven while they are here on earth.” - Joseph Caryl*
- E. Why an assured hope is exceedingly to be desired.
1. Assurance is to be desired, because of the present comfort and peace it affords.
 - a. Doubts and fears have power to spoil much of the happiness of a true believer in Christ.
 - b. Assurance goes far to set a child of God free from this painful kind of bondage, and thus ministers mightily to his comfort.
 - 1.) *“It was a saying of Bishop Latimer to Ridley, ‘When I live in a settled and steadfast assurance about the state of my soul, methinks than I am as bold as a lion. I can laugh at all trouble: no affliction daunts me. But when I am eclipsed in my comforts, I am of so fearful a spirit that I could run into a very mouse-hole.’” - Christopher Love.*
 - 2.) *“Assurance will assist us in all duties: it will arm us against all temptations; It will answer all objections; it will sustain us in all conditions into which the saddest of times can bring us. ‘If God be for us, who can be against us?’” - Bishop Reynolds on Hosea*

- 3.) *“We cannot come amiss to him that hath assurance. God is his. Hath he lost a friend? - his father lives. Hath he lost an only child? - God hath given him His only Son. Hath he scarcity of bread? - God hath given him the finest of the wheat, the bread of life. Are his comforts gone? - he hath a Comforter. Doth he meet with storms? - he knows where to put in for harbour. God is his Portion, and heaven is his haven.” - Thomas Watson.*
- c. Assurance will help a man to bear poverty and loss.
 - 1.) *[Habakkuk 3:17-18]- Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.*
- d. Assurance will support a child of God under the heaviest bereavements, and assist him to feel “It is well.”
 - 1.) *[2 Kings 4:25-26]- So she went and came unto the man of God to mount Carmel. And it came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to Gehazi his servant, Behold, yonder is that Shunammite: run now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say unto her, Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well.*
 - 2.) *[Hebrews 13:8]- Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever.*
 - 3.) *[Romans 6:9]- knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.*
 - 4.) *[2 Samuel 23:5]- Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.*
- e. Assurance will enable a man to praise God, and be thankful, even in prison, like Paul and Silas at Philippi.
 - 1.) *[Job 5:10]- who giveth rain upon the earth, and sendeth waters upon the fields:*
 - 2.) *[Psalm 42:8]- Yet the Lord will command his loving-kindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.*
 - 3.) *“I have no request to make. If Queen Mary gives me my life, I will thank her; if she will banish me, I will thank her; if she will burn me, I will thank her; if she will condemn me to perpetual imprisonment, I will thank her.” - John Bradford’s words in prison, shortly before his execution*
 - 4.) *“How blind are my adversaries, who sent me to a banqueting house, and not to a prison or a place of exile. My prison is a palace to me, and Christ’s banqueting house.” – Samuel Rutherford when banished to Aberdeen*
- f. Assurance will enable a man to sleep with the full prospect of death on the morrow, like Peter in Herod’s dungeon.
 - 1.) *[Psalm 4:8]- Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still.*
- g. Assurance can make a man rejoice to suffer shame for Christ’s sake.
 - 1.) *[Matthew 5:12]- Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*
 - 2.) *[2 Corinthians 4:17]- For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;*
- h. Assurance will enable a believer to meet a violent and painful death without fear.
 - 1.) *[Luke 12:4]- And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.*

- 2.) *[Acts 7:59]- And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.*
 - 3.) These were the last words of Hugh Mackail on the scaffold, at Edinburgh, 1666: *"Now I begin my intercourse with God, which shall never be broken off. Farewell, father and mother, friends and relations; farewell, the world and all its delights; farewell, meat and drinks; farewell, sun, moon and stars. Welcome, God and Father; welcome, sweet Lord Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant; welcome, blessed Spirit of grace, and God of all consolation; welcome, glory; welcome, eternal life; welcome, death. O Lord, into Thy hands I commit my spirit; for Thou hast redeemed my soul, O Lord God of truth!"*
- i. Assurance will support a man in pain and sickness, make all his bed, and smooth down his dying pillow.
 - 1.) *[2 Corinthians 5:1]- For we know that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*
 - 2.) *[Philippians 1:23]- For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:*
 - 3.) *[Psalm 73:26]- My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.*
 - 4.) These were Rutherford's words on his death-bed: *"O that all my brethren did know what a Master I have served, and what peace I have this day! I shall sleep in Christ, and when I awake I shall be satisfied with His likeness."* 1661.
 - 5.) These were Baxter's words on his death-bed: *"I bless God I have a well-grounded assurance of my eternal happiness, and great peace and comfort within."* Towards the close he was asked how he did. The answer was, *"Almost well."*
 - 6.) *"The Almighty Lord, who is a most strong tower to all them that put their trust in Him, be now and evermore thy defence, and make thee know and feel that there is none other name under heaven, through whom thou mayest receive health and salvation, but only the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."* - Prayer-book service for the Visitation of the Sick
 - 7.) *"The least degree of faith takes away the sting of death, because it takes away guilt; but the full assurance of faith breaks the very teeth and jaws of death, by taking away the fear and dread of it."* - Richard Fairclough's Sermon in the Morning Exercises.
 2. Assurance is to be desired, because it tends to make a Christian an active working Christian.
 - a. A believer who lacks an assured hope will spend much of his time in inward searchings of heart about his own state.
 - b. A believer who has an assured hope is free from these harassing distractions.
 - 1.) *"Assurance would make us active and lively in God's service: it would excite prayer, quicken obedience. Faith would make us walk, but assurance would make us run - we should think we could never do enough for God. Assurance would be as wings to the bird, as weights to the clock, to set all the wheels of obedience a-running."* - Thomas Watson.
 - 2.) *"Assurance will make a man fervent, constant, and abundant in the work of the Lord. When the assured Christian hath done one work, he is calling out for another. - What is next, Lord, says the assured soul, what is next? An assured Christian will put his hand to any work, he will put his neck in any yoke for Christ - he never thinks he hath done enough, he always thinks he had done too little; and when he hath done all he can, he sits down, saying, I am an unprofitable servant"* - Thomas Brooks.
 - c. *"Take an illustration of two English emigrants, and suppose them set down side by side in New Zealand or Australia. Give each of them a piece of land to clear and cultivate. Let the portions allotted to them be the same both in quantity and quality. Secure that land to them*

by every needful legal instrument; let it be conveyed as freehold to them and theirs for ever; let the conveyance be publicly registered, and the property made sure to them by every deed and security that man's ingenuity can devise. Suppose then that one of them shall set to work to clear his land and bring it into cultivation, and labour at it day after day without intermission or cessation. Suppose in the meanwhile that the other shall be continually leaving his work, and going repeatedly to the public registry to ask whether the land really is his own - whether there is not some mistake - whether after all there is not some flaw in the legal instruments which conveyed it to him. The one shall never doubt his title, but just work diligently on."

- d. Never were there such working Christians as the Apostles. They seemed to live to labour.
 - a. ***[1 John 5:19]- And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.***

3. Assurance is to be desired, because it tends to make a Christian a decided Christian.
 - a. Indecision and doubt about our own state in God's sight is a grievous evil, and the mother of many evils. It often produces a wavering and unstable walk in following the Lord.
 - b. Assurance helps to cut many a knot, and to make the path of Christian duty clear and plain.
 - c. That a child of God ought to act in a certain decided way, they quite feel; but the grand question is, "Are they children of God themselves?"
 - 1.) The devil whispers, "Perhaps after all you are only a hypocrite: what right have you to take a decided course? Wait till you are really a Christian."
 - d. One chief reason why so many in this day are inconsistent, trimming, unsatisfactory, and half-hearted in their conduct about the world.
 - 1.) Their faith fails.
 - 2.) They feel no assurance that they are Christ's, and so feel hesitancy about breaking with the world.
 - 3.) They shrink from laying aside all the ways of the old man.
 - 4.) ***[1 Kings 18:39]- And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God.***

4. Assurance is to be desired, because it tends to make a Christian a holy Christian.
 - a. He that is freely forgiven by Christ will always do much for Christ's glory, and he that enjoys the fullest assurance of this forgiveness will ordinarily keep up the closest walk with God.
 - 1.) ***[1 John 3:3]- And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.***
 - 2.) A hope that does not purify is a mockery, a delusion, and a snare.
 - 3.) *"The true assurance of salvation which the Spirit of God hath wrought in any heart hath that force to restrain a man from looseness of life, and to knit his heart in love and obedience to God, as nothing else hath in all the world. It is certainly either the want of faith and assurance of God's love, or a false and carnal assurance of it, that is the true cause of all the licentiousness that reigns in the world."* – Arthur Hildersam *Sermons on the 51st Psalm*
 - 4.) *"None walk so evenly with God, as they who are assured of the love of God. Faith is the mother of obedience, and sureness of trust makes way for strictness of life. When men are loose from Christ, they are loose in point of duty, and their floating belief is soon discovered in their inconstancy and unevenness of walking. We do not, with alacrity, engage in that of the success of which we are doubtful; and, therefore, when we know not whether God will accept us or not, when we are off and on in point of trust, we are just so in the course of our lives, and serve God by fits and starts. It is the slander of the world to think assurance an idle doctrine."* – Thomas Manton *Exposition of James*

- 5.) *"Who is more obliged, or who feels the obligation to observance more cogently - the son who knows his near relation, and knows his father loves him, or the servant that hath great reason to doubt it? Fear is a weak and impotent principle, in comparison of love. Terrors may awaken: love enlivens. Terrors may 'almost persuade': love over-persuades. Sure am I that a believer's knowledge that his Beloved is his, and he is his Beloved's (Cant. vi. 3), is found by experience to lay the most strong and cogent obligations upon him to loyalty and faithfulness to the Lord Jesus. For as to him that believes Christ is precious (1 Peter ii. 7), so to him that knows he believes Christ is so much the more precious, even the 'chiefest of ten thousand.'"* (Cant. v. 10) – Richard Fairclough Morning Exercises
 - 6.) *"Is it necessary that men should be kept in continual dread of damnation, in order to render them circumspect and ensure their attention to duty? Will not the well-grounded expectation of heaven prove far more efficacious? Love is the noblest and strangest principle of obedience; nor can it be but that a sense of God's love to us will increase our desire to please Him."* - Thomas Robinson The Christian System.
- b. None are so likely to maintain a watchful guard over their own hearts and lives as those who know the comfort of living in close communion with God.
 - 1.) They feel their privilege, and will fear losing it.
 - 2.) They will dread falling from the high estate, and marring their own comforts, by bringing clouds between themselves and Christ.
5. Further considerations.
 - a. Would you like to feel the Everlasting Arms around you, and to hear the voice of Jesus daily drawing nigh to your soul, and saying, "I am thy salvation"? –
 - b. Would you like to be a useful laborer in the vineyard in your day and generation?
 - c. Would you be known of all men as a bold, firm, decided, single-eyed, uncompromising follower of Christ?
 - d. Would you be eminently spiritually minded and holy?
 - e. Neglect of assurance may possibly be the main secret of all one's failures, the low measure of faith, which satisfies you, may be the cause of your low degree of peace!
 - f. Seek an increase of faith. Seek an assured hope of salvation like the Apostle Paul's.
 - g. Seek to obtain a simple, childlike confidence in God's promises.
 - h. Seek to be able to say with Paul, *"I know whom I have believed: I am persuaded that He is mine, and I am His."*
 - i. Change your plan. Go upon another tack.
 - 1.) Lay aside your doubts.
 - 2.) Lean more entirely on the Lord's arm.
 - 3.) Begin with implicit trusting.
 - 4.) Cast aside your faithless backwardness to take the Lord at His word.
 - 5.) Begin with simple believing, and all other things shall soon be added to you.
 - 6.) *"That which breeds so much perplexity is, that we would invert God's order. 'If I knew,' say some, 'that the promise belonged to me, and Christ was a Saviour to me, I could believe': that is to say, I would first see and then believe. But the true method is just the contrary: 'I had fainted,' says David, 'unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord.' He believed it first, and saw it afterwards."* - Archbishop Leighton.
 - 7.) *"It is a weak and ignorant, but common thought of Christians, that they ought not to look for heaven, nor trust Christ for eternal glory, till they be well advanced in holiness and meetness for it. But as the first sanctification of our natures flows from out faith and trust in Christ for acceptance, so our further sanctification and meetness for glory flows from the renewed and repeated exercise of faith in Him."* – Robert Traill.

- F. Why an assured hope is so seldom attained.
1. A defective view of the doctrine of justification.
 - a. Justification and sanctification are insensibly confused together in the minds of many believers.
 - b. They seem to imbibe the idea that their justification is, in some degree, affected by something within themselves.
 - c. They do not clearly see that Christ's work, not their own - is alone the ground of our acceptance with God.
 - d. *"Those whom God effectually calleth, He also freely justified! - not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous; not for anything wrought in them or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone; not by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience, to them, as their righteousness; but by imputing the obedience and righteousness of Christ unto them, they receiving and resting on Him and His righteousness by faith."* - The Westminster Confession of Faith Chapter on Justification
 - e. Many appear to forget that we are saved and justified as sinners, and only sinners. Redeemed sinners, justified sinners, and renewed sinners doubtless we must be - but sinners, sinners, sinners, we shall be always to the very last.
 - f. Our justification is a perfect finished work, and admits of no degrees. Our sanctification is imperfect and incomplete.
 - g. If any believing soul desires assurance, and has not got it, let him ask himself, first of all, if he is quite sure he is sound in the faith, if he knows how to distinguish things that differ, and if his eyes are thoroughly clear in the matter of justification. He must know what it is simply to believe and to be justified by faith before he can expect to feel assured.
 - h. The old Galatian heresy is the most fertile source of error, both in doctrine and in practice. People ought to seek clearer views of Christ, and what Christ has done for them.
 - i. Happy is the man who really understands "justification by faith without the deeds of the law."
 2. Slothfulness about growth in grace.
 - a. Many appear to think that, once converted, they have little more to attend to.
 - b. Many fancy that grace is given them that they may enjoy it, and they forget that it is given, like a talent, to be used, employed, and improved.
 - c. It ought to be our continual aim and desire to go forward, and our watchword on every returning birthday, and at the beginning of every year, should be, "More and more": more knowledge - more faith - more obedience - more love.
 - 1.) *[1 Thessalonians 4:1]- Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.*
 - 2.) *[Matthew 13:23]- But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.*
 - 3.) *[1 Thessalonians 4:3]- For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:*
 - d. There is an inseparable connection between diligence and assurance.
 - 1.) *[2 Peter 1:10]- Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure : for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:*
 - 2.) *[Hebrews 6:11]- And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:*
 - 3.) *[Proverbs 13:4]- The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.*
 - 4.) *"Faith of adherence comes by hearing, but faith of assurance comes not without doing."* - An old maxim of the Puritans

- 5.) *“Whose fault is it that thy interest in Christ is not put out of question? Were Christians more in self-examination, more close in walking with God, and if they had more near communion with God and were more in acting of faith, this shameful darkness and doubting would quickly vanish.” – Robert Traill.*
 - 6.) *“A lazy Christian shall always want four things: viz., comfort, content, confidence, and assurance. God hath made a separation between joy and idleness, between assurance and laziness; and, therefore, it is impossible for thee to bring these together that God hath put so far asunder.” - Thomas Brooks.*
 - 7.) *“Are you in depths and doubts, staggering and uncertain, not knowing what is your condition, nor whether you have any interest in the forgiveness that is of God? Are you tossed up and down between hopes and fears, and want peace, consolation, and establishment? Why lie you upon your faces? Get up: watch, pray, fast, meditate, offer violence to your lusts and corruptions; fear not, startle not at their crying to be spared; press unto the throne of grace by prayer, supplications, importunities, restless requests - this is the way to take the kingdom of God. These things are not peace, are not assurance; but they are part of the means God hath appointed for the attainment of them.” – John Owen A Practical Exposition on the 130th Psalm*
3. An inconsistent walk in life.
- a. Nothing more frequently prevents men attaining an assured hope than an inconsistent walk in life
 - b. Inconsistency of life is utterly destructive of peace of conscience.
 - c. If you will have your besetting sins, and cannot make up your minds to give them up - if you will shrink from cutting off the right hand and plucking out the right eye when occasion requires it - you will have no assurance.
 - d. A vacillating walk - a backwardness to take a bold and decided line - a readiness to conform to the world - a hesitating witness for Christ - a lingering tone of religion - a flinching from a high standard of holiness and spiritual life - all these make up a sure receipt for bringing a blight upon the garden of your soul.
 - e. It is vain to suppose you will feel assured and persuaded of your own pardon and acceptance with God, unless you count all God’s commandments concerning all things to be right, and hate every sin, whether great or small.
- 1.) ***[Psalm 119:128]- Thy testimonies that thou hast commanded are righteous and very faithful.***
 - 2.) One Achan allowed in the camp of your heart will weaken your hands and lay your consolations low in the dust.
 - 3.) You must be daily sowing to the Spirit, if you are to reap the witness of the Spirit.
 - 4.) You will not find and feel that all the Lord’s ways are ways of pleasantness, unless you labour in all your ways to please the Lord.
 - 5.) *“Would’st thou have thy hope strong? Then keep thy conscience pure: thou canst not defile one without weakening the other. The godly person that is loose and careless in his holy walking will soon find his hope languishing. All sin disposeth the soul that tampers with it to trembling fears and shakings of heart.” – William Gurnall.*
 - 6.) *“One great and too common cause of distress is the secret maintaining some known sin: it puts out the eye of the soul, or dimmeth it and stupefies it, that it can neither see nor feel its own condition; but especially it provoketh God to withdraw Himself, His comforts, and the assistance of His Spirit.” - Baxter’s The Saints’ Eternal Rest*
 - 7.) *“The stars which have least circuit are nearest the pole; and men whose earths are least entangled with the world are always nearest to God and to the assurance of His favour. Worldly Christians, remember this. You and the world must part, or else assurance and your souls will never meet.” - Thomas Brooks.*
- f. ***[Psalm 25:14]- The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant. Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord;***

- g. *[Psalm 50:23]- Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God.*
- h. *[Psalm 119:165]- Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.*
- i. *[1 John 1:7]- Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.*
- j. *[1 John 3:18-19]- My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.*
- k. *[1 John 2:3]- And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.*
- l. *[Acts 24:16]- And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward men.*

G. Application

1. To those who have not yet given themselves to the Lord, who have not yet followed Christ.
 - a. Learn of the privileges and comforts of a true Christian.
 - b. Do not judge of the Lord Jesus Christ by His people.
 - c. The weakest child of God has a mine of comforts within him, of which you know nothing.
 - d. The believer who possesses the least assurance is far better off than you are.
 - 1.) He has a hope, however faint, but you have none at all.
 - 2.) He has a portion that will never be taken from him.
 - 3.) He has a Saviour that will never be taken from him,
 - 4.) He has a Saviour that will never forsake him,
 - 5.) He has a treasure that fadeth not away, however little he may realize it all at present.
 - 6.) As for you, if you die as you are, your expectations will all perish.
 - 7.) *"They are doubly miserable that have neither heaven nor earth, temporals nor eternals, made sure to them in changing times."* - Thomas Brooks.
2. To those who are believers, a few words of brotherly counsel.
 - a. If you have not got an assured hope of your own acceptance in Christ, resolve this day to seek it.
 - 1.) Labor for it.
 - 2.) Strive after it.
 - 3.) Pray for it.
 - 4.) Give the Lord no rest till you *"know whom you have believed."*
 - b. The small amount of assurance in this day, among those who are reckoned God's children, is a shame and a reproach.
 - 1.) *"It is a thing to be heavily bewailed that many Christians have lived twenty or forty years since Christ called them by His grace, yet doubting in their life."* – Robert Traill
 - 2.) *[Hebrews 6:11]- And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:*
 - c. Do you have no desire to exchange hope for confidence, trust for persuasion, uncertainty for knowledge?
 - 1.) Never despise it in others, but never be content with it yourself.
 - d. You must not be surprised if you have occasional doubts, after you have got assurance.
 - 1.) Be not discouraged: you shall be more than conqueror through Him that loved you.
 - 2.) *"None have assurance at all times. As in a walk that is shaded with trees and chequered with light and shadow, some tracks and paths in it are dark and others are sunshine. Such is usually the life of the most assured Christian."* - Bishop Hopkins.

- 3.) *"It is very suspicious, that that person is a hypocrite that is always in the same frame, let him pretend it to be never so good."* – Robert Traill
3. The man who walks with God in Christ most closely will generally be kept in the greatest peace.
- a. The believer who follows the Lord most fully and aims at the highest degree of holiness will ordinarily enjoy the most assured hope, and have the clearest persuasion of his own salvation.
- H. Extracts from English Divines, showing that there is a difference between faith and assurance.
1. *"The mercy of God is greater than all the sins in the world. But we sometimes are in such a case, that we think we have no faith at all; or if we have any, it is very feeble and weak. And therefore these are two things: to have faith, and to have the feeling of faith. For some men would fain have the feeling of faith, but they cannot attain unto it; and yet they must not despair, but go forward in calling upon God, and it will come at the length: God will open their hearts, and let them feel His goodness."* – Bishop Larimer's Sermons.
 2. *"Weak faith may fail in the applying, or in the apprehension and appropriating of Christ's benefits to a man's own self. This is to be seen in ordinary experience. For many a man there is of humble and contrite heart, that serveth God in spirit and truth, yet is not able to say, without great doublings and waverings, I know and am fully assured that my sins are pardoned. Now shall we say that all such are without faith? God forbid. This weak faith will as truly apprehend God's merciful promises for the pardon of sin as strong faith, though not so soundly. Even as a man with a palsied hand can stretch it out as well to receive a gift at the hand of a king as he that is more sound, though it may be not so firmly and steadfastly."* - William Perkins Exposition of the Creed
 3. *"This certainty of our salvation, spoken of by Paul, rehearsed by Peter, and mentioned by David (Psalm iv. 7), is that special fruit of faith, which breedeth spiritual joy and inward peace, which passeth all understanding. True it is, all God's children have it not. One thing is the tree, and another thing is the fruit of the tree: one thing is faith, and another thing is the fruit of faith. And that remnant of God's elect which feel the want of this faith, have notwithstanding faith."* - Richard Greenham Sermons
 4. *"Some think they have no faith at all, because they have no full assurance. Yet the fairest fire that can be will have some smoke."* - Richard Sibbes The Bruised Reed
 5. *"The act of faith is to apply Christ to the soul; and this the weakest faith can do as well as the strongest, if it be true. A child can hold a staff as well, though not so strongly, as a man. The prisoner through a hole sees the sun, though not so perfectly as they in the open air. They that saw the brazen serpent, though a great way off, yet were healed. The least faith is as precious to the believer's soul as Peter's or Paul's faith was to themselves; for it lays hold upon Christ and brings eternal salvation."* - Thomas Adams An Exposition of the Second Epistle General of Peter
 6. *"Weak faith is true faith - as precious, though not so great as strong faith: the same Holy Ghost the author, the same Gospel the instrument. If it never proves great, yet weak faith shall save; for it interests us in Christ, and makes Him and all His benefits ours. For it is not the strength of our faith that saves, but the truth of our faith - not the weakness of our faith that condemns, but the want of faith; for the least faith layeth hold on Christ, and so will save us. Neither are we saved by the worth or quantity of our faith, but by Christ, who is laid hold on by a weak faith as well as a strong. Just as a weak hand that can put meat into the mouth shall feed and nourish the body as well as if it were a strong hand; seeing the body is not nourished by the strength of the hand, but by the goodness of the meat."* - John Rogers The Doctrine of Faith
 7. *"It is one thing to have a thing surely, another thing to know I have it surely. We seek many things that we have in our hands, and we have many things that we think we have lost. So a believer, who hath a sure belief, yet doth not always know that he so believeth. Faith is*

necessary to salvation: but full assurance that I do believe is not of like necessity.” – John Ball A Treatise on Faith

8. *“There is a weak faith, which yet is true; and although it be weak, yet, because it is true, it shall not be rejected of Christ. Faith is not created perfect at the first, as Adam was; but is like a man in the ordinary course of nature, who is first an instrument, then a child, then a youth, then a man. Some utterly reject all weak ones, and tax all weakness in faith with hypocrisy. Certainly these are either proud or cruel men. Some comfort and establish those who are weak, saying, ‘Be quiet. Thou hast faith and grace enough, and art good enough: thou needest no more, neither must thou be too righteous.’ (Eccles. vii. 16.) These are soft, but not safe, cushions: these are fawning flatterers, and not faithful friends. “Some comfort and exhort, saying, ‘Be of good cheer: He who hath begun a good work will also finish it in you; therefore pray that His grace may abound in you; yea, do not sit still, but go forward, and march on in the way of the Lord.’ (Heb. vi. 1.) Now this is the safest and best course.” - Richard Ward Questions, Observations, etc., upon the Gospel according to St. Matthew*
9. *“A man may be in the favour of God, in the state of grace, a justified man before God, and yet want the sensible assurance of His salvation, and of the favour of God in Christ. A man may have saving grace in him, and not perceive it himself; a man may have true justifying faith in him, and not have the use and operation of it, so far as to work in him a comfortable assurance of his reconciliation with God. Nay, I will say more: a man may be in the state of grace, and have true justifying faith in him, and yet be so far from sensible assurance of it in himself, as in his own sense and feeling he may seem to be assured of the contrary. Job was certainly in this case when he cried unto God, ‘Wherefore hidest Thou Thy face and boldest me for Thine enemy?’ (Job xiii. 24.) The weakest faith will justify. If thou canst receive Christ and rest upon Him, even with the weakest faith, it will serve thy turn. Take heed thou think not it is the strength of thy faith that justifieth thee. No, no: it is Christ and His perfect righteousness which thy faith receiveth and resteth upon, that doth it. He that hath the feeblest and weakest hand may receive an alms and apply a sovereign plaster to his wound, as well as he that hath the strongest, and receive as much good by it too.” - Arthur Hildersam Lectures upon the 51st Psalm preached at Ashby-de-la-Zouch*
10. *“Though your grace be never so weak, if ye have truth of grace, you have as great a share in the righteousness of Christ for your justification as the strong Christian hath. You have as much of Christ imputed to you as any other.” - William Bridge*
11. *“There are some who are true believers, and yet weak in faith. They do indeed receive Christ and free grace, but it is with a shaking hand; they have, as divines say, the faith of adherence; they will stick to Christ, as theirs. But they want the faith of evidence; they cannot see themselves as His. They are believers, but of little faith; they hope that Christ will not cast them off, but are not sure that He will take them up.” - John Durant Sips of Sweetness, or Consolation for Weak Relievers*
12. *“I know, thou sayest, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners: and that ‘Whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.’ (John iii. 15.) Neither can I know but that, in a sense of my own sinful condition, I do cast myself in some measure upon my Saviour, and lay some hold upon His all-sufficient redemption: but, alas, my apprehensions of Him are so feeble, as that they can afford no sound comfort to my soul! “Courage, my son. Were it that thou lookedst to be justified, and saved by the power of the very act of thy faith, thou hadst reason to be disheartened with the conscience of the weakness thereof; but now that the virtue and efficacy of this happy work is in the object apprehended by thee, which is the infinite merits and mercy of thy God and Saviour, which cannot be abated by thine infirmities, thou hast cause to take heart to thyself, and cheerfully to expect His salvation. Understand thy case aright. Here is a double hand, that helps us up toward Heaven. Our hand of faith lays hold upon our Saviour; our Saviour’s hand of mercy and plenteous redemption lays hold on us. Our hold of Him is feeble and easily loosed; His hold of us is strong and irresistible. If work were stood upon, a strength of hand were necessary; but now that only taking and receiving of a precious gift is required, why may not a weak hand do that as well as a strong? As well, though not as forcibly.” - Bishop Hall Balm of Gilead*

13. *"I find not salvation put upon the strength of faith, but the truth of faith - not upon the brightest degree, but upon any degree of faith. It is not said, If you have such a degree of faith you shall be justified and saved; but simply believing is required. The lowest degree of true faith will do it; as Romans 10:9, 'If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.' The thief upon the cross had not attained to such high degrees of faith: he by one act, and that of a weak faith, was justified and saved. (Luke 23:42.)"* - William Greenhill Exposition of the Prophet Ezekiel
14. *"A man may have true grace that hath not the assurance of the love and favour of God, or the remission of his sins, and salvation of his soul. A man may be God's, and yet he not know it; his estate may be good, and yet he not see it; he may be in a safe condition, when he is not in a comfortable position. All may be well with him in the court of glory, when he would give a thousand worlds that all were but well in the court of conscience. Assurance is requisite to the well-being of a Christian, but not to the being; it is requisite to the consolation of a Christian, but not to the salvation of a Christian; it is requisite to the well-being of grace, but not to the mere being of grace. Though a man cannot be saved without faith, yet he may be saved without assurance. God hath in many places of the Scripture declared that without faith there is no salvation; but God hath not in any one place of Scripture declared that without assurance there is no salvation."* - Thomas Brooks Heaven on Earth
15. *"You that can clear this to your own hearts that you have faith, though it be weak, be not discouraged, be not troubled. Consider that the smallest degree of faith is true, is saving faith as well as the greatest. A spark of fire is as true fire as any is in the element of fire. A drop of water is as true water as any is in the ocean. So the least grain of faith is as true faith, and as saving as the greatest faith in the world. The least bud draws sap from the root as well as the greatest bough. So the weakest measure of faith doth as truly ingraft thee into Christ, and by that draw life from Christ, as well as the strongest. The weakest faith hath communion with the merits and blood of Christ as well as the strongest. The least faith marries the soul to Christ. The weakest faith hath as equal a share in God's love as the strongest. We are beloved in Christ, and the least measure of faith makes us members of Christ. The least faith hath equal right to the promises as the strongest. And therefore let not our souls be discouraged for weakness."* - Samuel Bolton Nature and Royalties of Faith
16. *"Some are afraid they have no faith at all, because they have not the highest degree of faith, which is full assurance, or because they want the comfort which others attain to, even joy unspeakable and full of glory. But for the rolling of this stone out of the way, we must remember there are several degrees of faith. It is possible thou mayest have faith, though not the highest degree of faith, and so joy in the Spirit. That is rather a point of faith than faith itself. It is indeed rather a living by sense than a living by faith, when we are cheered up with continual cordials. A stronger faith is required to live upon God without comfort, than when God shines in on our spirit with abundance of joy."* - Matthew Lawrence
17. *"If any person abroad have thought that a special and full persuasion of the pardon of their sin was of the essence of faith, let them answer for it. Our divines at home generally are of another judgment. Bishop Davenant and Bishop Prideaux, and others, have shown the great difference between recumbrance and assurance, and they all do account and call assurance, a daughter, fruit, and consequent of faith. And the late learned Arrowsmith tells us, that God seldom bestows assurance upon believers till they are grown in grace: for, says he, there is the same difference between faith of recumbence and faith of assurance, as is between reason and learning. Reason is the foundation of learning; so, as there can be no learning if reason be wanting (as in beasts), in like manner there can be no assurance where there is no faith of adherence. Again: as reason well exercised in the study of arts and sciences arises to learning; so faith being well exercised on its proper object, and by its proper fruits, arises to assurance. Further, as by negligence, non-attendance, or some violent disease, learning may be lost, while reason doth abide; so by temptation, or by spiritual sloth, assurance may be lost, while saving faith may abide. Lastly, as all men have reason, but all men are not learned; so all regenerate persons have faith to comply savingly with the gospel method of salvation, but all true believers have not assurance."* - R. Fairdough

18. *"We must distinguish between weakness of faith and nullity. A weak faith is true. The bruised reed is but weak, yet it is such as Christ will not break. Though thy faith be but weak, yet be not discouraged. A weak faith may receive a strong Christ; a weak hand can tie the knot in marriage as well as a strong; a weak eye might have seen the brazen serpent. The promise is not made to strong faith, but to true. The promise doth not say, Whosoever hath a giant faith that can remove mountains, that can stop the mouth of lions, shall be saved; but whosoever believes, be his faith never so small. You may have the water of the Spirit poured on you in sanctification, though not the oil of gladness in assurance; there may be faith of adherence, and not of evidence; there may be life in the root where there is no fruit in the branches, and faith in the heart where no fruit of assurance." - Thomas Watson A Body of Divinity*
19. *"Many of God's dear children for a long time may remain very doubtful as to their present and eternal condition, and know not what to conclude, whether they shall be damned or whether they shall be saved. There are believers of several growths in the Church of God, - fathers, young men, children, and babes; and as in most families there are more babes and children than grown men, so in the Church of God there are more weak, doubting Christians than strong ones, grown up to a full assurance. A babe may be born, and yet not know it; so a man may be born again, and yet not be sure of it. We make a difference betwixt saving faith, as such, and a full persuasion of the heart. Some of those that shall be saved may not be certain that they shall be saved; for the promise is made to the grace of faith, and not to the evidence of it - to faith as true, and not to faith as strong. They may be sure of heaven, and yet in their own sense not assured of heaven." - Thomas Doolittle*
20. *"Is it not necessary to justification to be assured that my sins are pardoned, and that I am justified? No: that is no act of faith as it justifieth, but an effect and fruit that followeth after justification. It is one thing for a man to have his salvation certain, another thing to be certain that it is certain. Even as a man fallen into a river, and like to be drowned, as he is carried down with the flood, espies the bough of a tree hanging over the river, which he catcheth at, and clings unto with all his might to save him, and seeing no other way of succour but that, ventures his life upon it. This man, so soon as he has fastened on this bough, is in a safe condition, though all troubles, fears, and terrors are not presently out of his mind, until he comes to himself, and sees himself quite out of danger. Then he is sure he is safe; but he was safe before he was sure. Even so it is with a believer. Faith is but the espying of Christ as the only means to save, and the reaching out of the heart to lay hold upon Him. God hath spoke the word, and made the promise to His Son: I believe Him to be the only Saviour, and remit my soul to Him to be saved by His mediation. So soon as the soul can do this, God imputeth the righteousness of His Son unto it, and it is actually justified in the court of heaven, though it is not presently quieted and pacified in the court of conscience. That is done afterwards: in some sooner, in some later, by the fruits and effects of justification." - Archbishop James Ussher Body of Divinity.*
21. *"There are those who doubt, because they doubt, and multiply distrust upon itself, concluding that they have no faith, because they find so much and so frequent doubting within them. But this is a great mistake. Some doublings there may be, where there is even much faith; and a little faith there may be, where there is much doubting. Our Saviour requires, and delights in a strong, firm believing on Him, though the least and weakest He rejects not." - Archbishop Robert Leighton Lectures on the First Nine Chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel*
22. *"Many formerly, and those of the highest remark and eminency, have placed true faith in no lower degree than assurance, or the secure persuasion of the pardon of their sins, the acceptance of their persons, and their future salvation. But this, as it is very sad and uncomfortable for thousands of doubting and deserted souls, concluding all those to fall short of grace who fall short of certainty, so hath it given the Papists too great advantage. Faith is not assurance. But this doth sometimes crown and reward a strong, vigorous and heroic faith; the Spirit of God breaking in upon the soul with an evidencing light, and scattering all that darkness, and those fears and doubts which before beclouded it." - Bishop Ezekiel Hopkins Discourses on the Two Covenants*

23. *"A want of assurance is not unbelief. Drooping spirits may be believers. There is a manifest distinction made between faith in Christ, and the comfort of that faith - between believing to eternal life, and knowing we have eternal life. There is a difference between a child's having a right to an estate, and his full knowledge of the title. The character of faith may be written in the heart, as letters engraven upon a seal, yet filled with so much dust as not to be distinguished. The dust hinders the reading of the letters, yet doth not raze them out."* - Stephen Charnock *A Discourse of Unbelief, Proving it is the Greatest Sin*
24. *"Some rob themselves of their own comfort by placing saving faith in full assurance. Faith, and sense of faith, are two distinct and separable mercies; you may have truly received Christ, and not receive the knowledge or assurance of it. Some there be that say, 'Thou art our God,' of whom God never said, 'You are my people', these have no authority to be called the sons of God: others there are, of whom God saith, 'These are my people,' yet they dare not call God 'their God'; these have authority to be called the sons of God, yet know it not. They have received Christ, that is their safety; but they have not yet received the knowledge and assurance of it, that is their trouble . . . The father owns his child in the cradle, who yet knows him not to be his father."* - John Flavel *Method of Grace*
25. *"It is confessed weak faith hath as much peace with God, through Christ, as another hath by strong faith, but not so much bosom peace. Weak faith will as surely land the Christian in heaven as strong faith, for it is impossible the least dram of true grace should perish, being all incorruptible seed; but the weak, doubting Christian is not like to have so pleasant a voyage thither as another with strong faith. Though all in the ship come safe to shore, yet he that is all the way sea-sick hath not so comfortable a voyage as he that is strong and healthful."* - William Gurnall *The Christian in Complete Armour*
26. *"Be not discouraged if it doth not yet appear to you that you were given by the Father to the Son. It may be, though you do not see it. Many of the given do not for a long time know it; yea, I see no great danger in saying that not a few of the given to the Son may be in darkness, and doubts, and fears about it, till the last and brightest day declare it, and till the last sentence proclaims it. If, therefore, any of you be in the dark about your own election, be not discouraged: it may be, though you do not know it."* - Robert Traill *Sermons on the Lord's Prayer*
27. *"Assurance is not essential to the being of faith. It is a strong faith; but we read likewise of a weak faith, little faith, faith like a grain of mustard seed. True saving faith in Jesus Christ is only distinguishable by its different degrees; but in every degree and in every subject, it is universally of the same kind."* - John Newton *Sermons by the Key*
28. *"There is no reason why weak believers should conclude against themselves. Weak faith unites as really with Christ as strong faith - as the least bud in the vine is drawing sap and life from the root, no less than the strongest branch. Weak believers, therefore, have abundant cause to be thankful; and while they reach after growth in grace, ought not to overlook what they have already received."* - Henry Venn
29. *"The faith necessary and sufficient for our salvation is not assurance. Its tendency doubtless is to produce that lively expectation of the Divine favour which will issue in a full confidence. But the confidence is not itself the faith of which we speak, nor is it necessarily included in it: nay, it is a totally distinct thing. Assurance will generally accompany a high degree of faith. But there are sincere persons who are endued with only small measures of grace, or in whom the exercise of that grace may be greatly obstructed. When such defects or hindrances prevail, many fears and distresses may be expected to arise."* - Thomas Robinson *The Christian System*
30. *"Salvation, and the joy of salvation, are not always contemporaneous; the latter does not always accompany the former in present experience. A sick man may be under a process of recovery, and yet be in doubt concerning the restoration of his health. Pain and weakness may cause him to hesitate. A child may be heir to Ms estate or kingdom, and yet derive no joy from the prospect of his future inheritance. He may be unable to trace his genealogy, or to read his title-deeds, and the testament of his father; or with a capacity of reading them he may be unable to understand their import, and his guardian may for a time deem it right to suffer him*

to remain in ignorance. But his ignorance does not affect the validity of his title. Personal assurance of salvation is not necessarily connected with faith. They are not essentially the same. Every believer might indeed infer, from the effect produced in his own heart, his own safety and privileges; but many who truly believe are unskillful in the word of righteousness, and fail of drawing the conclusion from Scriptural premises which they would be justified in drawing.” - Thomas Biddulph Lectures on the 51st Psalm

VIII. Moses - An Example

A. Proof texts.

1. ***[Hebrews 11:24-26]- By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.***
2. ***[Proverbs 1:6]- to understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.***
3. ***[Proverbs 16:24]- Pleasant words are as a honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.***

B. What Moses gave up and refused.

1. Rank and greatness.
 - a. To be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.
 - 1.) In Eastern countries the liberty to adopt children who are not blood-relatives, and to give them the privileges of sons, is notoriously carried out most extensively.
 - 2.) From his connection with Pharaoh's daughter, Moses might have been, if he had pleased, a very great man.
 - b. How great this temptation was.
 - 1.) Here was a man of like passions with ourselves.
 - 2.) He might have had as much greatness as earth can well give. Rank, power, place, honour, titles, dignities within his grasp.
 - 3.) Moses would not have them as a gift. He turned his back upon them. He refused them. He gave them up!
2. Pleasure.
 - a. Sensual pleasure, intellectual pleasure, social pleasure.
 - 1.) ***[1 John 2:16]- For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.***
 - b. How great this temptation was.
 - 1.) Pleasure and enjoyment in the holidays.
 - 2.) Pleasure and satisfaction in making himself independent.
 - 3.) Pleasure and ease in retiring from business with a fortune.
 - 4.) Pleasure and bodily comfort at his own home.
 - 5.) Pleasure and fresh excitement in politics, traveling, amusements, company, and books
 - 6.) Pleasure is the shadow which all alike are hunting
 - 7.) This was the cup that Moses had before his lips. He might have drunk as deeply as he liked of earthly pleasure; but he would not have it. He turned his back upon it. He refused it. He gave it up!
3. Riches.
 - a. "The treasures in Egypt" is an expression that seems to tell of boundless wealth.
 - 1.) The pyramids, and obelisks, and temples, and statues are still standing there as witnesses.

- 2.) The ruins at Carnac, and Luxor, and Denderah, and many other places, are still the mightiest buildings in the world.
- b. How great this temptation was.
 - 1.) The power of money - the immense influence that “the love of money”.
 - 2.) To possess money seems to hide defects – to cover over faults - to clothe a man with virtues.
 - 3.) People can get over much, if you are rich!
 - 4.) But here is a man who might have been rich, and would not.
 - 5.) He would not have Egyptian treasures. He turned his back upon them. He refused them. He gave them up!
- C. What Moses chose.
1. He chose suffering and affliction
 - a. He left the ease and comfort of Pharaoh’s court, and openly took part with the children of Israel.
 - b. They were an enslaved and persecuted people - an object of distrust, suspicion, and hatred.
 - c. There seemed no chance of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, without a long and doubtful struggle.
 - d. Here is a man of like passions with ourselves, and he actually chooses affliction!
 2. He chose the company of a despised people.
 - a. He left the society of the great and wise, among whom he had been brought up, and joined himself to the Children of Israel.
 3. He chose reproach and scorn.
 - a. A torrent of mockery and ridicule that Moses would have to stem, in turning away from Pharaoh’s court to join Israel!
 4. Moses was no weak, ignorant, illiterate person, and yet he chose as he did!
 - a. ***[Acts 7:22]- And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.***
 5. The circumstances of his choice.
 - a. None compelled him to take such a course.
 - b. All that he did, he did of his own free choice - voluntarily, and of his own accord.
- D. The principle which moved Moses, and made him do as he did.
1. Moses had faith. Faith was the mainspring of his wonderful conduct.
 - a. God revealed to him that a Saviour was to be born of the stock of Israel that mighty promises were bound up in these children of Abraham.
 - b. He believed that God would keep His promises.
 - c. He believed that with God nothing was impossible.
 - d. He believed that God was all wise.
 - e. He believed that God was all merciful.
 - f. Faith was a telescope to Moses. It made him see the goodly land afar off - rest, peace, and victory, when dim-sighted reason could only see trial and barrenness, storm and tempest, weariness and pain,
 - g. Faith was an interpreter to Moses. It made him pick out a comfortable meaning in the dark commands of God’s handwriting, while ignorant sense could see nothing in it but mystery and foolishness.
 - h. Faith told Moses that all this rank and greatness was of the earth, earthy, a poor, vain, empty thing, frail, fleeting, and passing away; and that there was no true greatness like that of serving God.

- i. Faith told Moses that worldly pleasures were “pleasures of sin.”
- j. Faith told Moses that these pleasures after all were only for a “season.”
- k. Faith told him that there was a reward in heaven for the believer far richer than the treasures in Egypt, durable riches, where rust could not corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal.
- l. Faith told Moses that the despised Israelites were the chosen people of God.
- m. Faith told Moses that all the reproach and scorn poured out on him was “the reproach of Christ”.
- n. Marvel not that he refused greatness, riches, and pleasure. - He looked far forward.
- o. Wonder not that he chose affliction, a despised people, and reproach. - He beheld things below the surface.

E. Applications

1. If you would ever be saved, you must make the choice that Moses made - you must choose God before the world.
 - a. He must be prepared for tribulation.
 - b. He must make up his mind to choose much which seems evil, and to give up and refuse much which seems good.
 - c. Do you wish your soul to be saved? Then remember, you must choose whom you will serve.
 - d. Are you making any sacrifices? Does your religion cost you anything?
 - e. ***[Luke 16:25-27]- But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:***
2. Nothing will ever enable you to choose God before the world, except faith.
 - a. Knowledge will not, feeling will not, a regular use of outward forms will not, good companions will not.
 - b. There must be a real heartfelt belief that God's promises are sure and to be depended on; a real belief that what God says in the Bible is all true, and that every doctrine contrary to this is false, whatever anyone may say.
 - c. You must learn to believe promises better than possessions; things unseen better than things seen; things in heaven out of sight better than things on earth before your eyes; the praise of the invisible God better than the praise of visible man.
 - d. There must be a real abiding faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The life that you live in the flesh you must live by faith of the Son of God.
 - 1.) ***[Philippians 1:21]- For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.***
 - 2.) ***[Philippians 4:13]- I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.***
 - 3.) This was the faith that made Noah go on building His ark, while the world looked on and mocked.
 - 4.) This was the faith that made Abraham give the choice of the land to Lot, and dwell on quietly in tents.
 - 5.) This was the faith that made Ruth cleave to Naomi, and turn away from her country and her gods.
 - 6.) This was the faith that made Daniel continue in prayer, though he knew the lions' den was prepared.
 - 7.) This was the faith that made the three children refuse to worship idols, though the fiery furnace was before their eyes.
 - 8.) This was the faith that made Moses forsake Egypt, not fearing the wrath of Pharaoh.
3. The true reason why so many are worldly and ungodly persons is that they have no faith.

- a. The thousands who are daily preferring the world to God - placing the things of time before the things of eternity, and the things of the body before the things of the soul.
- b. No doubt they will all give us reasons and excuses.
 - 1.) Some will talk of the snares of the world.
 - 2.) Some will talk of the want of time.
 - 3.) Some will talk of the peculiar difficulties of their position.
 - 4.) Some will talk of the cares and anxieties of life.
 - 5.) Some will talk of the strength of temptation.
 - 6.) Some will talk of the power of passions.
 - 7.) Some will talk of the effects of bad companions.
 - 8.) There is a far shorter way to account for the state of their souls - they do not believe.
4. The true secret of doing great things for God is to have great faith.
 - a. We think too much, and talk too much, about graces, and gifts, and attainments, and do not sufficiently remember that faith is the root and mother of them all.
 - b. In walking with God, a man will go just as far as he believes, and no further. His life will always be proportioned to his faith. His peace, his patience, his courage, his seal, and his works - all will be according to his faith.
 - c. Go and cry to the Lord Jesus Christ, as the disciples did, "Lord, increase our faith."
 - 1.) ***[Luke 17:5]- And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.***
 - d. Your spiritual prosperity will always be according to your faith. He that believeth shall not only be saved, but shall never thirst - shall overcome - shall be established - shall walk firmly on the waters of this world - and shall do great works.

IX. Lot - A Beacon

A. Proof text.

1. ***[Genesis 19:16]- And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the Lord being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city.***

B. What Lot was himself.

1. Many would perhaps say, "Ah! Lot was a bad man - a poor, wicked, dark creature - an unconverted man - a child of this world! - no wonder he lingered."
2. Lot was nothing of the kind. Lot was a true believer - a converted person - a real child of God - a justified soul - a righteous man.
 - a. ***[2 Peter 2:7-8]- and delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds:)***
3. He lived in a wicked place, "seeing and hearing" evil all around him and yet was not wicked himself.
 - a. ***[2 Peter 2:8]- (for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds:)***
 - b. Daniel in Babylon.
 - c. Obadiah in Ahab's house.
 - d. Abijah in Jeroboam's family.
 - e. A saint in Nero's court.
 - f. A "righteous man" in Sodom.
4. He "vexed his soul with the unlawful deeds" he beheld around him.
 - a. ***[2 Peter 2:8]- (for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds:)***

- b. *[Psalm 119:136,158]- Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law. I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not thy word.*
 - c. *[Romans 9:2-3]- that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:*
 - 5. He “vexed his soul from day to day” with the unlawful deeds he saw.
 - a. *[2 Peter 2:8]- (for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds:)*
 - 6. Remember that a true Christian may have many a blemish, many a defect, many an infirmity, and yet be a true Christian nevertheless.
- C. What the text tells you of him.
- 1. Lot knew the awful condition of the city in which he stood. And yet “he lingered.”
 - a. “The cry” of its abominations “had waxen great before the Lord.”
 - b. *[Genesis 19:13]- for we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the Lord; and the Lord hath sent us to destroy it.*
 - 2. Lot knew the fearful judgment coming down on all within its walls. And yet “he lingered.”
 - a. The angels had said plainly, “The Lord hath sent us to destroy it.”
 - b. *[Genesis 19:13]- for we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the Lord; and the Lord hath sent us to destroy it.*
 - 3. Lot knew that God was a God who always kept His word, and if He said a thing would surely do it. Yet “he lingered.”
 - 4. Lot believed there was danger - for he went to his sons-in-law, and warned them to flee. And yet “he lingered.”
 - a. *[Genesis 19:14]- And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons-in-law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons-in-law.*
 - 5. Lot saw the angels of God standing by, waiting for him and his family to go forth. And yet “he lingered.”
 - a. *[Genesis 19:15]- And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city.*
 - 6. He was slow when he should have been quick - backward when he should have been forward – trifling when he should have been hastening - loitering when he should have been hurrying - cold when he should have been hot.
 - 7. There are many Christian men and Christian women in this day very like Lot.
 - a. They acknowledge the Head, even Christ, and love the truth. They like sound preaching, and assent to every article of Gospel doctrine, when they hear it.
 - 1.) But still there is something that is not satisfactory about them.
 - 2.) They are constantly doing things that disappoint the expectations of their ministers, and of more advanced Christian friends.
 - b. They believe in heaven, and yet seem faintly to long for it; and in hell, and yet seem little to fear it.
 - c. They love the Lord Jesus; but the work they do for Him is small. They hate the devil; but they often appear to tempt him to come to them.
 - d. They know the time is short; but they live as if it were long.
 - e. They know they have a battle to fight; yet a man might think they were at peace.

- f. They know they have a race to run; yet they often look like people sitting still.
- g. They know the Judge is at the door, and there is wrath to come; and yet they appear half asleep.
- h. They get the notion into their minds that it is impossible for all believers to be so very holy and very spiritual!
- i. They get into their heads false ideas of charity, as they call it. But they forget they ought first to be sure that they please God.
- j. They dread sacrifices, and shrink from self-denial.
 - 1.) ***[Matthew 5:29-30]- And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.***
- k. They are always trying to keep in with the world.
 - 1.) They are ingenious in discovering reasons for not separating decidedly, and in framing plausible excuses for attending questionable amusements, and keeping up questionable friendships.
- l. They cannot find it in their hearts to quarrel with their besetting sin.
 - 1.) Whether it is sloth, indolence, ill temper, pride, selfishness, or impatience.
- m. They are the brethren and sisters of Lot. They linger.

D. Reasons that may account for Lot's lingering.

- 1. Lot made a wrong choice in early life.
 - a. ***[Genesis 13:9-10]- Is not the whole land before thee ? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me : if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left. And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.***
- 2. He chose by sight, and not by faith.
 - a. He asked no counsel of God, to preserve him from mistakes.
 - b. He looked to the things of time, and not of eternity.
 - c. He thought of his worldly profit, and not of his soul.
 - d. He considered only what would help him in this life.
 - e. He forgot the solemn business of the life to come.
- 3. Lot mixed with sinners when there was no occasion for his doing so.
 - a. ***[Genesis 13:12]- Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.***
 - b. ***[Genesis 14:12]- And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.***
- 4. Beware of Lot's choice.
 - a. Remember this in choosing a dwelling-place, or residence.
 - 1.) It is not enough that the house is comfortable - the situation good - the air fine - the neighborhood pleasant - the rent or price small - the living cheap.
 - 2.) There are other things yet to be considered. You must think of your immortal soul.
 - 3.) Will the house you think of help you towards heaven or hell?
 - b. Remember this in choosing a calling, a place, or profession in life.

- 1.) It is not enough that the salary is high - the wages good - the work light - the advantages numerous - the prospects of getting on most favorable.
 - 2.) Think of your soul, your immortal soul. Will it be prospered or drawn back? Will you have your Sundays free, and be able to have one day in the week for your spiritual business?
 - 3.) Make no rash decision. Look at the place in every light – the light of God as well as the light of the world.
- c. Remember this in choosing a husband or wife, if you are unmarried.
- 1.) It is not enough that your eye is pleased - that your tastes are met - that your mind find congeniality - that there is amiability and affection - that there is a comfortable home for life.
 - 2.) Think of your soul, your immortal soul. Will it be helped upwards or dragged downwards by the union you are planning? - Will it be made more heavenly, or more earthly - drawn nearer to Christ, or to the world? - Will its religion grow in vigor, or will it decay? - I pray you, by all your hopes of glory, allow this to enter into your calculations.
 - 3.) “Think,” as old Baxter said, and “*think, and think again,*” before you commit yourself. “*Be not unequally yoked.*” Matrimony is nowhere named among the means of conversion.
 - 4.) ***[2 Corinthians 6:14]- Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?***
- d. Remember this, if you are ever offered a situation on a railway.
- 1.) It is not enough to have good pay and regular employment - the confidence of the directors, and the best chance of rising to a higher post.
 - 2.) How will your soul fare if you serve a railway company that runs Sunday trains? What day in the week will you have for God and eternity? What opportunities will you have for hearing the Gospel preached?
 - 3.) It will profit you nothing to fill your purse, if you bring leanness and poverty on your soul.
 - 4.) Beware of selling your Sabbath for the sake of a good place! Remember Esau’s mess of pottage.
- e. Some may think, “*A believer need not fear; he is a sheep of Christ, he will never perish, he cannot come to much harm. It cannot be that such small matters can be of great importance.*”
- 1.) If you neglect these matters, your soul will never prosper.
 - 2.) A true believer will certainly not be cast away, although he may linger. But if he does linger, it is vain to suppose that his religion will thrive.
 - 3.) Grace is a tender plant. Unless you cherish it and nurse it well, it will soon become sickly in this evil world.
 - 4.) You may be an earnest, zealous Christian now.
 - a.) You may feel like David in his prosperity: “*I shall never be moved.*”
 - b.) ***[Psalm 30:6]- And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.***
 - c.) Be not deceived. You have only got to walk in Lot’s steps and make Lot’s choice, and you will soon come to Lot’s state of soul.
 - d.) ***[1 Corinthians 10:11-13]- Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but 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 to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. ******

E. The fruit of Lot's lingering.

1. Lot did no good among the inhabitants of Sodom.
 - a. No doubt he had many precious opportunities for speaking of the things of God, and trying to turn away souls from sin.
 - b. Lot seems to have affected just nothing at all.
 - c. He appears to have had no weight or influence with the people who lived around him.
 - d. He possessed none of that respect and reverence which even the men of the world will frequently concede to a bright servant of God.
 - e. Not one of his neighbors believed his testimony. Not one of his acquaintances honored the Lord whom he worshipped. Not one of his servants served his master's God.
 - f. Not one of "all the people from every quarter" cared a jot for his opinion when he tried to restrain their wickedness.
 - 1.) ***[Genesis 19:9]- And they said, Stand back. And they said again, This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door.***
 - g. His life carried no weight; his words were not listened to; his religion drew none to follow him.
 - h. As a general rule, lingering souls do no good to the world and bring no credit to God's cause.
 - 1.) Their salt has too little savor to season the corruption around them.
 - 2.) They are not "*Epistles of Christ*" who can be "*known and read of all.*"
 - a.) ***[2 Corinthians 3:2]- Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men:***
 - 3.) There is nothing magnetic, and attractive, and Christ-reflecting about their ways.
2. Lot helped none of his family, relatives, or connections towards heaven.
 - a. He had a wife and two daughters at least; in the day he was called out of Sodom. But there was not one among them that feared God!
 - 1.) ***[Genesis 19:14]- And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons-in-law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons-in-law.***
 - 2.) ***[Genesis 19:17]- And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.***
 - 3.) ***[Genesis 19:31-32]- And the firstborn said unto the younger, Our father is old, and there is not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth: come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.***
 - b. Lot seems to have stood alone in his family! He was not made the means of keeping one soul back from the gates of hell!
 - 1.) Lingering souls are seen through by their own families; and, when seen through, they are despised.
 - 2.) They draw the sad, but not unnatural, conclusion, "*Surely, if he believed all he professes to believe, he would not go on as he does.*"
 - 3.) Lingering parents seldom have godly children.
 - 4.) The eye of the child drinks in far more than the ear.
 - 5.) A child will always observe what you do much more than what you say.
3. Lot left no evidences behind him when he died.

- a. His pleading for Zoar, because it was “a little one,”
- b. We know not how long he lived after his escape. We know not where he died, or when he died.
- c. The Scripture appears to draw a veil around him on purpose. There is a painful silence about his latter end.
- d. Had it not been specially told in the New Testament that Lot was “just” and “righteous,” we should have doubted whether Lot was a saved soul at all.
- e. Lingerer believers will generally reap according as they have sown.
 - 1.) Their lingering often meets them when their spirit is departing.
 - 2.) They have little peace at the last.
 - 3.) They reach heaven, to be sure; but they reach it in poor plight, weary and footsore, in weakness and tears, in darkness and storm.
 - 4.) They are saved, but “*saved so as by fire.*”
 - a.) ***[1 Corinthians 3:15]- If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.***

F. Application

1. Do not linger but be diligent.
 - a. ***[2 Peter 1:10]- Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:***
 - b. ***[Romans 12:1]- I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.***
 - c. ***[Galatians 5:25]- If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.***
2. Would you know what the times demand? ***Christian! Do not linger!***
3. Would you be found ready for Christ at His second appearing - your loins girded - your lamp burning - yourself bold, and prepared to meet Him? ***Christian! Do not linger!***
4. Would you enjoy much sensible comfort in your religion - feel the witness of the Spirit within you - know whom you have believed - and not be a gloomy, complaining, sour, downcast, and melancholy Christian? ***Christian! Do not linger!***
5. Would you enjoy strong assurance of your own salvation, in the day of sickness, and on the bed of death? ***Christian! Do not linger!***
6. Would you leave great broad evidences behind you when you are gone? - Would you like us to lay you in the grave with comfortable hope, and talk of your state after death without a doubt? ***Christian! Do not linger!***
7. Would you be useful to the world in your day and generation? - Would you draw men from sin to Christ, adorn your doctrine, and make your Master’s cause beautiful and attractive in their eyes? ***Christian! Do not linger!***
8. Would you help your children and relatives towards heaven, and make them say, “We will go with you”? ***Christian! Do not linger!***
9. Would you have a great crown in the day of Christ’s appearing, and not be the least and smallest star in glory, and not find yourself the last and lowest in the kingdom of God? ***Christian! Do not linger!***
10. Let not one of us linger! Time does not - death does not - judgment does not - the devil does not - the world does not. ***Christian! Do not linger!***
11. If you are a lingerer, you must go to Christ at once and be cured. - You must use the old remedy; you must bathe in the old fountain. You must turn again to Christ and be healed.
 - a. ***[Jeremiah 3:13,22]- Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the Lord. Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the Lord our God.***

12. Let us all remember the souls of others, as well as our own. If at any time we see any brother or sister lingering, let us try to awaken them.
 - a. *[Hebrews 3:13]- But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.*
 - b. *[Hebrews 10:24]- and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:*

X. A Woman To Be Remembered

A. Proof text.

1. *[Luke 17:32]- Remember Lot's wife.*

B. Lot's wife-A Solemn Warning.

1. Lot's wife was a professor of religion: her husband was a "righteous man."
 - a. *[2 Peter 2:8]- (for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds:)*
2. It is a solemn warning, when we think of the person Jesus names.
 - a. He does not bid us remember Abraham, or Isaac, or Jacob, or Sarah, or Hannah, or Ruth.
 - b. No: He singles out one whose soul was lost forever.
 - c. He cries to us, "*Remember Lot's wife.*"
3. It is a solemn warning, when we consider the subject Jesus is upon.
 - a. He is speaking of His own second coming to judge the world:
 - b. He is describing the awful state of unreadiness in which many will be found.
 - c. The last days are on His mind, when He says, "*Remember Lot's wife.*"
4. It is a solemn warning, when we think of the person who gives it.
 - a. The Lord Jesus is full of love, mercy, and compassion:
 - b. He is one who will not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax.
 - c. He could weep over unbelieving Jerusalem, and pray for the men that crucified Him; yet even He thinks it good to remind us of lost souls.
 - d. Even He says, "*Remember Lot's wife.*"
5. It is a solemn warning, when we think of the persons to whom it was first given.
 - a. The Lord Jesus was speaking to His disciples:
 - b. He was not addressing the scribes and Pharisees, who hated Him, but Peter, James, and John, and many others who loved Him; yet even to them He thinks it good to address a caution.
 - c. Even to them He says, "*Remember Lot's wife.*"
6. It is a solemn warning, when we consider the manner in which it was given.
 - a. He does not merely say, "*Beware of following - take heed of imitating - do not be like Lot's wife.*"
 - b. He uses a different word: He says, "*Remember.*"
 - c. He speaks as if we were all in danger of forgetting the subject; He stirs up our lazy memories; He bids us keep the case before our minds.
 - d. He cries, "*Remember Lot's wife.*"

C. The religious privileges which Lot's wife enjoyed.

1. In the days of Abraham and Lot, true saving religion was scarce upon earth:
2. The knowledge of God was confined to a few favoured families.
 - a. The greater part of the inhabitants of the world were living in darkness, ignorance, superstition, and sin.

3. Not one in a hundred perhaps had such good example, such spiritual society, such clear knowledge, such plain warnings as Lot's wife.
4. Compared with millions of her fellow-creatures in her time, Lot's wife was a favored woman.
5. She had a godly man for her husband: she had Abraham, the father of the faithful, for her uncle by marriage.
 - a. The faith, the knowledge, and the prayers of these two righteous men could have been no secret to her.
 - b. When Abraham first received the promises, it is probable Lot's wife was there.
 - c. When he built his altar by his tent between Hai and Bethel, it is probable she was there.
 - d. When her husband was taken captive by Chedorlaomer, and delivered by God's interference, she was there.
 - e. When Melchizedek, king of Salem, came forth to meet Abraham with bread and wine, she was there.
 - f. When the angels came to Sodom and warned her husband to flee, she saw them;
 - g. When they took them by the hand and led them out of the city, she was one of those whom they helped to escape.
 - h. Yet what good effect had all these privileges on the heart of Lot's wife?
 - 1.) None at all.
 - 2.) Notwithstanding all her opportunities and means of grace –
 - 3.) Notwithstanding all her special warnings and messages from heaven, she lived and died graceless, godless, impenitent, and unbelieving.
 - 4.) The world was in her heart, and her heart was in the world.
 - i. Lesson: That the mere possession of religious privileges will save no one's soul.
 - 1.) You may have spiritual advantages of every description;
 - 2.) You may live in the full sunshine of the richest opportunities and means of grace;
 - 3.) You may enjoy the best of preaching and the choicest instruction;
 - 4.) You may dwell in the midst of light, knowledge, holiness, and good company.
 - 5.) All this may be, and yet you yourself may remain unconverted, and at last be lost forever.
 - 6.) It requires something more than privileges to save souls.
 - a.) Joab was David's captain;
 - b.) Gehazi was Elisha's servant;
 - c.) Demas was Paul's companion;
 - d.) Judas Iscariot was Christ's disciple;
 - e.) Lot had a worldly, unbelieving wife.
- 7.) Let us value religious privileges, but let us not rest entirely upon them.
 - a.) Let us desire to have the benefit of them in all our movements in life, but let us not put them in the place of Christ.
 - b.) Let us use them thankfully, if God grants them to us, but let us take care that they produce some fruit in our heart and life.
 - c.) If they do not do good, they often do positive harm: they sear the conscience, they increase responsibility, they aggravate condemnation.
 - d.) The same fire which melts the wax hardens the clay; the same sun which makes the living tree grow, dries up the dead tree, and prepares it for burning.
 - e.) Nothing so hardens the heart of man as a barren familiarity with sacred things.
- 8.) It is a great privilege to live in a house where the fear of God reigns.
 - a.) It is a privilege to hear family prayers morning and evening, to hear the Word of God regularly expounded, to have a quiet Sunday, and to be able always to go to church.
 - b.) These are the things that you ought to seek after when you try to get a situation; these are the things which make a really good place.

- 9.) It is the highest privilege to be the child of a godly father and mother, and to be brought up in the midst of many prayers.
 - a.) It is a blessed thing indeed to be taught the Gospel from our earliest infancy, and to hear of sin, and Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, and holiness, and heaven; from the first moment we can remember anything.
 - b.) Take heed that you do not remain barren and unfruitful in the sunshine of all these privileges: beware lest your heart remains hard, impenitent and worldly, notwithstanding the many advantages you enjoy.
 - c.) You cannot enter the kingdom of God on the credit of your parents' religion.
 - d.) You must eat the bread of life for yourself, and have the witness of the Spirit in your own heart.
 - e.) You must have repentance of your own, faith of your own, and sanctification of your own.

- D. The sin that Lot's wife committed. "She looked back from behind her husband, and she became a pillar of salt.
 1. That look was a little thing, but revealed the true character of Lot's wife.
 - a. Little things will often show the state of a man's mind even better than great ones, and little symptoms are often the signs of deadly and incurable diseases.
 - b. The apple that Eve ate was a little thing, but it proved that she had fallen from innocence and become a sinner.
 - c. A crack in an arch seems a little thing, but it proves that the foundation is giving way, and the whole fabric is unsafe.
 - d. A little cough in a morning seems an unimportant ailment, but it is often an evidence of failing in the constitution, and leads on to decline, consumption, and death.
 - e. A straw may show which way the wind blows, and one look may show the rotten condition of a sinner's heart.
 - 1.) ***[Matthew 5:28]- but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.***
 2. That look was a little thing, but it told of disobedience in Lot's wife.
 - a. The command of the angel was strait and unmistakable: "Look not behind thee."
 - b. This command Lot's wife refused to obey.
 - c. But the Holy Ghost says, that "to obey is better than sacrifice," and that "rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft."
 - 1.) ***[1 Samuel 15:22-23]- And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king.***
 - d. When God speaks plainly by His Word, or by His messengers, man's duty is clear.
 3. That look was a little thing, but it told of proud unbelief in Lot's wife.
 - a. She seemed to doubt whether God was really going to destroy Sodom:
 - b. She appeared not to believe there was any danger, or any need for such hasty flight.
 - c. But without faith it is impossible to please God.
 - 1.) ***[Hebrews 11:6]- But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.***
 - d. The moment a man begins to think he knows better than God, and that God does not mean anything when He threatens, his soul is in great danger.

4. That look was a little thing, but it told of secret love of the world in Lot's wife.
 - a. Her heart was in Sodom, though her body was outside.
 - b. She had left her affections behind when she fled from her home.
 - c. Her eye turned to the place where her treasure was, as the compass-needle turns to the pole.
 - d. ***[James 4:4]- Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.***
 - e. ***[1 John 2:15]- Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.***

5. Warnings from Lot's wife.
 - a. How many children of religious families begin well and end ill!
 - 1.) They can repeat texts and hymns in abundance;
 - 2.) They have spiritual feelings and convictions of sin; they profess to love the Lord Jesus and desire after heaven;
 - 3.) They take pleasure in going to church and hearing sermons;
 - 4.) They say things which are treasured up by their fond parents as indications of grace;
 - 5.) But, alas, how often their goodness vanishes like the morning cloud, and like the dew that passes away!
 - 6.) Where is the spirituality which once appeared to promise so fair? It is all gone: it is buried; it is overflowed by the love of the world. They walk in the steps of Lot's wife. They look back.

 - b. How many married people do well in religion to all appearance, until their children begin to grow up - and then they fall away!
 - 1.) In the early years of their married life they seem to follow Christ diligently, and to witness a good confession.
 - 2.) They regularly attend the preaching of the Gospel:
 - 3.) They are fruitful in good works;
 - 4.) They are never seen in vain and dissipated society.
 - 5.) Their faith and practice are both sound, and walk hand in hand.
 - 6.) But, alas, how often a spiritual blight comes over the household when a young family begins to grow up, and sons and daughters have to be brought forward in life.
 - 7.) A leaven of worldliness begins to appear in their habits, dress, entertainments, and employment of time.
 - 8.) They walk in the steps of Lot's wife. They look back.

 - c. How many young women seem to love decided religion until they are twenty or twenty-one, and then lose all!
 - 1.) Up to this time of their life their conduct in religious matters is all that could be desired.
 - 2.) They like religious friends; they love to talk on religious subjects: they write letters full of religious expressions and religious experience.
 - 3.) But, alas, how often they prove unstable as water, and are ruined by the love of the world!
 - 4.) Little by little they fall away and lose their first love.
 - 5.) Little by little the "things seen" push out of their minds the "things unseen," and, like the plague of locusts, eat up every green thing in their souls.
 - 6.) Step by step they go back from the decided position they once took up.
 - 7.) They cease to be jealous about sound doctrine; they pretend to find out that it is "uncharitable" to think one person has more religion than another; they discover it is "exclusive" to attempt any separation from the customs of society.

- 8.) By and by they give their affections to some man who makes no pretence to decided religion.
 - 9.) At last they end by giving up the last remnant of their own Christianity, and becoming thorough children of the world.
 - 10.) They walk in the steps of Lot's wife. They look back.
- d. How many communicants in our churches were at one time zealous and earnest professors, and have now become torpid, formal, and cold!
- 1.) Time was when none seemed so much alive in religion as they were.
 - 2.) None were so diligent in their attendance on the means of grace;
 - 3.) None were so anxious to promote the cause of the Gospel, and so ready for every good work;
 - 4.) None were so thankful for spiritual instruction;
 - 5.) None were apparently so desirous to grow in grace.
 - 6.) But now, alas, everything seems altered!
 - 7.) The "love of other things" has taken possession of their hearts, and choked the good seed of the Word.
 - 8.) The money of the world, the rewards of the world, the literature of the world, the honors of the world, have now the first place in their affections.
 - 9.) Talk to them, and you will find no response about spiritual things.
 - 10.) Mark their daily conduct, and you will see no zeal about the kingdom of God.
 - 11.) They have walked in the steps of Lot's wife. They have looked back.
- e. How many clergymen work hard in their profession for a few years, and then become lazy and indolent from the love of this present world!
- 1.) At the outset of their ministry they seem willing to spend and be spent for Christ:
 - 2.) They are instant in season and out of season;
 - 3.) Their preaching is lively and their churches are filled.
 - 4.) Their congregations are well looked after: cottage lectures, prayer meetings, house-to-house visitation, are their weekly delight.
 - 5.) But, alas, how often after "beginning in the Spirit" they end "in the flesh," and, like Samson, are shorn of their strength in the lap of that Delilah, the world!
 - 6.) They are preferred to some rich living; they marry a worldly wife; they are puffed up with pride, and neglect study and prayer.
 - 7.) A nipping frost cuts off the spiritual blossoms which once bade so fair.
 - 8.) Their preaching loses its unction and power; their week-day work becomes less and less; the society they mix in becomes less select; the tone of their conversation becomes more earthly.
 - 9.) They cease to disregard the opinion of man: they imbibe a morbid fear of "extreme views," and are filled with a cautious dread of giving offence.
 - 10.) And at last the man who at one time seemed likely to be a real successor of the apostles and a good soldier of Christ, settles down on his lees as a clerical gardener, farmer, or diner-out, by whom nobody is offended and nobody is saved.
 - 11.) His church becomes half empty; his influence dwindles away; the world has bound him hand and foot.
 - 12.) He has walked in the steps of Lot's wife. He has looked back.
 - 13.) *"Remember Dr. Dodd! I myself heard him tell his own flock, whom he was lecturing in his house, that he was obliged to give up that method of helping their souls, because it exposed him to so much reproach. He gave it up, and fell from one compliance to another with his corrupt nature; and under what reproach did he die!" (He was hanged for forgery.) - Henry Venn Venn's Life and Letters*
- f. Beware of a half-hearted religion. Beware of following Christ from any secondary motive.
- 1.) To please relations and friends.

- 2.) To keep in with the custom of the place or family in which you reside.
 - 3.) To appear respectable and have the reputation of being religious.
 - 4.) Follow Christ for His own sake, if you follow Him at all.
 - 5.) Be thorough, be real, be honest, be sound, be whole-hearted.
 - 6.) If you have any religion at all, let your religion be real.
- g. Beware of ever supposing that you may go too far in religion, and of secretly trying to keep in with the world.
- 1.) Love Christ with all your heart, and mind, and soul, and strength.
 - 2.) Seek first the kingdom of God, and believe that then all other things shall be added to you.
 - 3.) Take heed that you do not prove a copy of the character John Bunyan draws - Mr. Facing-both-ways.
 - 4.) For your happiness' sake, for your usefulness' sake, for your safety's sake, for your soul's sake, beware of the sin of Lot's wife.
 - 5.) ***[Luke 9:62]- And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.***
- E. The punishment that God inflicted on Lot's wife. *"she looked back and became a pillar of salt."*
1. A miracle was wrought to execute God's judgment on this guilty woman.
 - a. From living flesh and blood she was turned into a pillar of salt.
 - b. It a fearful end for a soul to come to! To die at any time is a solemn thing.
 - c. It was a hopeless end for a soul to come to! There are cases where one hopes against hope, about the souls of those we see go down to the grave.
 - d. It is good to be reminded that God can punish sharply those who sin willfully, and that great privileges misused bring down great wrath on the soul.
 2. The punishment of eternity in hell is a reality.
 - a. Settle it firmly in your mind, that the same Bible which teaches that God in mercy and compassion sent Christ to die for sinners, does also teach that God hates sin, and must from His very nature punish all who cleave to sin, or refuse the salvation He has provided.
 - 1.) ***[John 3:16,36]- For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.***
 - 2.) ***[Mark 16:16]- He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.***
 - b. Settle it firmly in your mind that God has given us proof upon proof in the Bible that He will punish the hardened and unbelieving, and that He can take vengeance on His enemies, as well as show mercy on the penitent.
 - 1.) ***[Psalm 9:17]- The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.***
 - c. Settle it firmly in your mind that the Lord Jesus Christ Himself has spoken most plainly about the reality and eternity of hell.
 - 1.) ***[John 14:24]- He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.***
 - d. Settle it, lastly, in your mind, that the comforting ideas, which the Scripture gives us of heaven, are at an end, if we once deny the reality or eternity of hell.
 - 1.) ***[Matthew 25:46]- And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.***

2.) [Romans 16.26]- but now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:

- e. Never speak of hell without pain and sorrow but gladly offer the salvation of the Gospel to the very chief of sinners.
 - 1.) Scripture reveals a hell as well as heaven, and that the Gospel teaches that men may be lost as well as saved.
 - 2.) The watchman, who keeps silent when he sees a fire, is guilty of gross neglect.
 - 3.) The doctor, who tells us we are getting well when we are dying, is a false friend.
 - 4.) The minister who keeps back hell from his people in his sermons is neither a faithful nor a charitable man.
 - 5.) Where is the charity of keeping back any portion of God's truth?
- f. If you would ever be a healthy Scriptural Christian, I entreat you to give hell a place in your theology.
- g. If you would ever be a healthy and Scriptural Christian, I entreat you to beware of any ministry that does not plainly teach the reality and eternity of hell.
- h. If you desire to be a healthy Christian, consider often what your own end will be.

F. Application

- 1. Are you careless about the Second Advent of Christ? Alas, many are!
 - a. They live like the men of Sodom, and the men of Noah's day.
 - b. They eat, and drink, and plant, and build, and marry, and are given in marriage, and behave as if Christ was never going to return.
 - c. Take care: "Remember Lot's wife."
- 2. Are you lukewarm, and cold in your Christianity? Alas, many are!
 - a. They try to serve two masters:
 - b. They labour to keep friends both with God and mammon.
 - c. They strive to be a kind of spiritual bat, neither one thing nor the other: not quite a thoroughgoing Christian, but not quite men of the world.
 - d. Take care: "Remember Lot's wife."
- 3. Are you halting between two opinions, and disposed to go back to the world? Alas, many are!
 - a. They are afraid of the cross:
 - b. They secretly dislike the trouble and reproach of decided religion.
 - c. They are weary of the wilderness and the manna, and would fain return to Egypt, if they could.
 - d. Take care: "Remember Lot's wife."
- 4. Are you secretly cherishing some besetting sin? Alas, many are!
 - a. They go far in a profession of religion;
 - b. They do many things that are right, and are very like the people of God. But there is always some darling evil habit, which they cannot tear from their heart.
 - c. Hidden worldliness, or covetousness, or lust, sticks to them like their skin.
 - d. They are willing to see all their idols broken, but this one.
 - e. Take care: "Remember Lot's wife."
- 5. Are you trifling with little sins? Alas, many are!
 - a. They hold the great essential doctrines of the Gospel.
 - b. They keep clear of all gross profligacy, or open breach of God's law; but they are painfully careless about little inconsistencies, and painfully ready to make excuses for them.

- c. "It is only a little temper, or a little levity, or a little thoughtlessness, or a little forgetfulness"
 - d. "God does not take account of such little matters. We are none of us perfect: God will never require it."
 - e. Take care: "Remember Lot's wife."
6. Are you resting on religious privileges? Alas, many do!
- a. They enjoy the opportunity of hearing the Gospel regularly preached, and of attending many ordinances, and means of grace: and they settle down on their lees.
 - b. They seem to be "rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing" while they have neither faith, nor grace, nor spiritual-mindedness nor meetness for heaven.
 - 1.) ***[Revelation 3:]- Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:***
- c. Take care: "Remember Lot's wife."
7. Are you trusting to your religious knowledge? Alas, many do!
- a. They are not ignorant, as other men: they know the difference between true doctrine and false.
 - b. They can dispute, they can reason, they can argue, they can quote texts; but all this time they are not converted, and they are yet dead in trespasses and sins.
 - c. Take care: "Remember Lot's wife."
8. Are you making some profession of religion, and yet clinging to the world? Alas, many do!
- a. They aim at being thought Christians.
 - b. They like the credit of being serious, steady, proper, regular, church-going people; yet all the while their dress, their tastes, their companions, their entertainments tell plainly they are of the world.
 - c. Take care: "Remember Lot's wife."
9. Are you trusting that you will have a death-bed repentance? Alas, many do so!
- a. They know they are not what they ought to be: they are not yet born again, and fit to die.
 - b. But they flatter themselves that when their last illness comes they shall have time to repent and lay hold on Christ, and go out of the world pardoned, sanctified, and meet for heaven.
 - c. They forget that people often die very suddenly, and that as they live they generally die.
 - d. Take care: Remember Lot's wife."
10. Do you belong to an Evangelical congregation? Many do, and, alas, go no further!
- a. They hear the truth Sunday after Sunday and remain as hard as the nether-millstone.
 - b. Sermon after sermon sounds in their ears.
 - c. Month after month they are invited to repent, to believe, to come to Christ, and to be saved.
 - d. Year after year passes away, and they are not changed.
 - e. They keep their seat under the teaching of a favorite minister, and they also keep their favourite sins.
 - f. Take care: "Remember Lot's wife."

XI. Christ's Greatest Trophy

A. Proof text.

1. ***[Luke 23:39-43]- And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said***

unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.

B. Christ's power and willingness to save sinners.

1. Christ is mighty to save.
 - a. *[Isaiah 63:1]-Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.*
 - b. Was there ever a case could look more hopeless and desperate than that of the penitent thief?
 - 1.) He was a wicked man - a malefactor - a thief, if not a murderer.
 - 2.) He was a dying man. He hung there, nailed to a cross, from which he was never to come down alive.
 - 3.) If ever there was a soul hovering on the brink of hell, it was the soul of this thief.
 - c. Yet he ceased to rail and blaspheme, as he had done at the first:
 - 1.) He began to speak in another manner altogether.
 - 2.) He turned to our blessed Lord in prayer.
 - 3.) He prayed Jesus to "remember him when he came into His kingdom."
 - 4.) He asked that his soul might be cared for, his sins pardoned, and himself thought of in another world.
 - d. The answer he received from Jesus.
 - 1.) The Lord Jesus returned him an immediate answer.
 - 2.) The Lord Jesus returned him a kind answer.
 - 3.) The Lord Jesus returned him an assuring answer; that he should be with Him that day in paradise.
 - 4.) The Lord Jesus returned him a pardoning answer.
 - a.) Cleansed him thoroughly from his sins.
 - b.) Received him graciously.
 - c.) Justified him freely.
 - d.) Raised him from the gates of hell.
 - e.) Gave him a title to glory.
 - e. The Penitent thief is the proof of salvation in Christ.
 - 1.) Christ is "able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him".
 - a.) *[Hebrews 7:25]- Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.*
 - 2.) Christ will receive any poor sinner who comes to Him with the prayer of faith, and cast out none.
 - a.) If ever there was one that seemed too bad to be received, this was the man. Yet the door of mercy was wide open even for him.
 - 3.) By grace ye may be saved through faith, not of works: fear not, only believe.
 - a.) This thief was never baptized;
 - b.) He belonged to no visible Church.
 - c.) He never received the Lord's Supper.
 - d.) He never did any work for Christ.
 - e.) He never gave money to Christ's cause!
 - f.) But he had faith, and so he was saved.
 - 4.) The youngest faith will save a man's soul, if it only be true?

- a.) This man's faith was only one day old; but it led him to Christ, and preserved him from hell.

f. Applications.

- 1.) Never should any man or woman despair! The keys of death and hell are in His hand. When He opens none can shut.
 - a.) *"O Saviour, what a precedent is this of Thy free and powerful grace! Where Thou wilt give, what unworthiness can bar us from Thy mercy? When Thou wilt give, what time can prejudice our vocation? Who can despair of Thy goodness, when he, that in the morning was posting to hell, is in the evening with Thee in Paradise?"* - Bishop Hall
- 2.) There is hope, even for you.
 - a.) What though your sins be more in number than the hairs of your head?
 - b.) What though your evil habits have grown with your growth, and strengthened with your strength?
 - c.) What though you have hitherto hated good, and loved evil, all the days of your life?
 - d.) These things are sad indeed; but Christ can heal you:
 - e.) Christ can raise you from your low estate.
 - f.) Heaven is not shut against you.
- 3.) Are your sins forgiven? If not, I set before you this day a full and free salvation.
 - a.) Follow the steps of the penitent thief: come to Christ and live.
 - b.) Jesus is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.
 - c.) He can do everything that your soul requires.
 - d.) Though your sins be as scarlet, He can make them white as snow.
 - e.) Though your sins be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.
- 4.) Are you a true believer? If you are, you ought to glory in Christ.
 - a.) Glory not in your own faith, your own feelings, your own knowledge, your own prayers, your own amendment, your own diligence.
 - b.) Glory in nothing but Christ. Alas! The best of us know but little of that merciful and mighty Saviour.
 - c.) We do not exalt Him and glory in Him enough.
 - d.) Let us pray that we may see more of the fulness there is in Him.
- 5.) Do you ever try to do good to others? If you do, remember to tell them about Christ.
 - a.) Tell the young, tell the poor, tell the aged, tell the ignorant, tell the sick, tell the dying - tell them all about Christ.
 - b.) Tell them of His power, and tell them of His love; tell them of His doings, and tell them of His feelings; tell them what He has done for the chief of sinners; tell them what He is willing to do to the last day of time: tell it them over and over again.
 - c.) Never be tired of speaking of Christ.
 - d.) Say to them broadly and fully, freely and unconditionally, unreservedly and undoubtingly, "Come unto Christ, as the penitent thief did: come unto Christ, and you shall be saved."

C. If some are saved in the very hour of death, others are not.

1. Men forget that there were "two thieves."
 - a. What became of the other thief who was crucified?
 - 1.) Why did he not turn from his sin, and call upon the Lord? Why did he remain hardened and impenitent? Why was he not saved?
 - 2.) Both plainly were wicked men.

- 3.) Both were receiving the due reward of their deeds.
 - 4.) Both hung by the side of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - 5.) Both heard Him pray for His murderers, both saw Him suffer patiently.
 - 6.) While one repented, the other remained hardened.
 - 7.) While one began to pray, the other went on railing.
 - 8.) While one was converted in his last hours, the other died a bad man, as he had lived.
 - 9.) While one was taken to paradise, the other went to his own place - the place of the devil and his angels.
- b. Some may repent and be converted on their deathbeds, it does not at all follow that all will. A deathbed is not always a saving time.
 - c. Two men may have the same opportunities of getting good for their souls, may be placed in the same position, see the same things, and hear the same things - and yet only one of the two shall take advantage of them, repent, believe and be saved.
 - d. Repentance and faith are the gifts of God and are not in a man's own power.
 - 1.) If anyone flatters himself he can repent at his own time, like the penitent thief, be saved at the very last - he may find at length he is greatly deceived.
 - e. There is an immense amount of delusion in the world on that they ought to repent, but always putting off their own repentance.
 - 1.) Most men suppose they can turn to God just when they like!
 - 2.) They wrest the parable of the laborer in the vineyard, which speaks of the eleventh hour, and use it as it never was meant to be used.
 - 3.) *"He that puts off his repentance and seeking for pardon to the very last, in reliance upon this example, does but tempt God, and turn that to his own poison, which God intended for better ends. "The mercies of God are never recorded in Scripture for man's presumption, and the failings of men never for imitation." – John Lightfoot*
 - 4.) *"Most ungrateful and foolish is the conduct of those who take encouragement from the penitent thief to put off repentance to a dying moment; most ungrateful in perverting the grace of their Redeemer into an occasion of renewing their provocations against Him; and most foolish to imagine that what our Lord did in so singular circumstances, is to be drawn into an ordinary precedent." – Philip Doddridge*
2. Look at the history of men in the Bible, and see how often these notions are contradicted.
 - a. Look at Saul and David.
 - 1.) They lived about the same time.
 - 2.) They rose from the same rank in life.
 - 3.) They were called to the same position in the world.
 - 4.) They enjoyed the ministry of the same prophet, Samuel;
 - 5.) They reigned the same number of years!
 - 6.) Yet one was saved, and the other lost.
 - b. Look at Sergius Paulus and Gallio.
 - 1.) They were both Roman governors; they were both wise and prudent men in their generation.
 - 2.) They both heard the Apostle Paul preach!
 - 3.) But one believed and was baptized - the other "cared for none of those things."
 - 4.) ***[Acts 18:17]- Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment seat. And Gallio cared for none of those things.***
 - c. Look at the world around you.
 - 1.) Two sisters will often attend the same ministry, listen to the same truths, hear the same sermons; and yet only one shall be converted unto God, while the other remains totally unmoved.

- 2.) Two friends often read the same religious book: one is so moved by it, that he gives up all for Christ; the other sees nothing at all in it, and continues the same as before.
 - 3.) No man has any warrant for saying, "*Salvation is in my own power.*"
3. Beware of presumption.
- a.) Do not abuse God's mercy and compassion.
 - b.) Do not continue in sin and think you can repent, and believe, and be saved, just when you like, when you please, when you will, and when you choose.
- 2.) Beware of letting slip good thoughts and godly convictions, if you have them.
 - a.) Cherish them and nourish them, lest you lose them for ever.
 - b.) Make the most of them, lest they take to themselves wings and flee away.
 - c.) Have you an inclination to begin praying? Put it in practice at once.
 - d.) Have you an idea of beginning really to serve Christ? Set about it at once.
 - e.) Are you enjoying any spiritual light? See that you live up to your light.
 - f.) Trifle not with opportunities, lest the day come when you will want to use them, and not be able.
 - g.) Linger not, lest you become wise too late.
- D. The Spirit always leads saved souls in one way.
1. See how strong was the faith of this man.
 - a. The thief's testimony.
 - 1.) He called Jesus "Lord."
 - 2.) He declared his belief that He would have a "kingdom."
 - 3.) He believed that He was able to give him eternal life and glory, and in this belief prayed to Him.
 - 4.) He maintained His innocence of all the charges brought against Him. "This Man." said he, he hath done nothing amiss."
 - 5.) ***[Luke 23:41]- And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.***
 - b. When did all this happen?
 - 1.) When the whole nation had denied Christ - shouting, "Crucify Him, crucify Him: we have no king but Caesar,"
 - 2.) When the chief priests and Pharisees had condemned and found Him "guilty of death,"
 - 3.) When even His own disciples had forsaken Him and fled.
 - 4.) When He was hanging, faint, bleeding, and dying on the cross, numbered with transgressors, and accounted accursed.
 - 5.) This was the hour when the thief believed in Christ, and prayed to Him.
 - 6.) "*I know not that since the creation of the world there ever was a more remarkable and striking example of faith.*" – John Calvin *Commentary on the Gospels.*
 - 7.) "*A great faith that can see the sun under so thick a cloud; that can discover a Christ, a Saviour, under such a poor, scorned, despised, crucified Jesus, and call Him Lord. 'A great faith that could see Christ's kingdom through His cross, and grave, and death, and when there was so little sign of a kingdom, and pray to be remembered In that kingdom.'*" – John Lightfoot.
 - 8.) "*The penitent thief was the first confessor of Christ's heavenly kingdom - the first martyr who bore testimony to the holiness of His sufferings - and the first apologist for His oppressed innocence.*" - Pasquier Quesnel *The Gospel*
 - 9.) "*Probably there are few saints in glory who ever honoured Christ more illustriously than this dying sinner.*" – Philip Doddridge.
 - 10.) "*Is this the voice of a thief or a disciple? Give me leave, O Saviour, to borrow Thine own words, 'Verily I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel.' He saw Thee hanging miserably by him, and yet styles Thee Lord. He saw Thee dying, and yet talks*

of Thy kingdom. He felt himself dying, yet talks of a future remembrance, O faith, stronger than death, which can look beyond the cross at a crown; beyond dissolution at a remembrance of life and glory! Which of Thine eleven were heard to speak so gracious a word to Thee in these Thy last pangs?" - Bishop Hall.

- c. The disciples had seen mighty signs and miracles.
 - 1.) They had seen the dead raised with a word - and lepers healed with a touch - the blind receiving sight - the dumb made to speak - the lame made to walk.
 - 2.) They had seen thousands fed with a few loaves and fishes.
 - 3.) They had seen their Master walking on the water as on dry land.
 - 4.) They had all of them heard Him speak as no man ever spake, and hold out promises of good things yet to come.
 - 5.) They had some of them had a foretaste of His glory in the mount of transfiguration.
 - 6.) Doubtless their faith was "the gift of God," but still they had much to help it.
- d. The dying thief only saw our Lord in agony, and in weakness, in suffering, and in pain.
 - 1.) He saw Him undergoing a dishonorable punishment; deserted, mocked, despised, blasphemed.
 - 2.) He saw Him rejected by all the great, and wise, and noble of His own people - His strength dried up like a potsherd, His life drawing nigh to the grave.
 - a.) *[Psalm 22:15]- My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.*
 - b.) *[Psalm 88:3]- for my soul is full of troubles: and my life draweth nigh unto the grave.*
 - 3.) He saw no scepter, no royal crown, no outward dominion, no glory, no majesty, no power, and no signs of might.
 - 4.) Yet the dying thief believed, and looked forward to Christ's kingdom.
- e. Would you know if you have the Spirit? Where is your faith in Christ?
2. See what a right sense of sin the thief had.
 - a. He says to his companion, "We receive the due reward of our deeds."
 - b. He acknowledges his own ungodliness, and the justice of his punishment.
 - c. He makes no attempt to justify himself, or excuse his wickedness.
 - d. He speaks like a man humbled and self-abased by the remembrance of past iniquities.
 - e. This is what all God's children feel.
 - 1.) They are ready to allow they are poor, hell-deserving sinners.
 - 2.) They can say with their hearts as well as with their lips, "*We have left undone the things that we ought to have done, and we have done those things that we ought not to have done, and there is no health in us.*"
- f. Would you know if you have the Spirit? Do you feel your sins?
3. See what brotherly love the thief showed to his companion.
 - a. He tried to stop his railing and blaspheming, and bring him to a better mind. "Dost not thou fear God," he says, "seeing thou art in the same condemnation?"
 - b. There is no surer mark of grace than this; grace shakes a man out of his selfishness, and makes him feel for the souls of others.
 - c. When the Samaritan woman was converted, she left her water-pot, and ran to the city.
 - 1.) *[John 4:28-29]- The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?*

- d. When Saul was converted, immediately he went to the synagogue at Damascus and testified to his brethren of Israel that "Christ was the Son of God." (Acts ix. 20.)
 - e. Would you know if you have the Spirit? Then where is your charity and love to souls?
- E. Believers in Christ when they die are with the Lord.
- 1. Believers after death are "with Christ."
 - a. **[Luke 23:43]- And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.**
 - b. **[Philippians 1:23]- For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:**
 - 2. There is no brighter view of paradise than this - Christ is there.
 - a. "We ought not to enter into curious and subtle arguments about the place of paradise. Let us rest satisfied with knowing that those who are engrafted by faith into the body of Christ are partakers of life, and there enjoy after death a blessed and joyful rest, until the perfect glory of the heavenly life is fully manifested by the coming of Christ." – John Calvin *Calvin's Commentary on the Gospels*.
 - b. **[Psalm 16:11]- Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.**
 - c. It was a true saying of a dying girl, when her mother tried to comfort her by describing what paradise would be. "There," she said to the child, "there you will have no pains, and no sickness; there you will see your brothers and sisters who have gone before you, and will be always happy." "Ah, mother!" was the reply, "but there is one thing better than all, and that is, Christ will be there."
 - 3. Application
 - a. To those who do not think much about their soul.
 - 1.) It may be you know little of Christ as your Saviour, and have never tasted by experience that He is precious.
 - 2.) Perhaps you hope to go to paradise when you die.
 - 3.) Paradise is a place where Christ is. Then can it be a place that you would enjoy?
 - b. To those who are a believer, and yet tremble at the thought of the grave.
 - 1.) It seems cold and dreary.
 - 2.) You feel as if all before you was dark and gloomy, and comfortless.
 - 3.) Fear not, but be encouraged by this text. You are going to paradise, and Christ will be there.
- F. The eternal portion of every man's soul is close to him.
- 1. Today
 - a. He names no distant period.
 - b. He does not talk of His entering into a state of happiness as a thing "far away,"
 - c. He speaks of today - "this very day in which thou art hanging on the cross."
 - 2. How near that seems!
 - a. How awfully near that word brings our everlasting dwelling-place!
 - b. Happiness or misery - sorrow or joy - the presence of Christ or the company of devils - all are close to us.
 - c. **[1 Samuel 20:3]- And David sware moreover, and said, Thy father certainly knoweth that I have found grace in thine eyes; and he saith, Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved: but truly, as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death.**
 - d. There is but a step, we may say, between ourselves and either paradise or hell.

e. ***[Job 3:17]- There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest.***

- f. The very moment that believers die they are in paradise. Their battle is fought: their strife is over.
- 1.) We are warring still, but they are at peace.
 - 2.) We are laboring, but they are at rest. We are watching, but they are sleeping.
 - 3.) We are wearing our spiritual armour, but they have forever put it off.
 - 4.) We are still at sea, but they are safe in harbour.
 - 5.) We have tears, but they have joy.
 - 6.) We are strangers and pilgrims, but as for them they are at home.
 - 7.) Surely, better are the dead in Christ than the living!
 - 8.) Surely the very hour the poor saint dies, he is at once higher and happier than the highest upon earth.
 - 9.) *"We give Thee hearty thanks, for that it hath pleased Thee to deliver this our brother out of the miseries of this sinful world."* - Church of England Burial Service.
 - 10.) *"I have some of the best news to impart. One beloved by you has accomplished her warfare; has received an answer to her prayers, and everlasting joy rests upon her head. My dear wife, the source of my best earthly comfort for twenty years, departed on Tuesday."* - Henry Venn's letter to Stillingfleet, announcing the death of his wife.

3. Points of error.

- a. Purgatory in Roman Catholicism.
- b. Some interval or space of time between death and their eternal state.
 - 1.) They fancy they shall go through a kind of purifying change, and that though they die unfit for heaven, they shall yet be found meet for it after all!
 - 2.) There is no change after death: there is no conversion in the grave: there is no new heart given after the last breath is drawn.
 - 3.) The very day we go, we launch forever: the day we go from this world, we begin an eternal condition.
 - 4.) From that day there is no spiritual alteration - no spiritual change. As we die, so we shall receive our portion after death: as the tree falls, so it must lie.
 - 5.) If you are an unconverted man, this ought to make you think.
 - a.) Do you know you are close to hell?
 - b.) This very day you might die; and if you died out of Christ you would open your eyes at once in hell, and in torment.
 - 6.) If you are a true Christian, you are far nearer heaven than you think.
 - a.) This very day if the Lord should take you, you would find yourself in paradise.
 - b.) The good land of promise is near to you.
 - c.) The eyes that you closed in weakness and pain would open at once on a glorious rest, such as my tongue cannot describe.

G. Conclusion.

1. To the humble-hearted and contrite sinner.
 - a. See what the penitent thief did, and do likewise.
 - b. See how he prayed;
 - c. See how he called on the Lord Jesus Christ;
 - d. See what an answer of peace he obtained.
 - e. Brother or sister, why should not you do the same?
 - f. Why should not you also be saved?
2. To the proud and presumptuous man of the world.
 - a. See how the impenitent thief died as he had lived and beware lest you come to a like end.
 - b. Oh, erring brother or sister, be not too confident, lest you die in your sins!
 - c. Seek the Lord while He may be found.

- d. Turn you, turn: why will you die?
- 3. To the professing believer in Christ.
 - a. See that you know something of true repentance and saving faith, of real humility and fervent charity.
 - b. Brother or sister, do not be satisfied with the world's standard of Christianity.
 - c. Be of one mind with the penitent thief, and you will be wise.
- 4. To those mourning over departed believers.
 - a. See how your beloved ones are in the best of hands.
 - b. They cannot be better off.
 - c. They never were so well in their lives as they are now.
 - d. They are with Jesus, whom their souls loved on earth.
 - e. Oh, cease from your selfish mourning.
 - f. Rejoice rather that they are freed from trouble, and have entered into rest.
- 5. To the aged servant of Christ.
 - a. See how near you are to home.
 - b. Your salvation is nearer than when you first believed.
 - c. A few more days of labor and sorrow, and the King of kings shall send for you.
 - d. In a moment your warfare shall be at end, and all shall be peace.

XII. The Ruler Of The Waves

A. Proof text.

1. ***[Mark 4:37-40]- And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?***

B. Following Christ will not prevent our having earthly sorrows and troubles.

1. The faithful little flock is allowed by the Shepherd to be much disquieted.
2. The Lord Jesus taught them that a man may be one of His chosen servants, and yet have to go through many an anxiety, and endure many a pain.
3. If you are a believer, you must reckon on having your share of sickness and pain, of sorrow and tears, of losses and crosses, of deaths and bereavements, of partings and separations, of vexations and disappointments, so long as you are in the body. Christ never undertakes that you shall get to heaven without these. He has undertaken that all who come to Him shall have all things pertaining to life and godliness; but He has never undertaken that He will make them prosperous, or rich, or healthy, and that death and sorrow shall never come to their family.
4. Many do not like these terms.
 - a. They would prefer having Christ and good health.
 - b. They would prefer having Christ and plenty of money.
 - c. They would prefer having Christ and no deaths in their family.
 - d. They would prefer having Christ and no wearing cares.
 - e. They would prefer having Christ and a perpetual morning without clouds.
 - f. But they do not like Christ and the cross - Christ and tribulation - Christ and the conflict - Christ and the howling wind - Christ and the storm.
5. How should you know who are true Christians, if following Christ was the way to be free from trouble?
 - a. How should we discern the wheat from the chaff if it were not for the winnowing of trial?
 - b. How should we know whether men served Christ if His service brought health and wealth with it as a matter of course?

- c. The winds of winter soon show us which of the trees are evergreen and which are not.
 - d. The storms of affliction and care are useful in the same way.
 - e. Storms discover whose faith is real, and whose is nothing but profession and form.
6. How would the great work of sanctification go on in a man if he had no trial?
 - a. Trouble is often the only fire that will burn away the dross that clings to our hearts.
 - b. Trouble is the pruning-knife that the great Husbandman employs in order to make us fruitful in good works.
 - c. The harvest of the Lord's field is seldom ripened by sunshine only.
 - d. It must go through its days of wind, and rain, and storm.
 7. If you desire to serve Christ and be saved, I entreat you to take the Lord on His own terms.
 - a. Make up your mind to meet with your share of crosses and sorrows, and then you will not be surprised.
 - b. For want of understanding this, many seem to run well for a season, and then turn back in disgust, and are cast away.
 8. If you profess to be a child of God, leave to the Lord Jesus to sanctify you in His own way.
 - a. Rest satisfied that He never makes any mistakes.
 - b. Be sure that He does all things well.
 - c. The winds may howl around you, and the waters swell but fear not.
 - d. *[Psalm 107:7]- And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.*
- C. The Lord Jesus Christ is truly and really Man.
1. He was weary.
 - a. After laboring all day to do good to souls.
 - b. After preaching in the open air to vast multitudes, Jesus was fatigued.
 - c. Surely if the sleep of the laboring man is sweet, much more sweet must have been the sleep of our blessed Lord!
 2. He was equal to the Father in all things, and the eternal God. But He was also Man, and took part of flesh and blood, and was made like unto us in all things, except in sin.
 - a. He had a body like our own.
 - b. Like us, He was born of a woman.
 - c. Like us, He grew and increased in stature.
 - d. Like us, He was often hungry and thirsty, and faint and weary.
 - e. Like us, He ate and drank, rested and slept.
 - f. Like us, He sorrowed, and wept, and felt.
 - g. He that made the heavens went to and fro as a poor, weary Man on earth!
 - h. He that ruled over principalities and powers in heavenly places took on Him a frail body like our own.
 - i. He that might have dwelt forever in the glory, which He had with the Father, amidst the praises of legions of angels, came down to earth and dwelt as a Man among sinful men.
 - j. Surely this fact alone is an amazing miracle of condescension, grace, pity, and love.
 3. Sympathy is one of the sweetest things left to us in this sinful world.
 - a. Sympathy is far better than money, and far more rare too.
 - b. Sympathy has the greatest power to draw us and to open our hearts.
 - c. Genuine sympathy in such a day will call out all our better feelings and obtain an influence over us when nothing else can.
 4. See the marvelous proof of love and wisdom in the union of two natures in Christ's person.

- a. It was marvelous love in our Saviour to condescend to go through weakness and humiliation for our sakes, ungodly rebels as we are.
 - b. It was marvelous wisdom to fit Himself in this way to be the very Friend of friends, who could not only save man, but meet him on his own ground.
 - c. One able to perform all things needful to redeem my soul.
 - d. One able to understand my weakness and infirmities, and to deal gently with my soul.
 - e. Had the Saviour been God only, we might perhaps have trusted Him, but never could have come near to Him without fear.
 - f. Had the Saviour been Man only, we might have loved Him, but never could have felt sure that He was able to take away my sins.
 - g. The Saviour is God as well as Man, and Man as well as God - God, and so able to deliver - Man, and so able to feel.
 - h. Almighty power and deepest sympathy are met together in one glorious person, Jesus Christ, my Lord.
 - i. ***[Hebrews 12:3]- For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.***
5. Apply to the Lord Jesus for spiritual comfort in earthly troubles, then remember the days of His flesh, and His human nature.
- a. Apply to One who knows your feelings by experience, and has drunk deep of the bitter cup, for He was "a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."
 - 1.) ***[Isaiah 53:3]- He is despised and rejected of men ; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief : and we hid as it were our faces from him ; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.***
 - b. Jesus knows the heart of a man – the bodily pains of a man - the difficulties of a man, for he was a Man Himself, and had flesh and blood upon earth.
 - c. He sat wearied by the well at Sychar.
 - d. He wept over the grave of Lazarus at Bethany.
 - e. He sweat great drops of blood at Gethsemane. He groaned with anguish at Calvary.
6. He is no stranger to your sensations. He is acquainted with everything that belongs to human nature, except sin.
- a. Are you poor and needy? So also was Jesus.
 - 1.) ***[Matthew 8:20]- And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.***
 - 2.) ***[John 1:46]- And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.***
 - 3.) He was esteemed a carpenter's son.
 - 4.) He preached in a borrowed boat.
 - 5.) He rode into Jerusalem on a borrowed ass.
 - 6.) He was buried in a borrowed tomb.
 - b. Are you alone in the world, and neglected by those who ought to love you? So also was Jesus.
 - 1.) He came unto His own, and they received Him not.
 - 2.) He came to be a Messiah to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and they rejected Him.
 - 3.) The princes of this world would not acknowledge Him.
 - 4.) The few that followed Him were publicans and fishermen.
 - 5.) Even these at the last forsook Him, and were scattered every man to his own place.
 - c. Are you misunderstood, misrepresented, slandered, and persecuted? So also was Jesus.

- 1.) He was called a glutton and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans, a Samaritan, a madman, and a devil.
 - 2.) His character was belied.
 - 3.) False charges were laid against Him.
 - 4.) An unjust sentence was passed upon Him.
 - 5.) Though innocent, He was condemned as a malefactor, and as such died on the cross.
- d. Does Satan tempt you, and offer horrid suggestions to your mind? So also did he tempt Jesus.
- 1.) He bade Him to distrust God's fatherly providence. "*Command these stones to be made bread.*"
 - 2.) He proposed to Him to tempt God by exposing Himself to unnecessary danger. "*Cast Thyself down*" from the pinnacle of the temple.
 - 3.) He suggested to Him to obtain the kingdoms of the world for His own, by one little act of submission to himself. "*All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me.*"
- e. Do you ever feel great agony and conflict of mind? Do you feel in darkness as if God had left you? So did Jesus.
- 1.) Who can tell the extent of the sufferings of mind He went through in the garden?
 - 2.) Who can measure the depth of His soul's pain when He cried, "*My God! My God! Why hast Thou forsaken me?*"
- D. There may be much weakness and infirmity, even in a true Christian.
1. The waves broke over the ship.
 - a. They awoke Jesus in haste.
 - b. They said to Him, in fear and anxiety, "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?"
 2. There was impatience.
 - a. They might have waited till their Lord thought fit to arise from His sleep.
 3. There was unbelief.
 - a. They forgot that they were in the keeping of One who had all power in His hand. "We perish."
 4. There was distrust.
 - a. They spoke as if they doubted their Lord's care and thoughtfulness for their safety and well-being. "Carest Thou not that we perish?"
 5. This is only a picture of what is constantly going on among believers in every age.
 - a. Many of God's children get on very well so long as they have no trials.
 - b. Suddenly some unlooked-for trial assails them.
 - c. Where now is their faith?
 - d. Where is the strong confidence they thought they had?
 - e. Where is their peace, their hope, and their resignation?
 - f. They are weighed in the balances and found wanting. Fear, and doubt, and distress, and anxiety, break in upon them like a flood, and they seem at their wits' end.
 6. There is no literal and absolute perfection among true Christians, so long as they are in the body.
 - a. The best and brightest of God's saints is but a poor mixed being.
 - b. Converted, renewed, and sanctified though he is, he is still compassed with infirmity.
 - c. There is not a just man upon earth that always doeth good and sinneth not.

- 1.) *[Ecclesiastes 7:20]- For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.*
- d. In many things we offend all.
- 1.) *[James 3:2]- For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.*
- e. A man may have true saving faith, and yet not have it always close at hand, and ready to be used.
- f. Abraham was the father of the faithful.
- 1.) By faith he forsook his country and his kindred, and went out according to the command of God, to a land he had never seen.
- 2.) By faith he was content to dwell in the land as a stranger, believing that God would give it to him for an inheritance.
- 3.) Yet this very Abraham was so far overcome by unbelief, that he allowed Sarah to be called his sister, and not his wife, through the fear of man.
- 4.) Here was great infirmity. Yet there have been few greater saints than Abraham.
- g. David was a man after God's own heart.
- 1.) He had faith to go out to battle with the giant Goliath when he was but a youth.
- 2.) He publicly declared his belief that the Lord who delivered him from the paw of the lion and bear, would deliver him from this Philistine.
- 3.) He had faith to believe God's promise that he should one day be King of Israel, though he had few followers - though Saul pursued him like a partridge on the mountains and there often seemed but a step between him and death.
- 4.) Yet this very David at one time was so far overtaken by fear and unbelief.
- a.) *[1 Samuel 27:1]- And David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul: there is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any coast of Israel: so shall I escape out of his hand.*
- 5.) He forgot the deliverance he had experienced at God's hand.
- 6.) He only thought of his present danger, and took refuge among the ungodly Philistines.
- 7.) Surely here was great infirmity. Yet there have been few stronger believers than David.
- h. To those who would not excuse the fears of the disciples. "They had Jesus actually with them. They ought not to have been afraid."
- 1.) He knows little of his own heart.
- 2.) No one knows the length and breadth of his own infirmities if he has not been tempted.
- 3.) No one can say how much weakness might appear in him if he was placed in circumstances.
- 4.) Do you feel such love and confidence in Him that you cannot understand being greatly moved by any event that could happen?
- a.) But has this faith been tried?
- b.) Has this confidence been put to the test?
- c.) If not, take heed of condemning these disciples hastily.
- d.) Be not high-minded, but fear.
- e.) Think not because your heart is in a lively frame now, that such a frame will always last.
- f.) *[2 Chronicles 32:31]- Howbeit, in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to inquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart.*

- g.) *[1 Peter 5:5]- 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.*
- h.) *[Proverbs 28:14]- Happy is the man that feareth always: but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief.*
- i.) *[1 Corinthians 10:12]- Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.*
- i. Young Christians ought to understand what they must expect to find in themselves.
 - 1.) To prevent their being stumbled and puzzled by the discovery of their own weakness and infirmity.
 - 2.) To see that they may have true faith and grace, in spite of all the devil's whispers to the contrary, though they feel within doubts and fears.
 - 3.) To observe that Peter, and James, and John, and their brethren were true disciples, and yet not so spiritual but that they could be afraid.
 - 4.) To not make the unbelief of the disciples an excuse for themselves.
 - 5.) As they are in the body they must not expect faith to be above the reach of fear.
- j. Christians ought to understand what they must expect in other believers.
 - 1.) You must not hastily conclude that a man has no grace merely because you see in him some corruption.
 - a.) There are spots on the face of the sun; and yet the sun shines brightly and enlightens the whole world.
 - b.) There is quartz and dross mixed up with many a lump of gold that comes from Australia; and yet who thinks the gold on that account worth nothing at all?
 - c.) There are flaws in some of the finest diamonds in the world; and yet they do not prevent their being rated at a priceless value.
 - 2.) The Apostles believed in Christ, loved Christ, and gave up all to follow Christ. And yet you see in this storm the Apostles were afraid.
 - a.) Learn to be charitable in your judgment of them.
 - b.) Learn to be moderate in your expectations from your own heart.
 - c.) Contend to the death for the truth that no man is a true Christian who is not converted, and is not a holy man.
 - d.) But allow that a man may be converted, have a new heart, and be a holy man, and yet be liable to infirmity, doubts and fears.
- E. The power of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - 1. This was a wonderful miracle. No one could do this but one who was almighty.
 - a. *[Mark 5:39]- And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.*
 - b. Make the winds cease with a word! Who does not know that it is a common saying, in order to describe impossibility, "*You might as well speak to the wind!*"
 - c. Calm the waves with a voice! What reader of history does not know that a mighty King of England tried in vain to stop the tide rising on the shore? Yet here is one who says to raging waves in a storm, "*Peace, be still,*" and at once there was a calm. Here was power.
 - 2. It is good for all men to have clear views of the Lord Jesus Christ's power.
 - a. Let the sinner know that the merciful Saviour to whom he is urged to flee, and in whom he is invited to trust, is nothing less than the Almighty, and has power over all flesh to eternal life.
 - 1.) *[Revelation 1:8]- I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.*

- 2.) *[John 17:2]- as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.*
- b. Let the anxious inquirer understand that if he will only venture on Jesus, and take up the cross, he ventures on One who has all power in heaven and earth.
 - 1.) *[Matthew 28:18]- And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*
- c. Let the believer remember as he journeys through the wilderness, that his Mediator, and Advocate, and Physician, and Shepherd, and Redeemer, is Lord of lords, and King of kings, and that through Him all things may be done.
 - 1.) *[Revelation 17:14]- These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.*
 - 2.) *[Philippians 4:13]- I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*
3. Let all study the subject of Jesus' power.
 - a. Study it in His works of creation.
 - 1.) *[John 1:3]- All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.*
 - b. Study it in His works of providence, and the orderly continuance of all things in the world.
 - 1.) *[Colossians 1:17]- and he is before all things, and by him all things consist:*
 - 2.) *[Psalm 119:91]- They continue this day according to thine ordinances: for all are thy servants.*
 - c. Study the subject not least in the miracles worked by our Lord Jesus Christ during the three years of His ministry upon earth.
 - 1.) Learn from the mighty works, which He did, that the things, which are impossible with man, are possible with Christ.
 - 2.) Regard every one of His miracles as an emblem and figure of spiritual things.
 - 3.) See in it a lovely picture of what He is able to do for your soul. He that could raise the dead with a word can just as easily raise man from the death of sin.
 - 4.) He that could give sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and speech to the dumb, can also make sinners to see the kingdom of God, hear the joyful sound of the Gospel, and speak forth the praise of redeeming love.
 - 5.) He that could heal leprosy with a touch can heal any disease of heart.
 - 6.) He that could cast out devils can bid every besetting sin yield to His grace.
 - 7.) Oh, begin to read Christ's miracles in this light!
 - 8.) Wicked, and bad, and corrupt as you may feel, take comfort in the thought that you are not beyond Christ's power to heal.
 - 9.) Remember that in Christ there is not only a fulness of mercy, but a fulness of power.
 - d. Study the subject in particular as placed before you this day.
 - 1.) Your heart has sometimes been tossed to and fro like the waves in a storm.
 - 2.) You have found it agitated like the waters of the troubled sea when it cannot rest.
 - 3.) Come and hear this day that there is One who can give you rest.
 - 4.) Jesus can say to your heart, whatever may be its ailment, "Peace, be still I "
 - 5.) Your conscience within be lashed by the recollection of countless transgressions, and torn by every gust of temptation?
 - 6.) What though the remembrance of past hideous profligacy be grievous unto you, and the burden intolerable?
 - 7.) What though your heart seems full of evil, and sin appears to drag you whither it will like a slave?

- 8.) What though the devil rides to and fro over your soul like a conqueror, and tells you it is vain to struggle against him, there is no hope for you?
 - a.) My Lord and Master Jesus Christ can rebuke the devil's raging, can calm even your soul's misery, and say even to you, "Peace, be still!"
 - 9.) If your heart be right with God, and yet you are pressed down with a load of earthly trouble?
 - a.) He can speak peace to wounded hearts as easily as calm troubled seas.
 - b.) He can rebuke rebellious wills as powerfully as raging winds.
 - c.) He can make storms of sorrow abate and silence tumultuous passions as surely as He stopped the Galilean storm.
 - d.) He can say to the heaviest anxiety, "Peace, be still!"
 - e.) *[Psalm 93:4]- The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.*
 - f.) *[Matthew 11:28]- Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*
 - g.) *[Hebrews 12:25]- See that ye refuse not him that speaketh: for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:*
- F. How tenderly and patiently the Lord Jesus deals with weak believers.
1. He simply asks two questions. "Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?"
 2. At no time of our Lord's ministry did the disciples seem to comprehend fully the object of His coming into the world.
 - a. The humiliation, the atonement, the crucifixion, were hidden things to them.
 - b. The plainest words and clearest warnings from their Master of what was going to befall Him seemed to have had no effect on their minds.
 - c. They understood not. They perceived not. It was hid from their eyes.
 - d. Once Peter even tried to dissuade our Lord from suffering.
 - 1.) *[Matthew 16:22]- Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.*
 - 2.) *[Luke 18:34]- And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.*
 - 3.) *[Luke 9:45]- But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying.*
 - e. You will see things in their spirit and demeanour which are not at all to be commended.
 - 1.) *[Mark 9:34]- But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest.*
 - 2.) *[Mark 8:17-18, 21]- And when Jesus knew it, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened? Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember? And he said unto them, How is it that ye do not understand? ****
 - 3.) *[Luke 9:54]- And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elijah did?*
 - 4.) In the garden of Gethsemane the three best of them slept when they should have watched and prayed.
 - 5.) In the hour of His betrayal they all forsook Him and fled.
 - 6.) Peter, the most forward of the twelve, denied his Master three times with an oath.
 - 7.) Even after the resurrection, you see the same unbelief and hardness of heart cling to them.
 - a.) *[Luke 24.25]- Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:*

3. Our Lord's behavior towards these disciples all through His ministry?
 - a. He had nothing but unchanging pity, compassion, kindness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, and love.
 - b. He does not cast them off for their stupidity.
 - c. He does not reject them for their unbelief.
 - d. He does not dismiss them forever for cowardice.
 - e. He teaches them, as they are able to bear.
 - f. He leads them on step by step, as a nurse does an infant when it first begins to walk.
 - g. He sends them kind messages as soon as He is risen from the dead.
 - 1.) *[Matthew 28:10]- Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.*
 - h. He gathers them round Himself once more. He restores Peter to his place, and bids him "feed His sheep."
 - 1.) *[John 21:17]- He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jona, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.*
 - i. He condescends to sojourn with them forty days before He finally ascends.
 - j. He commissions them to go forth as His messengers, and preach the Gospel to the Gentiles.
 - k. He blesses them in parting, and encourages them with that gracious promise; "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."
 - 1.) *[Matthew 28:20]- teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*
4. Let the world know that the Lord Christ is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.
 - a. *[James 5:11]- Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord ; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.*
 - b. *[Matthew 12:20]- A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.*
 - c. *[Psalm 103:13]- Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.*
 - d. *[Isaiah 66:13]- As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.*
 - e. *[Isaiah 40:11]- He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.*
5. Let the world know that the Lord Jesus will not cast away His believing people because of shortcomings and infirmities.
 - a. The husband does not put away his wife because he finds failings in her.
 - b. The mother does not forsake her infant because it is weak, feeble and ignorant.
 - c. The Lord Christ does not cast off poor sinners who have committed their souls into His hands because He sees in them blemishes and imperfections.
 - d. It is His glory to pass over the faults of His people, and heal their backslidings – to make much of their weak graces and to pardon their many faults.
 - e. In the eleventh of Hebrews, the Holy Ghost speaks of the faith of the Lord's people but the faults are left alone, and not mentioned at all.
6. Who is there that feels desires after salvation, but is afraid to become decided, lest by-and-by he should fall away?

- a. Consider, I beseech you, the tenderness and patience of the Lord Jesus and be afraid no more.
 - b. Fear not to take up the cross and come out boldly from the world.
 - c. That same Lord and Saviour who bore with the disciples is ready and willing to bear with you.
 - d. If you stumble, He will raise you. If you err, He will gently bring you back. If you faint, He will revive you.
 - e. He will not lead you out of Egypt, and then suffer you to perish in the wilderness.
 - f. He will conduct you safe into the Promised Land.
 - g. Only commit yourself to His guidance, and then, my soul for yours, He shall carry you safe home.
 - h. Only hear Christ's voice, and follow Him, and you shall never perish.
7. Who is there that has been converted and desires to do his Lord's will?
- a. Take example, this day, by your Master's gentleness and long-suffering, and learn to be tenderhearted and kind to others.
 - b. Deal gently with young beginners. Do not expect them to know everything and understand everything all at once.
 - c. Take them by the hand. Lead them on and encourage them.
 - d. Believe all things, and hope all things, rather than make that heart sad which God would not have made sad.
 - e. Deal gently with backsliders. Do not turn your back on them as if their case was hopeless. Use every lawful means to restore them to their former place.
 - f. Consider yourself, and your often infirmities, and do as you would be done by.
 - g. Alas, there is a painful absence of the Master's mind among many of His disciples.
 - 1.) There are few churches, I fear, in the present day, which would have received Peter into communion again for many a long year, after denying His Lord.
 - 2.) There are few believers ready to do the work of Barnabas - willing to take young converts by the hand, and encourage them at their first beginnings.
 - h. Verily we want an outpouring of the Spirit upon believers almost as much as upon the world.

G. Application.

- 1. To those who know nothing of Christ's service by experience, or of Christ Himself.
 - a. Your present course cannot last. You will not live for ever. There must be an end.
 - b. What will you do when that day comes?
 - c. You will find no comfort when sick and dying, unless Jesus Christ is your friend.
 - d. You will, discover, to your sorrow and confusion, that however much men may talk and boast, they cannot do without Christ when they come to their deathbed.
 - e. You may send for ministers, and get them to read prayers, and give you the sacrament. You may go through every form and ceremony of Christianity.
 - f. But if you persist in living a careless and worldly life, and despising Christ in the morning of your days, you must not be surprised if Christ leaves you to yourself in your latter end.
 - 1.) ***[Proverbs 1:22-23,26]- How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh;***
- 2. To those who love the Lord Jesus, and believe in Him, and yet desire to love Him better.
 - a. Keep before your mind, as an ever-present truth, that the Lord Jesus is an actual, living Person, and deal with Him as such.
 - 1.) Talk is more about salvation than about the Saviour.
 - 2.) Talk is more about redemption than about the Redeemer.

- 3.) Talk is more about justification than about Jesus.
 - 4.) Talk is more about Christ's work than about Christ's person.
- b. Cease to regard the Gospel as a mere collection of dry doctrines.
- 1.) Look at it rather as the revelation of a mighty, living Being in whose sight you are daily to live.
 - 2.) Cease to regard it as a mere set of abstract propositions and abstruse principles and rules. Look at it as the introduction to a glorious, personal Friend.
 - 3.) The kind of Gospel that the Apostles preached was the loving heart of an actual living Christ.
- c. Keep before your mind, as an ever-present truth, that the Lord Jesus is utterly unchanged.
- 1.) *[Hebrews 13:8]- Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever.*
 - 2.) *[James 1:17]- Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.*
 - 3.) Follow Him all through His journeys to and fro in Palestine.
 - 4.) Mark how He received all that came to Him and cast out none.
 - 5.) Mark how He had an ear to listen to every tale of sorrow, a hand to help every case of distress, a heart to feel for all who needed sympathy.
 - 6.) Place and time have made no difference in Him.
 - 7.) This thought will give life and reality to your daily religion.
 - 8.) This thought will give substance and shape to your expectation of good things to come.
 - 9.) Surely it is matter for joyful reflection, that He who was thirty-three years upon earth, and whose life we read in the Gospels, is the very Saviour in whose presence we shall spend eternity.
- d. Read the four Gospels more than they do to become better acquainted with Christ.
- 1.) *[Philippians 1:21]- For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

XIII. The Church Which Christ Builds

A. Proof text.

1. *[Matthew 16:18]- And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

B. A Building: "My Church."

1. The Church is no material building.
 - a. *[Acts 17:24-25]- God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; ****
 - b. *[1 Corinthians 7:19]- What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? ****
 - c. *[2 Corinthians 7:16]- And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ****
 - d. *[Ephesians 2:19-22]- Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit. ****
2. The Church is a company of men and women.
3. The Church members do not all worship God in the same way, or use the same form of government.

4. The Church has the Lord's gracious promises of preservation, continuance, protection, and final glory.
 - a. *"Whatsoever we read in Scripture concerning the endless love and saving mercy which God showeth towards His Churches, the only proper subject thereof is this Church, which we properly term the mystical body of Christ."* – Thomas Hooker
 - b. Small and despised as the true Church may be in this world, it is precious and honorable in the sight of God.
 5. Outside of the Church, which is "built on the rock", there can be no salvation.
- C. A Builder: Christ says, "I will build My Church."
1. The true Church of Christ is tenderly cared for by all the three Persons in the blessed Trinity.
 - a. God the Father chooses, God the Son redeems, and God the Holy Ghost sanctifies every member of Christ's mystical body.
 - b. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, three Persons and one God, co-operate for the salvation of every saved soul.
 - c. There is a peculiar sense in which the help of the Church is laid on the Lord Jesus Christ, peculiarly and pre-eminently the Redeemer and Saviour of the Church.
 - d. It is Christ who calls the members of the Church in due time.
 - 1.) *[Romans 1:6]- among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:*
 - 2.) *[John 5:21]- For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.*
 - 3.) *[Revelation 1:5]- and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the firstbegotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,*
 - 4.) *[John 14:19,27]- Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*
 - 5.) *[John 10:28]- and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*
 - 6.) *[Acts 5:31]- Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.*
 - 7.) *[John 1:12]- But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*
 - 8.) *[Colossians 1:19]- For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell ;*
 - e. The mighty agent by whom the Lord Jesus Christ carries out this work in the members of His Church is without doubt the Holy Ghost.
 - f. The Lord Jesus condescends to use many subordinate instruments.
 - 1.) *[1 Corinthians 3:6]- I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.*
 - g. Great is the wisdom wherewith the Lord Jesus Christ builds His Church!
 - 1.) The great Builder makes no mistakes.
 - 2.) He sees the end from the beginning.
 - 3.) He works by a perfect, unalterable, and certain plan.
 - h. Great is the condescension and mercy which Christ exhibits in building His Church!
 - 1.) He often chooses the most unlikely and roughest stones, and fits them into a most excellent work.
 - 2.) He despises none, and rejects none, on account of former sins and past transgressions.
 - 3.) He often makes Pharisees and Publicans become pillars of His house.
 - 4.) He delights to show mercy.

- 5.) He often takes the most thoughtless and ungodly, and transforms them into polished corners of His spiritual temple.
 - i. Great is the power that Christ displays in building His Church!
 - 1.) He carries on His work in spite of opposition from the world, the flesh, and the devil.
 - 2.) In storm, in tempest, through troublous times, silently, quietly, without noise, without stir, without excitement, the building progresses, like Solomon's temple.
 - a.) ***[Isaiah 43:13]- Yea, before the day was I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it?***
 - j. The children of this world take little or no interest in the building of this Church.
 - 1.) They care nothing for the conversion of souls.
 - 2.) What are broken spirits and penitent hearts to them?
 - 3.) What is conviction of sin, or faith in the Lord Jesus to them?
 - 4.) It is all "foolishness" in their eyes.
 - 5.) While the children of this world care nothing, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God.
 - 6.) For the preserving of the true Church, the laws of nature have oftentimes been suspended.
 - 7.) For the good of that Church, all the providential dealings of God in this world are ordered and arranged.
 - 8.) For the elect's sake, wars are brought to an end, and peace is given to a nation.
 - 9.) There is another work going on of infinitely greater moment, for which they are only the "axes and saws" in God's hands.
 - a.) ***[Isaiah 10:15]- Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood.***
 - k. We ought to feel deeply thankful that the building of the true Church is laid on the shoulders of One that is mighty.
 - 1.) If the work depended on man, it would soon stand still.
 - 2.) Blessed be God, the work is in the hands of a Builder who never fails to accomplish His designs!
 - 3.) Christ is the almighty Builder. He will carry on His work, though nations and visible Churches may not know their duty.
 - 4.) Christ will never fail. That which He has undertaken He will certainly accomplish.
- D. A Foundation: "*Upon this rock I will build My Church.*"
1. It was not the person of the Apostle Peter, but the good confession that the Apostle had just made!
 - a. It was not Peter, the erring, unstable man, but the mighty truth that the Father had revealed to Peter.
 - b. It was the truth concerning Jesus Christ Himself that was the rock.
 - c. It was Christ's Mediatorship, and Christ's Messiahship.
 - d. It was the blessed truth that Jesus was the promised Saviour, the true Surety, the real Intercessor between God and man.
 2. The foundation of the true Church was laid at a mighty cost.
 - a. It needed that the Son of God should take our nature upon Him, and in that nature live, suffer, and die, not for His own sins, but for ours.
 - b. It needed that in that nature Christ should go to the grave, and rise again.
 - c. It needed that in that nature Christ should go up to heaven, to sit at the right hand of God, having obtained eternal redemption for all His people.

- d. No other foundation could have met the necessities of lost, guilty, corrupt, weak, helpless sinners.
 3. That foundation, once obtained, is very strong.
 - a. It can bear the weight of the sins of the world.
 - b. It has borne the weight of all the sins of all the believers who have built on it.
 - c. Sins of thought, sins of the imagination, sins of the heart, sins of the head, sins which everyone has seen, and sins which no man knows, sins against God, and sins against man, sins of all kinds and descriptions - that mighty rock can bear the weight of all these sins, and not give way.
 - d. The mediatorial office of Christ is a remedy sufficient for all the sins of the entire world.
 4. To this one foundation every member of Christ's true Church is joined.
 - a. In many things believers are disunited and disagreed. In the matter of their soul's foundation they are all of one mind.
 - b. Whether Episcopalians or Presbyterians, Baptists or Methodists, believers all meet at one point.
 - c. They are all built on the rock, where they get their peace, and hope, and joyful expectation of good things to come.
 - d. All flows from that one mighty source, Christ the Mediator between God and man, and the office that Christ holds, as the High Priest and Surety of sinners.
 5. Application
 - a. Look to your foundation, if you would know whether or not you are a member of the one true Church.
 - b. Your public worship we can see; but we cannot see whether you are personally built upon the rock.
 - c. Your attendance at the Lord's table we can see; but we cannot see whether you are joined to Christ, and one with Christ, and Christ in you.
 - d. Take heed that you make no mistake about your own personal salvation.
 - e. See that your own soul is upon the rock.
 - f. Without this, all else is nothing. Without this, you will never stand in the Day of Judgment.
 - g. Better a thousand times in that day to be found in a cottage "upon the rock," than in a palace upon the sand!
- E. The Implied Trials of the Church: "*The gates of hell.*"
1. By that expression, "*the gates of hell,*" we are meant to understand the power of the prince of hell, even the devil.
 - a. **[Psalm 9:13]- Have mercy upon me, O Lord; consider my trouble which I suffer of them that hate me, thou that liftest me up from the gates of death:**
 - b. **[Psalm 107:18]- Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat; and they draw near unto the gates of death.**
 - c. **[Isaiah 8:10]- Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand: for God is with us.**
 2. The history of Christ's true Church has always been one of conflict and war.
 - a. The Church has been constantly assailed by a deadly enemy, Satan, the prince of this world.
 - b. The devil hates the true Church of Christ with an undying hatred.
 - c. He is ever stirring up opposition against all its members.
 - d. He is ever urging the children of this world to do his will, and to injure and harass the people of God.
 - e. If he cannot bruise the head, he will bruise the heel.
 - f. If he cannot rob the believers of heaven, he will vex them by the way.

3. Warfare with the powers of hell has been the experience of the whole body of Christ for six thousand years.
 - a. It has always been a bush burning, though not consumed - a woman fleeing into the wilderness, but not swallowed up.
 - 1.) ***[Exodus 3:2]- And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.***
 - 2.) ***[Revelation 12:6,16]- And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days. And the earth helped the woman; and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.***
 - b. The visible Churches have their times of prosperity and seasons of peace, but never has there been a time of peace for the true Church.
 - c. Its conflict is perpetual. Its battle never ends.
4. Warfare with the powers of hell is the experience of every individual member of the true Church.
 - a. Each has to fight. What are the lives of all the saints, but records of battles?
 - b. What were such men as Paul, and James, and Peter, and John, and Polycarp, and Chrysostom, and Augustine, and Luther, and Calvin, and Latimer, and Baxter, but soldiers engaged in a constant warfare?
5. We who preach the Gospel can hold out to all who come to Christ, “exceeding great and precious promises.”
 - a. ***[2 Peter 1:4]- whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.***
 - b. We can offer boldly to you, in our Master’s name, the peace of God which passeth all understanding.
 - 1.) ***[Philippians 4:7]- And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.***
 - c. Mercy, free grace, and full salvation, are offered to every one who will come to Christ, and believe on Him.
 - d. But we promise you no peace with the world, or with the devil. We warn you, on the contrary, that there must be warfare so long as you are in the body.
 - e. We would not keep you back, or deter you from Christ’s service. But we would have you “count the cost,” and fully understand what Christ’s service entails.
 - 1.) ***[Luke 14:28]- For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?***
6. Application
 - a. Marvel not at the enmity of the gates of hell.
 - 1.) ***[John 15:19]- If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.***
 - 2.) So long as the world is the world, and the devil the devil, so long there must be warfare, and believers in Christ must be soldiers.
 - 3.) ***“Cain will go on murdering Abel so long as the Church is on earth.” - Martin Luther***
 - b. Be prepared for the enmity of the gates of hell.
 - 1.) Put on the whole armour of God.

- 2.) The tower of David contains a thousand bucklers, all ready for the use of God's people.
 - 3.) The weapons of our warfare have been tried by millions of poor sinners like ourselves, and have never been found to fail.
- c. Be patient under the enmity of the gates of hell.
 - 1.) It is all working together for your good.
 - 2.) It tends to sanctify.
 - 3.) It will keep you awake.
 - 4.) It will make you humble.
 - 5.) It will drive you nearer to the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - 6.) It will wean you from the world.
 - 7.) It will help to make you pray more.
 - 8.) It will make you long for heaven.
 - 9.) It will teach you to say with heart as well as lips, *"Come, Lord Jesus. Thy kingdom come."*
 - d. Be not cast down by the enmity of hell.
 - 1.) The warfare of the true child of God is as much a mark of grace as the inward peace which he enjoys.
 - 2.) No cross, no crown! No conflict, no saving Christianity!
 - 3.) *[Matthew 5:11]- Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.*
 - 4.) *[Luke 6:26]- Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! For so did their fathers to the false prophets.*
- F. Security Asserted: the Security of the true Church of Christ. *"The gates of hell shall not prevail against it."*
1. He who cannot lie has pledged His word that all the powers of hell shall never overthrow His Church.
 - a. *[Zechariah 2:8]- For thus saith the Lord of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.*
 2. The promise of our text is true of every individual member of the Church.
 3. The true Church is Christ's body.
 - a. Not one bone in that mystical body shall ever be broken.
 - b. The true Church is Christ's bride.
 - c. *[John 18:9]- that the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.*
 - d. *[John 10:28]- and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*
 - e. The devil may cast some of the members of the true Church into prison. He may kill, and burn, and torture, and hang. But after he has killed the body, there is nothing more that he can do. He cannot hurt the soul.
- G. Application
1. Are you a member of the one true Church of Christ?
 - a. Are you in the highest, the best sense, a "churchman" in the sight of God?
 - b. Are you a member of that Church?
 - c. Are you joined to the great Foundation?
 - d. Are you on the rock?
 - e. Have you received the Holy Ghost?
 - f. Does the Spirit witness with your spirit, that you are one with Christ, and Christ with you?
 2. To every one who is not yet a true believer.

- a. Come and join the one true Church without delay.
 - b. Come and join yourself to the Lord Jesus Christ in an everlasting covenant not to be forgotten.
 - c. Why not this very hour? Why not today, while it is called today? - Why not this very night, ere the sun rises to-morrow morning? –
 - d. Come to Him who died for sinners on the cross, and invites all sinners to come to Him by faith and be saved.
 - e. Come to my Master, Jesus Christ.
 - f. Come for all things are now ready.
 - 1.) Mercy is ready for you.
 - 2.) Heaven is ready for you.
 - 3.) Angels are ready to rejoice over you.
 - 4.) Christ is ready to receive you.
 - g. Christ will receive you gladly, and welcome you among His children.
 - h. Come into the ark. The flood of God's wrath will soon break upon the earth; come into the ark and be safe.
 - i. Come into the lifeboat of the one true Church.
 - j. Dost thou ask, "How can I come? My sins are too many. I am too wicked yet. I dare not come."
 - 1.) *"Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God I come."*
3. A word of exhortation to all believers.
- a. Strive to live a holy life.
 - 1.) Walk worthy of the Church to which you belong.
 - 2.) Live like citizens of heaven.
 - 3.) Let your light shine before men, so that the world may profit by your conduct.
 - 4.) Let them know whose you are, and whom you serve.
 - 5.) Be epistles of Christ, known and read of all men.
 - 6.) He that knows nothing of real, practical holiness is no member of "the Church on the Rock,"
 - b. Strive to live a courageous life.
 - 1.) Confess Christ before men.
 - 2.) Whatever station you occupy, in that station confess Christ.
 - 3.) Why should you be ashamed of Him? He was not ashamed of you on the cross.
 - 4.) He is ready to confess you now before His Father in heaven. Why should you be ashamed of Him? Be bold. Be very bold. The good soldier is not ashamed of his uniform. The true believer ought never to be ashamed of Christ.
 - c. Strive to live a joyful life.
 - 1.) Live like men who look for that blessed hope - the second coming of Jesus Christ.
 - 2.) This is the prospect to which we should all look forward.
 - 3.) It is not so much the thought of going to heaven as of heaven coming to us that should fill our minds.
 - 4.) There is a good time coming for all the people of God - a good time for all the Church of Christ - a good time for all believers
 - 5.) There is a bad time for the impenitent and unbelieving, but a good time for true Christians.
 - 6.) For that good time, let us wait, and watch, and pray.

- d. The scaffolding will soon be taken down.
 - 1.) The last stone will soon be brought out.
 - 2.) The top-stone will be placed upon the edifice.
 - 3.) Yet a little time, and the full beauty of the Church, which Christ is building, shall be clearly seen.
- e. The great Master Builder will soon come Himself.
 - 1.) A building shall be shown to assembled worlds in which there shall be no imperfection.
 - 2.) The Saviour and the saved shall rejoice together.
 - 3.) The whole universe shall acknowledge that in the building of Christ's Church all was well done.
 - 4.) "Blessed" - it shall be said in that day, if it was never said before - "BLESSED ARE ALL THEY WHO BELONG TO THE CHURCH ON THE ROCK!"

XIV. Visible Churches Warned

A. Proof text.

1. [Revelation 3:22]- He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

B. The Lord Jesus, in all the seven Epistles, speaks of nothing but matters of doctrine, practice, warning, and promise.

- 1. The Lord Jesus sometimes finds fault with false doctrines, and ungodly, inconsistent practices, and rebukes them sharply.
- 2. He sometimes praises faith, patience, work, labor, perseverance, and bestows on these graces high commendation.
- 3. He sometimes enjoins repentance, amendment, return to the first love, and renewed application to Himself.
- 4. The Lord does not dwell upon Church government or ceremonies.
 - a. He says nothing about sacraments or ordinances.
 - b. He makes no mention of liturgies or forms.
 - c. He does not instruct John to write one word about baptism, or the Lord's Supper, or the apostolical succession of ministers.
 - d. In short, the leading principles of what may be called "the sacramental system".
 - e. The sacraments, Church government, the use of a liturgy, the observance of ceremonies and forms, are all as nothing compared to faith, repentance, and holiness.

1.) [Acts 20:27-35]- For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. I have showed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

2.) [Numbers 24:13]- If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the commandment of the Lord, to do either good or bad of mine own mind; but what the Lord saith, that will I speak?

C. Observe that in every epistle the Lord Jesus says, "I know thy works".

1. The works of a professing Christian are of great importance.
 - a. They cannot save your soul.
 - b. They cannot justify you.
 - c. They cannot wipe out your sins.
 - d. They cannot deliver you from the wrath of God.
 - e. But it does not follow because they cannot save you, that they are of no importance.
 - f. Take heed and beware of such a notion.

2. A man's works are the evidence of a man's religion.
 - a. If you call yourself a Christian, you must show it in your daily ways and daily behavior.
 - b. Call to mind that the faith of Abraham and of Rahab was proved by their works.
 - 1.) *[James 2:21-25]- Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?*
 - c. Remember it avails you and me nothing to profess we know God, if in works we deny Him.
 - 1.) *[Titus 1:16]- They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.*
 - d. Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, "Every tree is known by its own fruit."
 - 1.) *[Luke 6:44]- For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.*
 - e. Whatever the works of a professing Christian may be, Jesus says, "I know them!"
 - 1.) *[Proverbs 15:3]- The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.*

3. All things are open and manifest before Him. He says to every one, "I know thy works."
 - a. The Lord Jesus knows the works of all impenitent and unbelieving souls, and will one day punish them.
 - 1.) They are not forgotten in heaven, though they may be upon earth.
 - 2.) When the great white throne is set, and the books are opened, the wicked dead will be judged "according to their works."
 - b. The Lord Jesus knows the works of His own people, and weighs them. "By Him actions are weighed."
 - 1.) *[1 Samuel 2:3]- Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.*
 - 2.) He knows the why and the wherefore of the deeds of all believers.
 - 3.) He sees their motives in every step they take.
 - 4.) He discerns how much is done for His sake, and how much is done for the sake of praise.
 - c. The Lord Jesus knows the works of all His own people, and will one day reward them.
 - 1.) He never overlooks a kind word or a kind deed done in His name.
 - 2.) He will own the least fruit of faith, and declare it before the world in the day of His appearing.
 - 3.) If you love the Lord Jesus and follow Him, you may be sure your work and labor shall not be in vain in the Lord.

- 4.) The works of those that die in the Lord “shall follow them.”
 - a.) *[Revelation 14:13]- And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.*
- 5.) They shall not go before them, nor yet by their side, but they shall follow them, and be owned in the day of Christ’s appearing.
- 6.) The parable of the pounds shall be made good.
 - a.) *[1 Corinthians 3:8]- Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor.*
- d. Think what a solemn warning there is to all worldly and hypocritical professors of religion.
 - 1.) Let all such read, mark, and digest these words. Jesus says to you, “I know thy works.”
 - 2.) You cannot deceive Christ. He sees you through and through, and will expose you at the last day, except you repent.
- e. Hypocrisy is a losing game.
 - 1.) The eye that saw Achan steal the golden wedge and hide it is upon you.
 - 2.) The book that recorded the deeds of Gehazi, and Ananias, and Sapphira, is recording your ways.
 - 3.) Jesus mercifully sends you a word of warning today. He says, “I know thy works.”
- f. Think also what encouragement there is here for every honest and truehearted believer.
 - 1.) You see no beauty in any action that you do.
 - 2.) All seems imperfect, blemished, and defiled.
 - 3.) You are often sick at heart of your own shortcomings.
 - 4.) You often feel that your whole life is one great arrear, and that every day is either a blank or a blot.
 - 5.) Know now that Jesus can see some beauty in everything that you do from a conscientious desire to please Him.
 - 6.) His eye can discern excellence in the least thing that is a fruit of His own Spirit.
 - 7.) He can pick out the grains of gold from amidst the dross of your performances, and sift the wheat from amidst the chaff, in all your doings.
 - 8.) Your tears are all put into His bottle.
 - 9.) Your endeavors to do good to others, however feeble, are written in His book of remembrance.
 - 10.) The least cup of cold water given in His name shall not lose its reward.
 - 11.) He does not forget your work and labor of love, however little the world may regard it.
- g. Jesus loves to honour the work of His Spirit in His people, and to pass over their frailties.
 - 1.) He dwells on the faith of Rahab, but not on her lie.
 - 2.) He commends His Apostles for continuing with Him in His temptations, and passes over their ignorance and want of faith.
 - a.) *[Luke 22:28]- Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations.*
 - 3.) As a father finds a pleasure in the least acts of his children, of which a stranger knows nothing, so I suppose the Lord finds a pleasure in our poor feeble efforts to serve Him.
 - a.) *[Psalm 103:13]- Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.*
 - b.) *[Matthew 25:37-39]- Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee ahungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?*

- D. Observe that in every epistle the Lord Jesus makes a promise to the man that overcomes.
1. Every professing Christian is the soldier of Christ.
 - a. He is bound by his baptism to fight Christ's battle against sin, the world, and the devil.
 - b. The very fact that he belongs to a Church, attends a Christian place of worship, and calls himself a Christian is a public declaration that he desires to be reckoned a soldier of Jesus Christ.
 2. Armour is provided for the professing Christian.
 - a. ***[Ephesians 6:13-17]- Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:***
 3. The professing Christian has the best of leaders.
 - a. Jesus the Captain of Salvation, through whom he may be more than conqueror.
 - b. The best of provisions, the bread and water of life.
 - c. The best of pay promised to him: an eternal weight of glory.
 4. The true believer is not only a soldier, but also a victorious soldier.
 - a. He not only professes to fight on Christ's side against sin, the world, and the devil, but he does actually fight and overcome.
 - b. If you would prove you are born again and going to heaven, you must be a victorious soldier of Christ.
 - c. If you would make it clear that you have any title to Christ's precious promises, you must fight the good fight in Christ's cause, and in that fight you must conquer.
 - d. Victory is the only satisfactory evidence that you have a saving religion.
 5. This is the road that saints of old have trodden in, and left their record on high.
 - a. When Moses refused the pleasures of sin in Egypt, and chose affliction with the people of God – this was overcoming: he overcame the love of pleasure.
 - b. When Micaiah refused to prophesy smooth things to king Ahab, though he knew he would be persecuted if he spoke the truth - this was overcoming: he overcame the love of ease.
 - c. When Daniel refused to give up praying, though he knew the den of lions was prepared for him – this was overcoming: he overcame the fear of death.
 - d. When Matthew rose from the receipt of custom at our Lord's bidding, left all and followed Him – this was overcoming: he overcame the love of money.
 - e. When Peter and John stood up boldly before the council and said, "We cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard" - this was overcoming: they overcame the fear of man.
 - f. When Saul the Pharisee gave up all his prospects of preferment among the Jews, and preached that very Jesus whom he had once persecuted - this was overcoming: he overcame the love of man's praise.
 - g. The secret of their victory was their faith.
 - 1.) They believed on Jesus, and in believing, they were made strong.
 - 2.) They believed on Jesus, and in believing, they were held up.
 - 3.) In all their battles, they kept their eyes on Jesus, and He never left them nor forsook them.
 - 4.) ***[Revelation 12:11]- And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.***
 6. Warnings.
 - a. To those many professing Christians.
 - 1.) With no sign of fighting in them, much less of victory.

- 2.) Who never strike one stroke on the side of Christ. They are at peace with His enemies.
 - 3.) They have no quarrel with sin. This is not Christianity. This is not the way to heaven.
- b. To those who hear the Gospel regularly.
 - 1.) The danger of becoming so familiar with the sound of its doctrines, that insensibly you become dead to its power.
 - 2.) The danger that should sink down into a little vague talk about your own weakness and corruption, and a few sentimental expressions about Christ, while real, practical fighting on Christ's side is altogether neglected.
 - 3.) **[James 1:22]- But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.**
 - c. To those who have been brought up in religious families.
 - 1.) The danger that you get a habit of giving way to every temptation.
 - 2.) The danger that you become afraid of saying, "No!" to the world and the devil - and, when sinners entice you, think it least trouble to consent.
 - 3.) Beware of giving way. Every concession will make you weaker.
 - 4.) Go into the world resolved to fight Christ's battle - and fight your way on.
 - d. To those believers of every Church and rank in life.
 - 1.) Your course is hard.
 - 2.) It is a sore battle you have to fight.
 - 3.) You are often tempted to say, "It is of no use," and to lay down your arms altogether.
 - e. Cheer up and take comfort.
 - 1.) Be encouraged to fight on.
 - 2.) The time is short. The Lord is at hand.
 - 3.) The night is far spent.
 - 4.) Millions as weak as you have fought the same fight.
 - 5.) Not one of all those millions has been finally led captive by Satan.
 - 6.) Mighty are your enemies - but the Captain of your salvation is mightier still. –
 - 7.) His arm, His grace, and His Spirit shall hold you up.
 - 8.) Cheer up. Be not cast down.
 - f. What though you lose a battle or two? You shall not lose all.
 - 1.) What though you faint sometimes? You shall not be quite cast down.
 - 2.) What though you fall seven times? You shall not be destroyed.
 - 3.) Watch against sin, and sin shall not have dominion over you.
 - 4.) Resist the devil, and he shall flee from you.
 - 5.) Come out boldly from the world, and the world shall be obliged to let you go.
 - 6.) You shall find yourselves in the end more than conquerors - you shall "overcome."

E. Application

1. To those who are living only for the world.
 - a. Take heed what they are doing.
 - b. You are enemies to Christ, though you may not know it.
 - c. He marks your ways, though you turn your backs on Him, and refuse to give Him your hearts.
 - d. He is observing your daily life, and reading your daily ways.
 - e. There will yet be a resurrection of all your thoughts, words and actions.
 - f. You may forget them, but God does not.
 - g. You may be careless about them, but they are carefully marked down in the book of remembrance.
 - h. ***Tremble, tremble and repent.***

2. To those formalists and self-righteous people to take heed that they are not deceived.
 - a. You fancy you will go to heaven because you go regularly to church.
 - b. You indulge an expectation of eternal life, because you are always at the Lord's Table, and are never missing in your pew.
 - c. Where is your repentance? Where is your faith?
 - d. Where are your evidences of a new heart?
 - e. Where is the work of the Spirit?
 - f. Where are your evidences of regeneration?
 - g. Oh, formal Christian, consider these questions!
 - h. Tremble, tremble and repent.**
3. To those careless members of Churches to beware lest they trifle their souls into hell.
 - a. You live on year after year as if there was no battle to be fought with sin, the world, and the devil.
 - b. You pass through life a smiling, laughing, gentlemanlike or lady-like person, and behave as if there was no devil, no heaven, and no hell.
 - c. Oh, careless Churchman, or careless Dissenter, careless Episcopalian, careless Presbyterian, careless Independent, careless Baptist, awake to see eternal realities in their true light!
 - d. Awake and put on the armour of God!
 - e. Awake and fight hard for life!
 - f. Tremble, tremble and repent.**
4. To those who want to be saved, not to be content with the world's standard of religion.
 - a. Surely, no man with his eyes open can fail to see that the Christianity of the New Testament is something far higher and deeper than the Christianity of most professing Christians.
 - b. The formal, easy-going, do-little thing that most people call religion is evidently not the religion of the Lord Jesus.
 - c. The things that He praises in these seven Epistles are not praised by the world.
 - d. The things that He blames are not things in which the world sees any harm.
 - e. Oh, if you would follow Christ, be not content with the world's Christianity!
 - f. Tremble, tremble and repent.**
5. To those who professes to be a believer in the Lord Jesus, not to be content with a little religion.
 - a. Be not content and satisfied with a little grace,
 - 1.) With a little grace
 - 2.) With a little repentance.
 - 3.) With a little faith.
 - 4.) With a little knowledge.
 - 5.) With a little charity.
 - 6.) With and a little holiness.
 - b. Be not content with a little religion.
 - 1.) If you have any desires after usefulness.
 - 2.) If you have any wishes to promote your Lord's glory.
 - 3.) If you have any longings after much inward peace.
 - c. Let us rather seek, every year we live, to make more spiritual progress than we have done.
 - 1.) To grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus.
 - 2.) To grow in humility and self-acquaintance.
 - 3.) To grow in spirituality and heavenly-mindedness.

- 4.) To grow in conformity to the image of our Lord.
- d. Let us beware;
 - 1.) Of leaving our first love like Ephesus.
 - 2.) Of becoming lukewarm like Laodicea.
 - 3.) Of tolerating false practices like Pergamos.
 - 4.) Of tampering with false doctrine like Thyatira.
 - 5.) Of becoming half dead, ready to die, like Sardis.
- e. Let us rather covet the best gifts.
 - 1.) Let us aim at eminent holiness.
 - 2.) Let us endeavour to be like Smyrna and Philadelphia.
 - 3.) Let us hold fast what we have already, and continually seek to have more.
 - 4.) Let us labor to be unmistakable Christians.
 - 5.) Let it not be our distinctive character that we are men of science - or men of literary attainments - or men of the world - or men of pleasure, or men of business - but "men of God."
 - 6.) Let us so live that all may see that to us the things of God are the first things, and the glory of God the first aim in our lives - to follow Christ our grand object in time present - to be with Christ our grand desire in time to come.
- f. Let us live in this way.
 - 1.) We shall be happy.
 - 2.) We shall do good to the world.
 - 3.) We shall leave good evidence behind us when we are buried.
 - 4.) The Spirit's word to the Churches will not have been spoken to us in vain.

XV. Lovest Thou Me?

A. Proof text.

1. ***[John 21:16]- He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jona, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.***

B. The peculiar feeling of a true Christian towards Christ - he loves Him.

1. All are not true Christians who are members of the visible Church of Christ.
 - a. A true Christian is not a mere baptized man or woman.
 - b. He is something more. He is not a person who only goes, as a matter of form, to a church or chapel on Sundays and lives all the rest of the week as if there was no God.
 - c. Formality is not Christianity. Ignorant lip-worship is not true religion.
 - d. ***[Romans 9:6]- Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:***
2. The true Christian is one whose religion is in his heart and life.
 - a. It is felt by himself in his heart.
 - b. It is seen by others in his conduct and life.
 - c. He feels his sinfulness, guilt and badness, and repents.
 - d. He sees Jesus Christ to be that Divine Saviour whom his soul needs, and commits himself to Him.
 - e. He puts off the old man with his corrupt and carnal habits and puts on the new man.
 - f. He lives a new and holy life, fighting habitually against the world, the flesh and the devil.
 - g. Christ Himself is the corner stone of his Christianity.
 - h. Ask him in what he trusts for the forgiveness of his many sins, and he will tell you in the death of Christ.

- i. Ask him in what righteousness he hopes to stand innocent at the judgment day, and he will tell you it is the righteousness of Christ.
 - j. Ask him by what pattern he tries to frame his life, and he will tell you that it is the example of Christ.
3. There is one thing in a true Christian, which is eminently peculiar to him; love to Christ.
- a. Knowledge, faith, hope, reverence, obedience, are all marked features in a true Christian's character.
 - b. But his picture would be very imperfect if you omitted his "love" to his Divine Master.
 - c. He not only knows, trusts, and obeys-he loves.
 - d. Faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - e. The Holy Ghost mentions love in almost as strong terms as faith.
 - f. Not believing and not loving are both steps to everlasting ruin.
 - 1.) *[1 Corinthians 16:22]- If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maranatha.*
 - 2.) *[Ephesians 6:24]- Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.*
 - 3.) *[John 8:42]- Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.*
 - 4.) *[John 21:15-17]- So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jona, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jona, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jona, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.*
- g. *[1 John 4:19]- We love him, because he first loved us.*
- 1.) A true Christian loves Christ for all He has done for him.
 - a.) He has suffered in his stead, and died for him on the cross.
 - b.) He has redeemed him from the guilt, the power, and the consequences of sin, by His blood.
 - c.) He has called him by His Spirit to self-knowledge, repentance, faith, hope, and holiness.
 - d.) He has forgiven all his many sins and blotted them out.
 - e.) He has freed him from the captivity of the world, the flesh, and the devil.
 - f.) He has taken him from the brink of hell, placed him in the narrow way, and set his face toward heaven.
 - g.) He has given him light instead of darkness, peace of conscience instead of uneasiness, hope instead of uncertainty, life instead of death.
 - 2.) A true Christian loves Him for all that He is still doing.
 - a.) He feels that He is daily washing away his many shortcomings and infirmities, and pleading his soul's cause before God.
 - b.) He is daily supplying all the needs of his soul, and providing him with an hourly provision of mercy and grace.
 - c.) He is daily leading him by His Spirit to a city of habitation.
 - d.) He is bearing with him when he is weak and ignorant.
 - e.) He is raising him up when he stumbles and falls.
 - f.) He is protecting him against his many enemies.
 - g.) He is preparing an eternal home for him in heaven.

- 3.) Does the debtor in jail love the friend who unexpectedly and undeservedly pays all his debts, supplies him with fresh capital, and takes him into partnership with himself?
 - 4.) Does the prisoner in war love the man who at the risk of his own life breaks through the enemy's lines, rescues him, and sets him free?
 - 5.) Does the drowning sailor love the man who plunges into the sea, dives after him, catches him by the hair of his head, and by a mighty effort saves him from a watery grave?
4. The Nature of Love to Christ.
- a. This love to Christ is the inseparable companion of saving faith.
 - 1.) A faith of devils, a mere intellectual faith, a man may have without love, but not that faith which saves. Love cannot usurp the office of faith.
 - 2.) Love cannot justify. It does not join the soul to Christ.
 - 3.) Love cannot bring peace to the conscience.
 - 4.) Where there is real justifying faith in Christ, there will always be heart-love to Christ.
 - 5.) He that is really forgiven is the man who will really love.
 - a.) ***[Luke 7:47]- Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.***
 - 6.) If a man has no love to Christ, you may be sure he has no faith.
 - b. Love to Christ is the mainspring of work for Christ.
 - 1.) There is little done for His cause on earth from sense of duty, or from knowledge of what is right and proper.
 - 2.) The heart must be interested before the hands will move and continue moving.
 - 3.) Excitement may galvanize the Christian's hands into a fitful and spasmodic activity.
 - 4.) There will be no patient continuance in well doing, no unwearied labor in missionary work at home or abroad, without love.
 - 5.) There is a vast difference between that nurse and a wife tending the sickbed of a beloved husband, or a mother watching over a dying child.
 - a.) The one acts from a sense of duty - the other from affection and love.
 - b.) The one does her duty because she is paid for it - the other is what she is because of her heart.
 - 6.) The great workers of the Church - the men who have led forlorn hopes in the mission-field and turned the world upside down, have all been eminently lovers of Christ.
 - c. Love to Christ is the point that we ought specially to dwell upon in teaching religion to children.
 - 1.) Election, imputed righteousness, original sin, justification, sanctification, and even faith itself, are matters that sometimes puzzle a child of tender years.
 - 2.) But love to Jesus seems far more within reach of their understanding.
 - 3.) That He loved them even to His death, and that they ought to love Him in return, is a creed that meets the span of their minds.
 - 4.) ***[Matthew 21:16]- and said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?***
 - d. Love to Christ is the common meeting-point of believers of every branch of Christ's Church on earth.
 - 1.) About forms and ceremonies, about Church government and modes of worship, they often differ widely.
 - 2.) But on one point, at any rate, they are united. They *"love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."*

a.) ***[Ephesians 6:24]- Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.
Amen.***

- 3.) Many of them, perhaps, are ignorant of systematic divinity and could argue but feebly in defense of their creed.
- 4.) But they all know what they feel toward Him who died for their sins. - *"I cannot speak much for Christ, sir, but if I cannot speak for Him, I could die for Him!"* - an old, uneducated Christian woman to Dr. Chalmers

- e. Love to Christ will be the distinguishing mark of all saved souls in heaven.
 - 1.) Old differences will be merged in one common feeling.
 - 2.) Old doctrinal peculiarities, fiercely wrangled for upon earth, will be covered over by one common sense of debt to Christ.
 - 3.) Luther and Zwingle will no longer dispute. Wesley and Toplady will no longer waste time in controversy.
 - 4.) Churchmen and Dissenters will no longer bite and devour one another.
 - 5.) All will find themselves joining with one heart and voice in that hymn of praise.
 - a.) ***[Revelation 1:5-6]- and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the firstbegotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. 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.***
 - b.) *"This river has been a terror to many; yea, the thoughts of it also have often frightened me. But now methinks I stand easy; my foot is fixed upon that on which the priests that bear the ark stood while Israel went over Jordan. The waters indeed are to the palate bitter, and to the stomach cold; yet the thoughts of what I am going to, and of the convoy that waits for me on the other side, lie as a glowing coal at my heart. I see myself now at the end of my journey; my toilsome days are ended. I am going to see that Head which was crowned with thorns, and that Face which was spit upon for me. I have formerly lived by hearing and faith, but now I go where I shall live by sight, and be with Him in whose company I delight myself. I have loved to hear my Lord spoken of; and wherever I have seen the print of His shoe in the earth, there I have coveted to set my foot too. His name has been to me a civet-box; yea, sweeter than all perfumes! His voice to me has been most sweet; and His countenance I have more desired than they that have desired the light of the sun!"* Mr. Steadfast in the River – John Bunyan *Pilgrim's Progress*

C. The peculiar marks by which love to Christ makes itself known.

- 1. If we love a person, we like to think about him.
 - a. ***[Ephesians 3:17]- that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,***
 - b. Affection is the real secret of a good memory in religion.
 - c. No worldly man can think much about Christ, unless Christ is pressed upon his notice, because he has no affection for Him.
 - d. The true Christian has thoughts about Christ every day that he lives, for this one simple reason, that he loves Him.
- 2. If we love a person, we like to hear about him.
 - a. We find a pleasure in listening to those who speak of him.
 - b. We feel an interest in any report that others make of him.
 - c. We are all attention when others talk about him and describe his ways, his sayings, his doings, and his plans.
 - d. The true Christian delights to hear something about his Master.

- e. He likes those sermons best, which are full of Christ.
 - f. He enjoys that society most in which people talk of the things that are Christ's.
 - g. An old Welsh believer used to walk several miles every Sunday to hear an English clergyman preach, though she did not understand a word of English. She was asked why she did so. She replied that this clergyman named the name of Christ so often in his sermons that it did her good. She loved even the name of her Saviour.
3. If we love a person, we like to read about him.
- a. What intense pleasure a letter from an absent husband gives to a wife, or a letter from an absent son to his mother.
 - b. Those who love the writer see something in the letter which no one else can. They carry it about with them as a treasure. They read it over and over again.
 - c. The true Christian delights to read the Scriptures, because they tell him about his beloved Saviour. It is no wearisome task with him to read them. He rarely needs reminding to take his Bible with him when he goes a journey.
4. If we love a person, we like to please him.
- a. We are glad to consult his tastes and opinions, to act upon his advice, and do the things that he approves.
 - b. We even deny ourselves to meet his wishes, abstain from things that we know he dislikes, and learn things to do which we are not naturally inclined, because we think it will give him pleasure.
 - c. The true Christian studies to please Him, by being holy both in body and spirit.
 - d. Show him anything in his daily practice that Christ hates, and he will give it up.
 - e. Show him anything that Christ delights in, and he will follow after it.
 - f. He does not murmur at Christ's requirements as being too strict and severe, as the children of the world do.
 - g. To him Christ's commandments are not grievous and Christ's burden is light.
5. If we love a person, we like his friends.
- a. We are favorably inclined to them, even before we know them.
 - b. We are drawn to them by the common love to one and the same person.
 - c. When we meet them we do not feel that we are altogether strangers.
 - d. There is a bond of union between us. They love the person that we love, and that alone is an introduction.
 - e. The true Christian regards all Christ's friends as his friends, members of the same body, children of the same family, soldiers in the same army, and travelers to the same home.
 - f. When he meets them, he feels as if he had long known them.
 - g. He is more at home with them in a few minutes than he is with many worldly people after an acquaintance of several years.
6. If we love a person, we are jealous about his name and honour.
- a. We do not like to hear him spoken against without speaking up for him and defending him.
 - b. We feel bound to maintain his interests and his reputation.
 - c. We regard the person who treats him ill with almost as much disfavor as if he had ill-treated us.
 - d. The true Christian regards with a godly jealousy all efforts to disparage his Master's word, or name, or Church, or day.
 - e. He will confess Him before princes, if need be, and be sensitive of the least dishonour put upon Him.
 - f. He will not hold his peace and suffer his Master's cause to be put to shame without testifying against it.
7. If we love a person, we like to talk to him.

- a. We tell him all our thoughts, and pour out all our heart to him.
 - b. We find no difficulty in discovering subjects of conversation.
 - c. However silent and reserved we may be to others, we find it easy to talk to a much-loved friend.
 - d. However often we may meet, we are never at a loss for matter to talk about.
 - e. We have always much to say, much to ask about, much to describe, much to communicate.
 - f. The true Christian finds no difficulty in speaking to his Saviour.
 - g. Every day he has something to tell Him, and he is not happy unless he tells it.
 - h. He speaks to Him in prayer every morning and night.
 - 1.) He tells Him his wants and desires, his feelings and his fears.
 - 2.) He asks counsel of Him in difficulty.
 - 3.) He asks comfort of Him in trouble.
 - 4.) He cannot help it. He must converse with his Saviour continually, or he would faint by the way.
8. If we love a person, we like to be always with him.
- a. When we really love people we want something more.
 - b. We long to be always in their company.
 - c. We wish to be continually in their society, and to hold communion with them without interruption or farewell.
 - d. The heart of a true Christian longs for that blessed day when he will see his Master face to face, and go out no more.
 - e. He longs to have done with sinning and repenting, and believing, and to begin that endless life when he shall see as he has been seen, and sin no more.
 - f. He has found it sweet to live by faith, and he feels it will be sweeter still to live by sight.
 - g. He has found it pleasant to hear of Christ, and talk of Christ, and read of Christ.
 - h. How much more pleasant will it be to see Christ with his own eyes, and never to leave Him any more!
- 1.) ***[Ecclesiastes 6:9]- Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the desire: this is also vanity and vexation of spirit.***

D. Application.

1. Look at the question in the face that Christ asked of Peter, and try to answer it for yourself. Look at it seriously. Can you honestly say that you love Christ?
 - a. ***[James 2:19]- Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.***
 - b. True, saving Christianity is not the mere believing a certain set of opinions, and holding a certain set of notions. Its essence is knowing, trusting, and loving a certain living Person who died for us - even Christ the Lord.
 - c. It is no answer to disapprove of a religion of feelings. You do well to dislike a religion consisting of nothing but feelings.
 - d. But if you mean to shut out feelings altogether, you can know little of Christianity.
 - e. The Bible teaches us plainly that a man may have good feelings without any true religion. But it teaches us no less plainly that there can be no true religion without some feeling towards Christ.
2. If you do not love Christ this is the reason.
 - a. You have no sense of debt to Him.
 - b. You have no feeling of obligation to Him.
 - c. You have no abiding recollection of having got anything from Him.
 - d. The remedy is self-knowledge, and the teaching of the Holy Ghost.
 - 1.) The eyes of your understanding must be opened.
 - 2.) You must find out what you are by nature.
 - 3.) You must discover that grand secret, your guilt and emptiness in God's sight.

- e. Perhaps you never read your Bible at all, or only read an occasional chapter as a mere matter of form, without interest, understanding, or self-application.
 - 1.) Begin to read the Bible like a man in earnest, and never rest till you become familiar with it.
 - 2.) Read what the law of God requires, as expounded by the Lord Jesus in Matthew 5.
 - 3.) Read how St. Paul describes human nature in Romans 1 and 2.
 - 4.) Study such passages as these with prayer for the Spirit's teaching, and then say whether you are not a debtor to God and a debtor in mighty need of a Friend like Christ.
- f. Perhaps you are one who has never known anything of real, hearty, business-like prayer.
 - 1.) You have been used to regard religion as an affair of churches, chapels, forms, services, and Sundays, but not as a thing requiring the serious, heartfelt attention of the inward man.
 - 2.) Begin the habit of real, earnest pleading with God about your soul. Ask Him for light, teaching, and self-knowledge.
 - 3.) Beseech Him to show you anything you need to know for the saving of your soul.
 - 4.) Do this with all your heart and mind, and before long you will feel your need of Christ.
 - 5.) Not to love Christ is to be in imminent danger of eternal ruin.
 - 6.) To see your need of Christ and your amazing debt to Christ is the first step towards loving Him.
 - 7.) To know yourself and find out your real condition before God is the only way to see your need.
 - 8.) To search God's Book and ask God for light in prayer is the right course by which to attain saving knowledge.
- 3. If you really know anything of love towards Christ, accept two parting words of comfort and counsel.
 - a. If you love Christ in deed and truth, rejoice in the thought that you have good evidence about the state of your soul.
 - 1.) Love is an evidence of grace.
 - b. If you love Christ, never be ashamed to let others see it and know it.
 - 1.) Speak for Him. Witness for Him. Live for Him. Work for Him.
 - 2.) If He has loved you and washed you from your sins in His own blood, you never need shrink from letting others know that you feel it, and love Him in return.

XVI. Without Christ

A. Proof text.

- 1. ***[Ephesians 2:12]- For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.***

B. Consider when it can be said of a man that he is "without Christ."

- 1. The words were written under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.
 - a. ***[Ephesians 2:12]- that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:***
- 2. He has no head-knowledge of Him.
 - a. They know not who Christ is - nor what He has done - nor what He taught - nor why He was crucified - nor where He is now - nor what He is to mankind. In short, they are entirely ignorant of Him.

- b. Error of some who believe that all mankind have a part and interest in Christ, whether they know Him or not.
 - 1.) *[John 17:3]- And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*
 - c. It is one of the marks of the wicked, on whom God shall take vengeance at the last day, that they “*know not God.*”
 - 1.) *[2 Thessalonians 1:8]- in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:*
 - d. We may rest assured that “*the Judge of all the earth will do right.*”
 - 1.) *[Genesis 18:25]- That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked; and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*
3. He has no heart-faith in Him as his Saviour.
- a. It is quite possible to know all about Christ, and yet not to put our trust in Him.
 - b. Error of some who believe that you can be members of Christ by other virtues.
 - 1.) Some tell us that all baptized people are members of Christ by virtue of their baptism.
 - 2.) Others tell us that where there is head knowledge, we have no right to question a person’s interest in Christ.
 - 3.) The Bible forbids us to say that any man is joined to Christ until he believes.
 - a.) *[Acts 8:21]- Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God.*
 - 4.) The grand question is, “*Do we believe?*”
 - a.) *[John 3:36]- He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*
 - b.) *[Mark 16:16]- He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*
4. When the Holy Spirit’s work cannot be seen in his life.
- a. The myriads of professing Christians who know nothing of inward conversion of heart.
 - 1.) They will tell you that they believe the Christian religion.
 - 2.) They go to their places of worship with tolerable regularity.
 - 3.) They think it a proper thing to be married and buried with all the ceremonies of the Church.
 - 4.) They would be much offended if their Christianity were doubted.
 - 5.) Where is the Holy Ghost to be seen in their lives?
 - 6.) What are their hearts and affections set upon?
 - 7.) Whose is the image and superscription that stands out in their tastes, and habits, and ways?
 - 8.) They know nothing experimentally of the renewing, sanctifying work of the Holy Ghost.
 - 9.) They are yet dead to God and such, only one account can be given. They are “without Christ.”
 - 10.) *[John 3:3]- Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*
 - 11.) *[Matthew 18:3]- 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.*
 - 12.) *[1 John 2:6]- He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.*
 - 13.) *[Romans 8:9]- But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*

5. How painfully ignorant are many!
 - a. They know literally nothing about religion.
 - b. Christ, and the Holy Ghost, and faith, and grace, and conversion, and sanctification are mere “words and names” to them.
 - c. They could not explain what they mean, if it were to save their lives.
 - d. Can such ignorance as this take anyone to heaven? Impossible! Without knowledge, “without Christ!”
 6. How painfully self-righteous are many!
 - a. They can talk complacently about having “done their duty,” and being “kind to everybody,” and having always “kept to their Church,” and having “never been so very bad” as some - and therefore they seem to think they must go to heaven!
 - b. As to deep sense of sin and simple faith in Christ’s blood and sacrifice, these seem to have no place in their religion.
 - c. Their talk is all of doing and never of believing.
 - d. Will such self-righteousness as this land anyone in heaven? Never! Without faith, “without Christ!”
 7. How painfully ungodly are many!
 - a. They live in the habitual neglect of God’s Sabbath, God’s Bible, God’s ordinances, and God’s sacraments.
 - b. They think nothing of doing things that God has flatly forbidden.
 - c. They are constantly living in ways that are directly contrary to God’s commandments.
 - d. Can such ungodliness end in salvation? Impossible! Without the Holy Ghost, “without Christ!”
- C. What is the actual condition of a man “*without Christ*”?
1. To be without Christ is to be without God.
 - a. ***[Ephesians 2:12]- that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:***
 - b. ***[Hebrews 12:29]- for our God is a consuming fire.***
 - c. ***[John 5:23]- that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent him.***
 - d. ***[John 14:6]- Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.***
 2. To be without Christ is to be without peace.
 - a. Every man has a conscience within him, which must be satisfied before he can be truly happy.
 - b. So long as this conscience is asleep or half dead, so long, no doubt, he gets along pretty well.
 - c. As soon as a man’s conscience wakes up, and he begins to think of past sins, and present failings, and future judgment, at once he finds out that he needs something to give him inward rest.
 - d. Repenting, and praying, and Bible-reading, and church going, and sacrament receiving, and self-mortification may be tried, and tried in vain.
 - e. They never yet took off the burden from anyone’s conscience.
 - f. There is only one thing can give peace to the conscience, and that is the blood of Jesus Christ sprinkled on it.
 - 1.) A clear understanding that Christ’s death was an actual payment of our debt to God, and that the merit of that death is made over to man when he believes, is the grand secret of inward peace.

- 2.) It meets every craving of conscience.
 - 3.) It answers every accusation.
 - 4.) It calms every fear.
 - 5.) ***[John 16:33]- These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.***
 - 6.) ***[Ephesians 2:14]- For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;***
 - 7.) ***[Romans 5:1]- Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:***
- g. We have peace through the blood of His cross: peace like a deep mine - peace like an ever flowing stream. But “without Christ” we are without peace.
3. To be without Christ is to be without hope.
- a. Hope of some sort or other almost everyone thinks he possesses.
 - b. Rarely indeed will you find a man who will boldly tell you that he has no hope at all about his soul.
 - c. How few there are that can give “*a reason of the hope that is in them!*”
 - 1.) ***[1 Peter 3:15]- but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear:***
 - d. How few can explain it, describe it, and show its foundations!
 - e. How many a hope is nothing better than a vague, empty feeling, which the day of sickness and the hour of death will prove to be utterly useless - impotent alike to comfort or to save.
 - f. There is but one hope that has roots, life, strength and solidity, and that is the hope which is built on the great rock of Christ’s work and office as man’s Redeemer.
 - 1.) ***[1 Corinthians 3:11]- For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.***
 - g. There is no such thing as a good hope without Christ, and “without Christ” is to have “no hope.”
 - 1.) ***[Ephesians 2:12]- that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:***
4. To be without Christ is to be without heaven.
- a. In saying this I do not merely mean that there is no entrance into heaven, but that “without Christ” there could be no happiness in being there.
 - b. A man without a Saviour and Redeemer could never feel at home in heaven. He would feel that he had no lawful right or title to be there: boldness and confidence and ease of heart would be impossible.
 - c. Amidst pure and holy angels, under the eyes of a pure and holy God, he could not hold up his head: he would feel confounded and ashamed.
 - d. It is the very essence of all true views of heaven that Christ is there.
 - e. Who art thou that dreamest of a heaven in which Christ has no place? Awake to know thy folly.
 - 1.) Know that in every description of heaven that the Bible contains, the presence of Christ is one essential feature.
 - 2.) “*In the midst of the throne,*” says St. John, “*stood a Lamb as it had been slain.*” The very throne of heaven is called the “*throne of God and of the Lamb.*” - “*The Lamb is the light of heaven, and the temple of it.*”

- a.) *[Revelation 5:6]-And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.*
 - b.) *[Revelation 22:3]- And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:*
 - c.) *[Revelation 21:22-23]- And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.*
- 3.) The saints who dwell in heaven are to be “*fed by the Lamb,*” and “*led to living fountains of waters.*”
- a.) *[Revelation 7:17]- For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.*
- 4.) The meeting of the saints in heaven is called, “*the marriage supper of the Lamb.*”
- a.) *[Revelation 19:9]- And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.*
- 5.) A heaven without Christ would not be the heaven of the Bible. To be “without Christ” is to be without heaven.
5. To be without Christ is to be without life, without strength, without safety, without foundation, without a friend in heaven, without righteousness.
- a. What the ark was to Noah, what the passover lamb was to Israel in Egypt, what the manna, the smitten rock, the brazen serpent, the pillar of cloud and fire, the scapegoat, were to the tribes in the wilderness, all this the Lord Jesus is meant to be to man’s soul. None so destitute as those that are without Christ!
 - b. What the root is to the branches, what the air is to our lungs, what food and water are to our bodies, what the sun is to creation, all this and much more Christ is intended to be to us. None so helpless, none so pitiable as those that are without Christ!

D. Application.

1. Examine yourself and find out your own precise condition. Are you without Christ?
 - a. Do not allow life to pass away without some serious thoughts and self-inquiry.
 - b. You cannot always go on as you do now. A day must come when eating, and drinking, and sleeping, and dressing, and making merry, and spending money, will have an end.
 - c. There will be a day when your place will be empty and you will be only spoken of as one dead and gone.
 - d. Where will you be then if you have lived and died without thought about your soul, without God, and without Christ?
 - e. Oh, remember, it is better a thousand times to be without money, and health, and friends, and company, and good cheer, than to be without Christ!
2. If you have lived without Christ hitherto, I invite you in all affection to change your course without delay.
 - a. Seek the Lord Jesus while He may be found. Call upon Him while He is near.
 - b. He is sitting at God’s right hand, able to save to the uttermost everyone who comes to Him, however sinful and careless he may have been.
 - c. He is sitting at God’s right hand, willing to hear the prayer of every one who feels that his past life has been all wrong, and wants to be set right.

- d. Seek Christ without delay.
 - e. Acquaint yourself with Him. Do not be ashamed to apply to Him.
 - f. Only become one of Christ's friends this year, and you will say one day it was the happiest year that you ever had.
3. If you have become one of Christ's friends already, be a thankful man.
- a. Awake to a deeper sense of the infinite mercy of having an Almighty Saviour, a title to heaven, a home that is eternal, a Friend that never dies!
 - b. A few more years and all our family gatherings will be over.
 - c. What a comfort to think that we have in Christ something that we can never lose!
 - d. Awake to a deeper sense of the sorrowful state of those who are "without Christ."
 - e. We are often reminded of the many who are without food, or clothing, or school, or church. Let us pity them, and help them, as far as we can. But let us never forget that there are people whose state is far more pitiable. Who are they? The people "without Christ!"
 - f. Have we relatives "without Christ"? Let us feel for them, pray for them, speak to the King about them, strive to recommend the Gospel to them. Let us leave no stone unturned in our efforts to bring them to Christ.
 - g. Have we neighbours "without Christ"? Let us labour in every way for their souls' salvation. The night cometh when none can work.
 - h. Happy is he who lives under the abiding conviction that to be "in Christ" is peace, safety, and happiness; and that to be "without Christ" is to be on the brink of destruction.

XVII. Thirst Relieved

A. Proof text.

1. ***[John 7:37-38]- In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.***

B. The Context.

1. The Place.
 - a. The place was Jerusalem.
 - b. The metropolis of Judaism.
 - c. The stronghold of priests and scribes, of Pharisees and Sadducees.
2. The Time.
 - a. The occasion was the Feast of Tabernacles.
 - b. One of those great annual feasts when every Jew, if he could, went up to the temple, according to the law.
3. The Occasion.
 - a. The time was "the last day of the feast,"
 - b. When all the ceremonies were drawing to a close,
 - c. When the water drawn from the fountain of Siloam, according to traditional custom, had been solemnly poured on the altar,
 - d. Nothing remained for worshippers but to return home.
4. At this critical moment, our Lord Jesus Christ "stood" forward on a prominent place, and spoke to the assembled crowds.
 - a. He saw them going away with aching consciences and unsatisfied minds, having got nothing from their blind teachers the Pharisees and Sadducees, and carrying away nothing but a barren recollection of pompous forms.
 - b. He saw and pitied them, and cried aloud, like a herald, "*If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink.*"
 - c. That this was all our Lord said on this memorable occasion.

- d. This was the first sentence that fell from His lips.
- 5. No prophet or apostle ever took on himself to use such language as this.
 - a. "Come with us," said Moses to Hobab.
 - 1.) ***[Numbers 10:29]- And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of Raguel the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law, We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel.***
 - b. "Come to the waters," says Isaiah.
 - 1.) ***[Isaiah 55:1]- Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.***
 - c. "Behold the Lamb," says John the Baptist.
 - 1.) ***[John 1:29]- The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!***
 - d. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," says St. Paul.
 - 1.) ***[Acts 16:31]- And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.***
 - e. But no one except Jesus of Nazareth ever said, "Come to ME." That fact is very significant. He that said, "Come to Me," knew and felt, when He said it, that He was the eternal Son of God, the promised Messiah, the Saviour of the world.
- C. You have a case supposed: "If any man thirst."
 - 1. Bodily thirst is notoriously the most painful sensation to which the frame of mortal man is liable.
 - a. ***[Luke 16:24]- And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.***
 - 2. If bodily thirst is so painful, how much more painful is thirst of soul?
 - a. Physical suffering is not the worst part of eternal punishment.
 - b. Physical suffering is a light thing, even in this world, compared to the suffering of the mind and inward man.
 - c. This is the thirst that the Jews felt when Peter preached to them on the day of Pentecost.
 - 1.) ***[Acts 2:37]- Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?***
 - d. This is the thirst that the Philippian jailor felt, when he awoke to consciousness of his spiritual danger and felt the earthquake making the prison reel under his feet.
 - 1.) ***[Acts 16:29-30]- Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?***
 - e. This is the thirst that many of the greatest servants of God seem to have felt when light first broke in on their minds.
 - 1.) Augustine seeking rest among the Manichean heretics and finding none.
 - 2.) Luther groping after truth among monks in Erfurt Monastery.
 - 3.) John Bunyan agonizing amidst doubts and conflicts in his Elstow cottage.
 - 4.) George Whitefield groaning under self-imposed austerities, for want of clear teaching, when an undergraduate at Oxford.

- f. Woe to that man of whom the Saviour can say, "Thou knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."
 - 1.) ***[Revelation 3:17]- Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:***
 - g. To realize our spiritual need, and feel true spiritual thirst, is the A B C in saving Christianity.
 - 1.) ***[Job 34:27-28]- He looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not; he will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light.***
- D. You have a remedy proposed: "Let him come unto Me, and drink."
- 1. There is a grand simplicity about this little sentence. It solves that mighty problem, "How can man have peace with God?"
 - a. ***[Matthew 11:28]- Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.***
 - b. ***[John 6:35]- And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.***
 - c. ***[John 6:37]- All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.***
 - d. ***[John 7:38]- If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.***
 - e. ***[John 8:12]- Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.***
 - f. ***[John 10:9]- I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.***
 - g. ***[John 14.6]- I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.***
 - 2. What is the sum and substance of these simple words?
 - a. Christ is that Fountain of living water that God has graciously provided for thirsting souls.
 - b. From Him, as out of the rock smitten by Moses, there flows an abundant stream for all who travel through the wilderness of this world.
 - c. In Him, as our Redeemer and Substitute, crucified for our sins and raised again for our justification, there is an endless supply of all that men can need - pardon, absolution, mercy, grace, peace, rest, relief, comfort, and hope.
 - d. He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.
 - 1.) ***[1 Peter 2:24]- 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.***
 - 2.) ***[1 Peter 3:18]- For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:***
 - 3.) ***[2 Corinthians 5:21]- For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.***
 - e. He is sealed and appointed to be the Reliever of all who are laboring and heavy laden, and the Giver of living water to all who thirst.
 - f. It is His office to receive sinners.
 - g. It is His pleasure to give them pardon, life, and peace.
 - h. The efficacy of a medicine depends in great measure on the manner in which it is used.
 - 1.) The best prescription of the best physician is useless if we refuse to follow the directions that accompany it.

3. A word of exhortation, some caution and advice about the Fountain of living water.
 - a. He that thirsts and wants relief must come to Christ Himself.
 - 1.) He must not be content with coming to His Church and His ordinances, or to the assemblies of His people for prayer and praise.
 - 2.) He must not stop short even at His holy table, or rest satisfied with privately opening his heart to His ordained ministers.
 - 3.) He that is content with only drinking these waters “shall thirst again.”
 - a.) ***[John 4:13]-Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:***
 - 4.) He must have personal dealings with Christ Himself: all else in religion is worthless without Him.
 - 5.) The King’s palace, the attendant servants, the richly furnished banqueting house, the very banquet itself - all is nothing unless we speak with the King.
 - 6.) His hand alone can take the burden off our backs and make us feel free.
 - 7.) The hand of man may take the stone from the grave and show the dead; but none but Jesus can say to the dead, “*Come forth and live.*”
 - a.) ***[John 11:41-43]- Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.***
 - b. He that thirsts and wants relief from Christ must actually come to Him.
 - 1.) It is not enough to wish, and talk, and mean, and intend, and resolve, and hope.
 - 2.) Meaning and intending they live; meaning and intending they die.
 - 3.) We must “*arise and come!*”
 - 4.) If the prodigal son had been content with saying, “*How many hired servants of my father have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I hope some day to return home,*” he might have remained forever among the swine. It was when he arose and came to his father that his father ran to meet him, and said, “*Bring forth the best robe and put it on him. - Let us eat and be merry.*”
 - a.) ***[Luke 15:20-23]- And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry:***
 - 5.) We must not only “*come to ourselves*” and think, but we must actually come to the High Priest, to Christ. We must come to the Physician.
 - c. He that thirsts and wants to come to Christ must remember that simple faith is the one thing required.
 - 1.) By all means let him come with a penitent, broken and contrite heart; but let him not dream of resting on that for acceptance.
 - 2.) Faith is the only hand that can carry the living water to our lips.
 - 3.) Faith is the hinge on which all turns in the matter of our justification.
 - 4.) ***[John 3:15-16]- that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.***

- 5.) ***[Romans 4:5]- But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.***
 - 6.) *Just as I am! without one plea
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee -
O Lamb of God, I come!*
 - 7.) How simple this remedy for thirst appears! But oh, how hard it is to persuade some persons to receive it!
 - a.) ***[2 Kings 5:12]-Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel ? may I not wash in them, and be clean ? So he turned and went away in a rage.***
 - b.) ***[John 5:40]- And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.***
 - 8.) Simple as this remedy for thirst appears, it is the only cure for man's spiritual disease, and the only bridge from earth to heaven.
 - a.) ***[Jeremiah 2:13]- For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.***
 - 9.) Simple as the old remedy for thirst may appear, it is the root of the inward life of all God's greatest servants in all ages.
 - a.) ***[John 6:55]- For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.***
 - b.) ***[Galatians 2:20]- 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.***
 - 10.) How thankful we ought to be that we live in a land where the great remedy for spiritual thirst is known.
 - a.) ***[Numbers 21:5]- And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, either is there any water ; and our soul loatheth this light bread.***
- E. You have a promise held out: *"He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living waters."*
1. Promises are one of the grand means by which God is pleased to approach the soul of man.
 2. God is continually holding out inducements to man to listen to Him, obey Him, and serve Him, and undertaking to do great things, if man will only attend and believe.
 - a. ***[2 Peter 1:4]- Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.***
 3. There is one grand difference between the promises of Adam's children and the promises of God.
 - a. The promises of man are not sure to be fulfilled. With the best wishes and intentions, he cannot always keep his word.
 - b. The promises of God, on the contrary, are certain to be kept. He is Almighty: nothing can prevent His doing what He has said.
 - 1.) ***[Job 23.13]- But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? And what his soul desireth, even that he doeth.***
 - 2.) ***[James 1.17]- Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.***
 - 3.) ***[Hebrews 6:18]- that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:***

4. Concerning the variety and riches of Scripture promises.
 - a. God's infinite mercy and compassion.
 - b. God's readiness to receive all who repent and believe.
 - c. God's willingness to forgive, pardon absolve the chief of sinners.
 - d. God's power to change hearts and alter our corrupt nature.
 - e. God's encouragements to pray, and hear the Gospel, and draw near to the throne of grace.
 - f. God given strength for duty.
 - g. God's comfort in trouble, guidance in perplexity, help in sickness, consolation in death, support under bereavement,
 - h. God's happiness beyond the grave and reward in glory.
 - i. ***[1 Kings 10:7]- Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it; and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard.***

5. The promise of our Lord Jesus Christ is singularly rich in encouragement to all who feel spiritual thirst, and come to Him for relief.
 - a. He who comes to Him by faith shall receive an abundant supply of everything that he can desire for the relief of his own soul's wants.
 - 1.) The Spirit shall convey to him such an abiding sense of pardon, peace and hope, that it shall be in his inward man like a wellspring, never dry.
 - 2.) He shall feel so satisfied with "the things of Christ," which the Spirit shall show him, that he shall rest from spiritual anxiety about death, judgment, and eternity.
 - a.) ***[John 16:15]- All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.***
 - 3.) He may have his seasons of darkness and doubt, through his own infirmities or the temptations of the devil but when he has once come to Christ by faith, he shall find in his heart of hearts an unfailing fountain of consolation.
 - 4.) *"Only come to Me, poor anxious soul,"* our Lord seems to say - *"Only come to Me, and thy spiritual anxiety shall be relieved. I will place in thy heart, by the power of the Holy Spirit, such a sense of pardon and peace, through My atonement and intercession, that thou shalt never completely thirst again. Thou mayest have thy doubts, and fears, and conflicts, while thou art in the body. But once having come to Me, and taken Me for thy Saviour, thou shalt never feel thyself entirely hopeless. The condition of thine inward man shall be so thoroughly changed that thou shalt feel as if there were within thee an ever flowing spring of water."*
 - 5.) The humblest and feeblest believer in Christ has got something within him that he would not part with, though he may not yet fully understand it. It is just that "river of living water" which begins to run in the heart of every child of Adam as soon as he comes to Christ and drinks.
 - b. He who comes to Him by faith shall also become a source of blessing to the souls of others.
 - 1.) ***[Romans 14:7]- For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.***
 - 2.) Some believers are "rivers of living water" while they live.
 - a.) Their words, their conversation, their preaching, their teaching, are all means by which the water of life has flowed into the hearts of their fellow-men.
 - 3.) Some believers are "rivers of living water" when they die.
 - a.) Their courage in facing the king of terrors, their boldness in the most painful sufferings, their unswerving faithfulness to Christ's truth even at the stake, their manifest peace on the edge of the grave - all this has set thousands thinking, and led hundreds to repent and believe.

- 4.) Some believers are “*rivers of living water*” long after they die.
 - a.) They do good by their books and writings in every part of the world, long after the hands which held the pen are mouldering in the dust.
 - b.) ***[Hebrews 11:4]- By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.***
- 5.) There are some believers who are “*rivers of living water*” by the beauty of their daily conduct and behavior.
 - a.) There are many quiet, gentle, consistent Christians who make no show and no noise in the world, and yet insensibly exercise a deep influence for good on all around them.
 - b.) They “*win without the Word.*”
 - 1.) ***[1 Peter 3:1]- Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;***
 - c.) Their love, their kindness, their sweet temper, their patience, their unselfishness, tell silently on a wide circle, and sow seeds of thought and self-inquiry in many minds.

F. Application.

1. Do you know anything of spiritual thirst? Have you ever felt anything of genuine deep concern about your soul?
 - a. People may go on for years attending God’s house and yet never feel their sins, or desire to be saved.
 - b. The cares of this world, the love of pleasure, the “lust of other things” choke the good seed every Sunday, and make it unfruitful.
2. Do you feel anything at this very moment? Is your conscience awake and working? Are you sensible of spiritual thirst, and longing for relief?
 - a. Hear the invitation which I bring you in my Master’s name this day: - “*If any man,*” no matter who he may be - if any man, high or low, rich or poor, learned or unlearned - “*if any man thirst, let him come to Christ and drink.*”
 - b. Hear and accept that invitation without delay. Wait for nothing. Wait for nobody.
3. Have you come to Christ already, and found relief?
 - a. Then come nearer, nearer still.
 - b. The closer your communion with Christ, the more comfort you will feel.
 - c. The more you daily live by the side of the Fountain, the more you shall feel in yourself “a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”
 - 1.) ***[John 4:14]- but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.***
 - d. You shall not only be blessed yourself, but be a source of blessing to others.
 - e. ***[Psalm 17:15]- As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.***
4. “*When a man is awakened, and brought to that that all must be brought to, or to worse, ‘What shall I do to be saved?’ (Acts xvi. 30, 31), we have the apostolic answer to it: ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.’ This answer is so old that with many it seems out of date. But it is still and will ever be fresh, and new, and savoury, and the*

only resolution of this grand case of conscience, as long as conscience and the world lasts. No wit or art of man will ever find a crack or flaw in it, or devise another or a better answer; nor can any but this alone heal rightly the wound of an awakened conscience.

a. [Acts 16:30-31]- and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

5. “Let us set this man to seek resolution and relief in this case of some masters in our Israel. According to their principles they must say to him, ‘Repent, and mourn for your known sins, and leave them and loath them; and God will have mercy on you.’ ‘Alas!’ (saith the poor man), ‘my heart is hard, and I cannot repent aright: yea, I find my heart more hard and vile than when I was secure in sin.’ If you speak to this man of qualifications for Christ, he knows nothing of them; if of sincere obedience, his answer is native and ready: ‘Obedience is the work of a living man, and sincerity is only in a renewed soul.’ Sincere obedience is, therefore, as impossible to a dead unrenewed sinner as perfect obedience is. Why should not the right answer be given to the awakened sinner: ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved’? Tell him what Christ is, what He hath done and suffered to obtain eternal redemption for sinners, and that according to the will of God and His Father. Give him a plain downright narrative of the Gospel salvation wrought out by the Son of God; tell him the history and mystery of the Gospel plainly. It may be the Holy Ghost will work faith thereby, as He did in those first fruits of the Gentiles. (Acts x. 44.)

a. [Acts 10:44]- While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.

6. “If he ask, What warrant he hath to believe on Jesus Christ? tell him that he hath utter indispensable necessity for it; for without believing on Him, he must perish eternally. Tell him that he hath God’s gracious offer of Christ and all His redemption; with a promise, that upon accepting the offer by faith, Christ and salvation with Him is his. Tell him that he hath God’s express commandment (1 John iii. 23) to believe on Christ’s name; and that he should make conscience of obeying it, as well as any command in the moral law. Tell him of Christ’s ability and good-will to save; that no man was ever rejected by Him that cast himself upon Him; that desperate cases are the glorious triumphs of His art of saving. Tell him that there is no midst (or medium) between faith and unbelief; that there is no excuse for neglecting the one and continuing in the other; that believing on the Lord Jesus for salvation is more pleasing to God than all obedience to His law; and that unbelief is the most provoking to God, and the most damning to man, of all sins. Against the greatness of his sins, the curse of the law, and the severity of God as Judge, there is no relief to be held forth to him, but the free and boundless grace of God in the merit of Christ’s satisfaction by the sacrifice of Himself.

a. [1 John 3:23]- And 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.

7. “If he should say, What is it to believe on Jesus Christ? As to this, I find no such question in the Word; but that all did some way understand the notion of it: the Jews that did not believe on Him (John vi. 28-30); the chief priests and Pharisees (John vii. 48); the blind man. (John ix. 35.) When Christ asked him, Believest thou on the Son of God? he answered, Who is He, Lord, that I may believe on Him? Immediately, when Christ had told him (verse 37), he saith not, What is it to believe on Him? but, Lord, I believe; and worshipped Him: and so both professed and acted faith in Him. So the father of the lunatic (Mark ix. 23, 24) and the eunuch (Acts viii. 37), they all, both Christ’s enemies and His disciples, knew that faith in Him was a believing that the Man Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God, the Messiah, and Saviour of the world, so as to receive and look for salvation in His name. (Acts iv. 12.) This was the common report, published by Christ and His apostles and disciples, and known by all that heard it.

a. [John 6:28-30]- Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye

- believe on him whom he hath sent. They said therefore unto him, What sign showest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?*
- b. *[John 7:48]- Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?*
 - c. *[John 9:35,37]-Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.*
 - d. *[Mark 9:23-24]- Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.*
 - e. *[Acts 8:37]-And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.*
 - f. *[Acts 4:12]- Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*
8. *“If he yet ask, What he is to believe? you tell him, that he is not called to believe that he is in Christ, and that his sins are pardoned, and he a justified man; but that he is to believe God’s record concerning Christ, (1 John v. 10-12.) And this record is, that God giveth (that is, offereth) to us eternal Life in His Son Jesus Christ; and that all that with the heart believe this report, and rest their souls on these glad tidings, shall be saved. (Rom. x. 9-11.) And thus he is to believe, that he may be justified. (Gal. ii. 16.)*
- 1.) *[1 John 5:10-12]- Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.*
 - 2.) *[Romans 10:9-11]- that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.*
 - 3.) *[Galatians 2:16]- knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*
9. *“If he still say that this believing is hard, this is a good doubt, but easily resolved. It bespeaks a man deeply humbled. Anybody may see his own impotence to obey the law of God fully; but few find the difficulty of believing. For his relief and resolution ask him, What it is he finds makes believing difficult to him? Is it unwillingness to be justified and saved? Is it unwillingness to be so saved by Jesus Christ, to the praise of God’s grace in Him, and to the voiding of all boasting in himself? This he will surely deny. Is it a distrust of the truth of the Gospel record? This he dare not own. Is it a doubt of Christ’s ability or goodwill to save? This is to contradict the testimony of God in the Gospel. Is it because he doubts of an interest in Christ and His redemption? You tell him that believing on Christ makes up the interest in Him.*
10. *“If he say that he cannot believe on Jesus Christ because of the difficulty of the acting this faith, and that a Divine power is needful to draw it forth, which he finds not, you must tell him that believing in Jesus Christ is no work, but a resting on Jesus Christ. You must tell him that this pretence is as unreasonable as if a man, wearied with a journey and not able to go one step further, should argue, ‘I am so tired, that I am not able to lie down,’ when indeed he can neither stand nor go. The poor wearied sinner can never believe on Jesus Christ till he finds he can do nothing for himself; and in his first believing doth always apply himself to Christ for salvation, as a man hopeless and helpless in himself. And by such reasonings with him from the Gospel, the Lord will (as He hath often done) convey faith, and joy and peace by believing.” - Robert Traill*

XVIII. Unsearchable Riches

A. Proof text.

1. *[Ephesians 3:8]- Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;*

B. Paul says of himself, “I am less than the least of all saints.”

1. The language he uses is singularly strong.
2. The language he uses is almost unintelligible to many who profess and call themselves Christians.
 - a. *[1 Corinthians 2:14]- But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*
3. The language he uses is testily felt in his heart.
 - a. *[Philippians 3:12]- Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.*
 - b. *[1 Corinthians 15:9]- For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.*
 - c. *[1 Timothy 1:15]- This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.*
 - d. *[Romans 7:24]- O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*
 - e. *[1 Peter 5:5]- 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.*
4. Humility Paul’s was not a peculiar characteristic of the great apostle of the Gentiles.
 - a. It is one leading mark of all the most eminent saints of God in every age.
 - b. The more real grace men have in their hearts, the deeper is their sense of sin.
 - c. The more light the Holy Ghost pours into their souls, the more do they discern their own infirmities, defilements, and darkness.
5. He that desires to be saved, among the readers of this paper, let him know this day that the first steps towards heaven are a deep sense of sin and a lowly estimate of ourselves.
 - a. *[Luke 18:13]- And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.*
6. Let us all seek humility.
 - a. No grace suits man so well.
 - 1.) *[Job 8:9]- (for we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow.)*
 - b. There is no grace that so befits a churchman.
 - c. The more we have of it, the more Christlike we shall be.
 - 1.) *[Philippians 2:5-8]- Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*

C. Paul says of his ministerial office, “Grace is given unto me to preach.”

1. There is a grand simplicity in the Apostle’s words.
 - a. “Grace is given unto me that I should preach.”

- b. The privilege of being a messenger of good news.
 - c. The privilege of being a herald of glad tidings.
 - d. *[1 Corinthians 1:17]- For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.*
- 2. Paul never supports the favorite theory that there was intended to be a sacerdotal ministry, a sacrificing priesthood in the Church of Christ.
 - a. *[1 Timothy 2:7]- Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not,) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.*
 - b. *[2 Timothy 1:11]- whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.*
 - c. *[2 Timothy 4:17]- Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.*
 - d. *[Titus 1:3]- but hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour;*
 - e. *[2 Timothy 4:2]- preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.*
- 3. Beware of undervaluing the office that the minister of Christ holds.
 - a. Let us grasp firmly certain fixed principles about the Christian ministry.
 - b. However strong our dislike of priesthood and aversion to Romanism, let nothing tempt us to let these principles slip out of our hands.
 - c. Surely there is solid middle ground between a grovelling idolatry of sacerdotalism on one hand, and a disorderly anarchy on the other.
 - d. Surely it does not follow, because we will not be Papists in this matter of the ministry, that we must needs be Quakers or Plymouth Brethren.
 - 1.) *"Every well-informed person knows that, to the apprehension of most people, the Quakers and Plymouth Brethren appear to ignore the ministerial office altogether."*
- 4. Exhortations.
 - a. Let us settle it firmly in our minds that the ministerial office is a Scriptural Institution.
 - 1.) Ask yourself and others, *"Is the Christian ministry a Scriptural thing or not?"*
 - b. Let us settle it in our minds that the ministerial office is a most wise and useful provision of God.
 - 1.) It secures the regular maintenance of all Christ's ordinances and means of grace.
 - 2.) It provides an undying machinery for promoting the awakening of sinners and the edification of saints.
 - 3.) Our God is a God of order, and a God who works by means.
 - a.) We have no right to expect His cause to be kept up by constant miraculous interpositions, while His servants stand idle.
 - b.) There is no better plan can be devised for the uninterrupted preaching of the Word and administration of the sacraments, than the appointment of a regular order of men who shall give themselves wholly to Christ's business.
 - c. Let us settle it firmly in our minds that the ministerial office is an honourable privilege.
 - 1.) How great an honour it is to be the Ambassador of a King: the very person of such an officer of state is respected, and called legally sacred.
 - 2.) How great an honour is it to be the ambassador of the King of kings, and to proclaim the good news of the conquest achieved on Calvary!
 - 3.) To serve directly such a Master, to carry such a message, to know that the results of our work, if God shall bless it, are eternal, this is indeed a privilege.

- 4.) Other laborers may work for a corruptible crown, but the minister of Christ works for an incorruptible crown.
- 5.) Never is a land in worse condition than when the ministers of religion have caused their office to be ridiculed and despised.
 - a.) ***[Malachi 2:9]- Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law.***
- 6.) But, whether men will hear or forbear, the office of a faithful ambassador is honourable.
 - a.) It was a fine saying of an old missionary on his deathbed, who died at the age of ninety-six, *"The very best thing that a man can do is to preach the Gospel."*
- d. Let all who pray never forget to make supplications and prayers and intercession for the ministers of Christ.
 - 1.) That there be a due supply of them at home and in the mission field.
 - 2.) That they may be kept sound in the faith and holy in their lives,
 - 3.) That they make take heed to themselves as well as to the doctrine.
 - 4.) ***[1 Timothy 4:16]- Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.***
 - 5.) Remember that while our office is honourable, useful, and Scriptural, it is also one of deep and painful responsibility!
 - a.) ***[Hebrews 13:17-18]- Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you. Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.***
 - b.) ***[1 Corinthians 9:16]- For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!***
 - 6.) Remember the old saying of the Fathers, *"None are in more spiritual danger than ministers."*
 - 7.) It is easy to criticize and find fault with minister.
 - a.) They have a treasure in earthen vessels.
 - b.) They are men of like passions with yourselves, and not infallible.
 - 8.) Pray in these trying, tempting, controversial days, that the Church may never lack bishops, priests, and deacons who are sound in the faith, bold as lions, "wise as serpents, and yet harmless as doves."
 - a.) ***[Matthew 10:16]- Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.***
 - 9.) The very man who said *"Grace is given me to preach,"* is the same man who said, in another place, *"Pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith."*
 - a.) ***[Ephesians 3:8]- Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;***
 - b.) ***[2 Thessalonians 3:1-2]- Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith.***

D. Paul says of the great subject of his preaching, *"the unsearchable riches of Christ."*

1. That the converted man of Tarsus should preach “Christ” is no more than we might expect from his antecedents.
 - a. Having found peace through the blood of the cross himself, we may be sure he would always tell the story of the cross to others.
 - b. He never wasted precious time in exalting a mere rootless morality.
 - c. He always went to the root of the matter, and showed men their great family disease, their desperate state as sinners, and the Great Physician needed by a sin-sick world.

2. That he should preach Christ among the Gentiles is in keeping with all we know of his line of action in all places and among all people.
 - a. Wherever he traveled and stood up to preach among Greeks or Romans, among learned or unlearned, among Stoics and Epicureans, before rich or poor, barbarians, Scythians, bond, or free – Jesus and His vicarious death, Jesus and His resurrection, was the keynote of his sermons.
 - b. Varying his mode of address according to his audience, as he wisely did, the pith and heart of his preaching was Christ crucified.

3. He uses a very peculiar expression, an expression that unquestionably stands alone in his writings - *“the unsearchable riches of Christ”*.
 - a. There are unsearchable riches in Christ’s person.
 - 1.) The miraculous union of perfect Man and perfect God in our Lord Jesus Christ is a great mystery, no doubt, which we have no line to fathom.
 - 2.) Mysterious as that union may be, it is a mine of comfort and consolation to all who can rightly regard it.
 - 3.) Infinite power and infinite sympathy are met together and combined in our Saviour.
 - 4.) If He had been only Man He could not have saved us. If He had been only God, He could not have been *“touched with the feeling of our infirmities,”* nor *“suffered Himself being tempted.”*
 - a.) ***[Hebrews 2:18]- For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.***
 - b.) ***[Hebrews 4:15]- For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.***
 - 5.) As God, He is mighty to save; and as Man, He is exactly suited to be our Head, Representative, and Friend.
 - 6.) Let those who never think deeply, taunt us, if they will, with squabbling about creeds and dogmatic theology.
 - 7.) Let thoughtful Christians never be ashamed to believe and hold fast the neglected doctrine of the Incarnation, and the union of two natures in our Saviour.
 - 8.) It is a rich and precious truth that our Lord Jesus Christ is both *“God and Man.”*
 - b. There are unsearchable riches in the work that Christ accomplished for us, when He lived on earth, died, and rose again.
 - 1.) Truly and indeed, *“He finished the work which His Father gave Him to do.”*
 - a.) ***[John 17:4]- I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.***
 - b.) The work of atonement for sin,
 - c.) The work of reconciliation,
 - d.) The work of redemption,
 - e.) The work of satisfaction,
 - f.) The work of substitution as *“the just for the unjust.”*

1.) [1 Peter 3:18]-For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.

- c. There are unsearchable riches in the offices that Christ at this moment fills, as He lives for us at the right hand of God.
 - 1.) He is at once our Mediator, our Advocate, our Priest, our Intercessor, our Shepherd, our Bishop, our Physician, our Captain, our King, our Master, our Head, our Forerunner, our Elder Brother, and the Bridegroom of our souls.
 - 2.) To those who live the life of faith, and seek first the kingdom of God, each office is precious as gold.
- d. There are unsearchable riches in the names and titles that are applied to Christ in the Scriptures.
 - 1.) The Lamb of God.
 - 2.) The bread of life.
 - 3.) The fountain of living waters.
 - 4.) The light of the world.
 - 5.) The door, the way, the vine, the rock, and the corner stone.
 - 6.) The Christian's robe and the Christian's altar
 - 7.) To the true Christian each title will be found to have a wealth of blessed truth.
- e. There are unsearchable riches in the characteristic qualities, attributes, dispositions, and intentions of Christ's mind towards man, as we find them revealed in the New Testament.
 - 1.) In Him there are riches of mercy, love, and compassion for sinners.
 - 2.) In Him there are riches of power to cleanse, pardon, forgive, and to save to the uttermost.
 - 3.) In Him there are riches of willingness to receive all who come to Him repenting and believing.
 - 4.) In Him there are riches of ability to change by His Spirit the hardest hearts and worst characters.
 - 5.) In Him there are riches of tender patience to bear with the weakest believer.
 - 6.) In Him there are riches of strength to help His people to the end, notwithstanding every foe without and within.
 - 7.) In Him there are riches of sympathy for all who are cast down and bring their troubles to Him.
 - 8.) In Him there are riches of glory to reward, when He comes again to raise the dead and gather His people to be with Him in His kingdom.
 - 9.) Who can estimate these riches? Those who feel the value of their souls will say with one voice, "There are no riches like those which are laid up in Christ for His people."
- f. These riches are unsearchable.
 - 1.) They are a mine which, however long it may be worked, is never exhausted.
 - 2.) They are a fountain which, however many draw its waters, never runs dry.
 - 3.) The sun shines on for generation after generation, and season after season, rising and setting with unbroken regularity, giving to all, taking from none, and to all ordinary eyes the same in light and heat that it was in the day of creation, the great common benefactor of mankind.
 - 4.) If any illustration can approach the reality, just so it is with Christ. He is still "*the Sun of righteousness*" to all mankind.
 - a.) **[Malachi 4:2]- But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.**

- 5.) Millions have drawn from Him in days gone by, and looking to Him have lived with comfort, and with comfort died.
- 6.) Myriads at this moment are drawing from Him daily supplies of mercy, grace, peace, strength, and help, and find “all fulness” dwelling in Him.

E. Application

1. What do you think of yourself? What are your thoughts about yourself? Have you found out that grand foundation-truth that you are a sinner, a guilty sinner in the sight of God?
 - a. Self-knowledge is the first step towards heaven.
 - b. To know God’s unspeakable perfection, and our own immense imperfection.
 - c. To see our own unspeakable defectiveness and corruption is the A B C in saving religion.
 - d. The more real inward light we have, the more humble and lowly minded we shall be, and the more we shall understand the value of that despised thing, the Gospel of Christ.
 - e. He that thinks worst of himself and his own doings is perhaps the best Christian before God.
 - f. Well would it be for many if they would pray, night and day, this simple prayer - “Lord, show me myself.”
2. What do you think of the ministers of Christ? The kind of answer a man would give to it, if he speaks honestly, is very often a fair test of the state of his heart.
 - a. What you think of the faithful minister of Christ, who honestly exposes sin, and pricks your conscience.
 - b. Too many like only those ministers who prophesy smooth things and let their sins alone, who flatter their pride and amuse their intellectual taste, but who never sound an alarm, and never tell them of a wrath to come.
 - c. When Ahab saw Elijah, he said, “*Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?*”
 - 1.) *[1 Kings 21:20]- And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found thee: because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord.*
 - d. When Micaiah was named to Ahab, he cried, “I hate him because he doth not prophesy good of me, but evil.”
 - 1.) *[1 Kings 22:8]- And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of the Lord: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so.*
 - e. He is the best friend who tells you the most truth!
 - 1.) *[Proverbs 27:6]- Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful. ****
 - f. It is an evil sign in the Church when Christ’s witnesses are silenced, or persecuted, and men hate him who reproveth.
 - 1.) *[Isaiah 29:20-21]- For the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off: that make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought.*
 - g. It was a solemn saying of the prophet to Amaziah: “*Now I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou has done this, and not hearkened to my counsel.*”
 - 1.) *[2 Chronicles 25:16]- And it came to pass, as he talked with him, that the king said unto him, Art thou made of the king’s counsel? forbear; why shouldest thou be smitten? Then the prophet forbore, and said, I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened unto my counsel.*

3. What do you think of Christ Himself? Is He great or little in your eyes? Does He come first or second in your estimation? Is He before or behind His Church, His ministers, His sacraments, and His ordinances? Where is He in your heart and your mind's eye?
 - a. Pardon, peace, rest of conscience, hope in death, heaven itself - all hinge upon our answer.
 - b. To know Christ is life eternal. To be without Christ is to be without God.
 - 1.) ***[1 John 5:12]- He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.***
 - c. There is a sore disease at the heart of mankind, which will baffle all their efforts, and defeat all their plans, and that disease is sin.
 - d. Oh, that people would only see and recognize the corruption of human nature, and the uselessness of all efforts to improve man which are not based on the remedial system of the Gospel!
 - e. Yes: the plague of sin is in the world, and no waters will ever heal that plague except those that flow from the fountain for all sin - a crucified Christ.
 - f. The best Christian among us knows but little of his glorious Saviour, even after he had learned to believe.
 - 1.) We see through a glass darkly. We do not realize the "unsearchable riches" there are in Him.
 - 2.) When we wake up after His likeness in another world, we shall be amazed that we knew Him so imperfectly, and loved Him so little. Let us seek to know Him better now, and live in closer communion with Him.
 - 3.) So living, we shall feel no need of human priests and earthly confessionals. We shall feel *"I have all and abound: I want nothing more. Christ dying for me on the cross - Christ ever interceding for me at God's right hand - Christ dwelling in my heart by faith - Christ soon coming again to gather me and all His people together to part no more, Christ is enough for me. Having Christ, I have 'unsearchable riches.'"*
 - 4.) *Long did I toil, and knew no earthly rest,
Far did I rove, and found no certain home;
At last I sought them in His sheltering breast,
Who opes His arms, and bids the weary come:
With Him I found a home, a rest divine,
And since then I am His, and He is mine.*

*"The good I have is from His stores supplied,
The ill is only what He deems the best;
He for my Friend, I'm rich with nought beside,
And poor without Him, though of all possess'd:
Changes may come, I take or I resign,
Content while I am His, and He is mine.*

*Whate'er may change, in Him no change is seen,
A glorious sun that wanes not nor declines,
Above the clouds and storms He walks serene,
And on His people's inward darkness shines:
All may depart, I fret not, nor repine,
While I my Savior's am, while He is mine.*

*"While here, alas! I know but half His love,
But half discern Him, and but half adore;
But when I meet Him in the realms above,
I hope to love Him better, praise Him more,
And feel, and tell, amid the choir divine,*

XIX. Wants Of The Times

A. Proof text.

1. *[1 Chronicles 12:32]- And of the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do; the heads of them were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their commandment.*

B. The importance of understanding the times.

1. *[Esther 1:13]- Then the king said to the wise men, which knew the times, (for so was the king's manner toward all that knew law and judgment:*
2. *[Matthew 16:3]- And in the morning, It will be foul weather today: for the sky is red and lowering. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?*
3. *[Luke 19:44]- and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.*
4. *[1 Corinthians 14:8]- For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.*

C. The times require of us a bold and unflinching maintenance of the entire truth of Christianity, and the Divine authority of the Bible.

1. Our lot is cast in an age of abounding unbelief, skepticism, and infidelity.
 - a. *“It is come to be taken for granted by many persons, that Christianity is not even a subject of inquiry; but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious. And accordingly they treat it as if, in the present age, this was an agreed point among all people of discernment, and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject of mirth and ridicule, as it were by way of reprisals for its having so long interrupted the pleasures of the world.” – Bishop Joseph Butler 1736*
2. In reviews, magazines, newspapers, lectures, essays, and sometimes even in sermons, scores of clever writers are incessantly waging war against the very foundations of Christianity.
 - a. Reason, science, geology, anthropology, modern discoveries, free thought, are all boldly asserted to be on their side.
 - b. No educated person, we are constantly told nowadays, can really believe supernatural religion, or the plenary inspiration of the Bible, or the possibility of miracles.
 - c. Such ancient doctrines as the Trinity, the deity of Christ, the personality of the Holy Spirit, the atonement, the obligation of the Sabbath, the necessity and efficacy of prayer, the existence of the devil, and the reality of future punishment, are quietly put on the shelf.
 - d. All this is done so cleverly, and with such an appearance of candour and liberality, and with such compliments to the capacity and nobility of human nature, that multitudes of unstable Christians are carried away as by a flood, and become partially unsettled, if they do not make complete shipwreck of faith.
 - e. *[Luke 18:8]- I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the*
 - f. *Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?*
 - g. *[2 Timothy 3:13]- But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.*
 - h. *[2 Peter 3:3]- knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,*
3. Do not to be surprised at the widespread skepticism of the times, so also, do not be shaken in mind by it, or moved from steadfastness.
 - a. There is no real cause for alarm. The ark of God is not in danger, though the oxen seem to shake it.

- b. Christianity in like manner will survive the attacks of the clever writers of these times.
 - c. When you cannot answer a skeptic, be content to wait for more light; but never forsake a great principle.
 - d. *"In religion, as in many scientific questions, the highest philosophy is often a judicious suspense of judgment."* – Faraday
- 4. Three great broad facts that skeptics and infidels have never explained away.
 - a. Jesus Christ Himself.
 - 1.) If Christianity is a mere invention of man, and the Bible is not from God, how can infidels explain Jesus Christ?
 - 2.) His existence in history, they cannot deny. How is it that without force or bribery, without arms or money, He has made such an immensely deep mark on the world, as He certainly has?
 - 3.) Who was He? What was He? Where did He come from?
 - 4.) How is it that there never has been one like Him, neither before nor after, since the beginning of historical times?
 - b. The Bible itself.
 - 1.) If Christianity is a mere invention of man, and the Bible is of no more authority than any other uninspired volume, how is it that the Book is what it is?
 - 2.) How is it that a Book written by a few Jews in a remote corner of the earth - written at distant periods without consort or collusion among the writers - written by members of a nation that compared to Greeks and Romans, did nothing for literature?
 - 3.) How is it that this Book stands entirely alone, and there is nothing that even approaches it, for high views of God, for true views of man, for solemnity of thought, for grandeur of doctrine, and for purity of morality?
 - 4.) What account can the infidel give of this Book, so deep, so simple, so wise, so free from defects?
 - c. The effect that Christianity has produced on the world.
 - 1.) If Christianity is a mere invention of man, and not a supernatural, Divine revelation, how is it that it has wrought such a complete alteration in the state of mankind?
 - 2.) Any well-read man knows that the moral difference between the condition of the world, before Christianity was planted and since Christianity took root, is the difference between night and day, the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of the devil.
 - 3.) At this very moment, I defy anyone to look at the map of the world, and compare the countries where men are Christians with those where men are not Christians, and to deny that these countries are as different as light and darkness, black and white.
 - 4.) How can any infidel explain this on his principles? He cannot do it.
 - 5.) We only can who believe that Christianity came down from God, and is the only Divine religion in the world.
- D. The times require at our hands distinct and decided views of Christian doctrine.
 - 1. The professing Church is as much damaged by laxity and indistinctness about matters of doctrine within, as it is by sceptics and unbelievers without.
 - a. The heart of man is naturally in the dark about religion - has no intuitive sense of truth - and really needs instruction and illumination.
 - b. The natural heart in most men hates exertion in religion, and cordially dislikes patient, painstaking inquiry.
 - c. The natural heart generally likes the praise of others, shrinks from collision, and loves to be thought charitable and liberal.
 - 2. Beware of this undecided state of mind in religion.

- a. It is a pestilence that walks in darkness.
 - b. It is a destruction that kills in noonday.
 - c. It is a lazy, idle frame of soul that saves men the trouble of thought and investigation.
 - d. It is a frame of soul for which there is no warrant in the Bible
 - e. For your own soul's sake, dare to make up your mind what you believe, and dare to have positive, distinct views of truth and error.
 - f. Never be afraid to hold decided doctrinal opinions.
 - g. Let no fear of man and no morbid dread make you rest contented with a bloodless, boneless, tasteless, colorless, lukewarm, undogmatic Christianity.
3. If you want to do good in these times, you must throw aside indecision, and take up a distinct, sharply cut, doctrinal religion.
- a. If you believe little, those to whom you try to do good will believe nothing.
 - b. The victories of Christianity, wherever they have been won, have been won by distinct doctrinal theology.
 - 1.) By telling men roundly of Christ's vicarious death and sacrifice;
 - 2.) By showing them Christ's substitution on the cross, and His precious blood;
 - 3.) By teaching them justification by faith, and bidding them believe on a crucified Saviour.
 - 4.) By preaching ruin by sin, redemption by Christ, regeneration by the Spirit.
 - 5.) By lifting up the brazen serpent; by telling men to look and live - to believe, repent, and be converted.
 - c. This is the only teaching which for eighteen centuries God has honored with success, and is honoring at the present day both at home and abroad.
 - d. Christianity without distinct doctrine is a powerless thing.
 - e. Christianity may be beautiful to some minds, but it is childless and barren.
 - f. Evil may abound, and ignorant impatience may cry out that Christianity has failed.
 - 1.) Depend on it, if we want to "do good" and shake the world, we must fight with the old apostolic weapons, and stick to "dogma."
 - 2.) No dogma, no fruits!
 - 3.) No positive Evangelical doctrine, no evangelization!
4. The men, who have done most for the Church and made the deepest mark on their day and generation, have always been men of most decided and distinct doctrinal views.
- 1.) It is the bold, decided, outspoken men who make a deep impression, and sets people thinking, and "turns the world upside down."
 - 2.) It was "dogma" in the apostolic ages which emptied the heathen temples and shook Greece and Rome.
 - 3.) It was "dogma" which awoke Christendom from its slumbers at the time of the Reformation and spoiled the Pope of one third of his subjects.
 - 4.) It was "dogma" which 100 years ago revived the Church of England in the days of Whitfield, Wesley, Venn, and Romaine, and blew up our dying Christianity into a burning flame.
 - 5.) It is "dogma" at this moment which gives power to every successful mission, whether at home or abroad.
 - 6.) It is clear ringing doctrine - which, like the ram's horns at Jericho, casts down the opposition of the devil and sin.
 - 7.) Let us cling to decided doctrinal views, whatever some may please to say in these times, and we shall do well for ourselves, well for others, well for the Church of England, and well for Christ's cause in the world.
- E. The times require of us an awakened and livelier sense of the unscriptural and soul ruining character of Romanism.

1. The edge of the old British feeling about Protestantism seems blunted and dull.
 - a. Some profess to be tired of all religious controversy, and are ready to sacrifice God's truth for the sake of peace.
 - b. Some look on Romanism as simply one among many English forms of religion, and neither worse nor better than others.
 - c. Some try to persuade us that Romanism is changed, and not nearly so bad as it used to be.
 - d. Some boldly point to the faults of Protestants, and loudly cry that Romanists are quite as good as us.
 - e. Some think it fine and liberal to maintain that we have no right to think anyone wrong who is in earnest about his creed.
 - 1.) That ignorance, immorality, and superstition reigned supreme in England 400 years ago under Popery.
 - 2.) That the Reformation was the greatest blessing God ever gave to this land.
 2. The causes of this melancholy change of feeling.
 - a. The untiring zeal of the Romish Church herself.
 - b. The proceedings of the Ritualistic party in the Church of England.
 - 1.) By vilifying the Reformation and sneering at Protestantism for many years, with only too much success.
 - 2.) It has corrupted, leavened, blinded, and poisoned the minds of many Churchmen by incessant misrepresentation.
 - 3.) It has gradually familiarized people with every distinctive doctrine and practice of Romanism - the real presence - the mass - auricular confession and priestly absolution - the sacerdotal character of the ministry - the monastic system - and a histrionic, sensuous, showy style of public worship.
 - c. The spurious liberality of the age we live in helps on the Rome ward tendency.
 - d. It is fashionable now to say that all sects should be equal.
 - e. That the State should have nothing to do with religion.
 - f. That all creeds should be regarded with equal favor and respect.
 - g. That there is a substratum of common truth at the bottom of all kinds of religion.
 3. Warnings against Romanism.
 - a. The times require you to awake and be on your guard.
 - b. Beware of Romanism and beware of any religious teaching which, wittingly or unwittingly, paves the way to it.
 - c. Realize the painful fact that the Protestantism is gradually ebbing away, and resist the growing tendency to forget the blessings of the English Reformation.
 - d. For the sake of the Church of England, for the sake of our country, for the sake of our children, let us not drift back to Romish ignorance, superstition, priest craft, and immorality.
 4. Entreaties toward Protestantism.
 - a. Read your Bibles and store your minds with Scriptural arguments. A Bible-reading laity is a nation's surest defense against error.
 - b. Read history and see what Rome did in days gone by.
 - c. Read facts, standing out at this minute on the face of the globe, if you will not read history.
- F. The times require of us a higher standard of personal holiness, and an increased attention to practical religion in daily life.
1. There never has been so much profession of religion without practice, so much talking about God without walking with Him, so much hearing God's words without doing them.
 2. The pathway to a higher standard of holiness.

- a. Examine more closely the Ten Commandments. The two tables of God's law are a perfect mine of practical religion.
 - b. Examine more closely such portions of our Lord Jesus Christ's teaching as the Sermon on the Mount.
 - 1.) ***[Matthew 5:20]- For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.***
 - c. Examine more closely the latter part of nearly all of Paul's Epistles to the Churches.
3. There is a common complaint in these latter days that there is a want of power in modern Christianity, and that the true Church of Christ, the body of which He is the Head, does not shake the world in the twentieth century as it used to do in former years.
 - a. The low tone of life that is so sadly prevalent among professing believers.
 - b. Where is the self-denial, the redemption of time, the absence of luxury and self-indulgence, the unmistakable separation from earthly things, the manifest air of being always about our Master's business, the singleness of eye, the simplicity of home life, the high tone of conversation in society, the patience, the humility, the universal courtesy which marked so many of our forerunners seventy or eighty years ago?
 - c. Endeavour to walk with God, to be "thorough" and unmistakable in our daily life, and to silence, if we cannot convert, a sneering world.
- G. The times require of us more regular and steady perseverance in the old ways of getting good for our souls.
1. There is an immense increase of public religion in the land. Services of all sorts are strangely multiplied.
 - a. The revival of the old apostolic plan of "aggressiveness" in religion, and the evident spread of a desire "by all means to save some."
 - 1.) ***[1 Corinthians 9:22]- To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.***
 - b. Anything is better than torpor, apathy, and inaction. "If Christ is preached I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice."
 - 1.) ***[Philippians 1:18]- What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretense, or in truth, Christ is preached ; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.***
 - 2.) ***[2 Kings 7:2]- Then a lord on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, if the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.***
 2. We must never forget that, unless it is accompanied by private religion, it is of no real solid value, and may even produce most mischievous effects.
 - a. Incessant running after sensational preachers, incessant attendance at hot, crowded meetings, protracted to late hours, incessant craving after fresh excitement and highly-spiced pulpit novelties – all this kind of thing is calculated to produce a very unhealthy style of Christianity; and, in many cases, the end is utter ruin of soul.
 - b. Those who make public religion everything are often led away by mere temporary emotions, after some grand display of ecclesiastical oratory, into professing far more than they really feel.
 - c. They can only be kept up to the mark, which they imagine they have reached, by a constant succession of religious excitements.
 - d. Too often, the conclusion of the whole matter is a relapse into utter deadness and unbelief, and a complete return to the world.

- e. It was not the wind, or the fire, or the earthquake, which showed Elijah the presence of God, but *“the still, small voice.”*
 - 1.) ***[1 Kings 19:11-12]- And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.***
- f. There must be an increase of that religion which is private - private between each man and his God.
 - 1.) The root of a plant or tree makes no show above ground. If you dig down to it and examine it, it is a poor, dirty, coarse-looking thing, and not nearly so beautiful to the eye as the fruit, or leaf, or flower.
 - 2.) That despised root, nevertheless, is the true source of all the life, health, vigor and fertility that your eyes see, and without it the plant or tree would soon die.
 - 3.) Now private religion is the root of all vital Christianity. Without it, we may make a brave show in the meeting or on the platform, and sing loud, and shed many tears, and have a name to live and the praise of man.
- 3. Exhortations.
 - a. Let us pray more heartily in private, and throw our whole souls more into our prayers.
 - 1.) There are live prayers and there are dead prayers - prayers that cost us nothing and prayers that often cost us strong crying and tears.
 - 2.) When great professors backslide in public, and the Church is surprised and shocked, the truth is that they had long ago backslidden on their knees. They had neglected the throne of grace.
 - b. Let us read our Bibles in private more, and with more pains and diligence. Ignorance of Scripture is the root of all error and makes a man helpless in the hand of the devil.
 - 1.) ***[Ephesians 4:14]- that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;***
 - 2.) ***[Matthew 22:29]- Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.***
 - c. Let us cultivate the habit of keeping up more private meditation and communion with Christ.
 - 1.) Let us resolutely make time for getting alone occasionally, for talking with our own souls like David, for pouring out our hearts to our Great High Priest, Advocate, and Confessor at the right hand of God.
 - 2.) We want more auricular confession: not to man but the throne of grace.
 - 3.) Spiritual prosperity depends immensely on our private religion, and private religion cannot nourish unless we determine that by God's help we will make time, whatever trouble it may cost us, for thought, for prayer, for the Bible, and for private communion with Christ.
 - 4.) That saying of our Master is sadly overlooked: *“Enter into thy closet and shut the door.”*
 - a.) ***[Matthew 6:6]- But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret ; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.***

H. Application

1. Would you understand what the times require of you in reference to your own soul? You live in times of peculiar spiritual danger.
 - a. Mind what you are about. Look well to your goings. Ponder the paths of your feet.
 - b. Take heed lest you come to eternal grief and ruin your own soul.
 - c. Beware of practical infidelity under the specious name of free thought.
 - d. Beware of a helpless state of indecision about doctrinal truth under the plausible idea of not being party spirited, and under the baneful influence of so-called liberality and charity.
 - e. Beware of frittering away life in wishing, and meaning, and hoping for the day of decision, until the door is shut and you are given over to a dead conscience and die without hope.
 - f. Awake to a sense of your danger. Arise and give diligence to make your calling and election sure, whatever else you leave uncertain.
 - g. The kingdom of God is very nigh. Christ the Almighty Saviour, Christ the sinner's Friend, Christ and eternal life, are ready for you if you will only come to Christ.
 - h. Arise and cast away excuses: this very day Christ calls you. Wait not for company if you cannot have it; wait for nobody.

2. Would you understand what the times require of all Christians in reference to the souls of others? You live in times of great liberty and abounding opportunities of doing good.
 - a. Never were there so many open doors of usefulness, so many fields white to the harvest.
 - b. Mind that you use those open doors, and try to reap those fields.
 - c. Try to do a little good before you die. Strive to be useful. Determine that, by God's help, you will leave the world a better world in the day of your burial than it was in the day you were born.
 - d. Remember the souls of relatives, friends and companions; remember that God often works by weak instruments, and try with holy ingenuity to lead them to Christ.
 - e. The time is short: the sand is running out of the glass of this old world; then redeem the time, and endeavour not to go to heaven alone.
 - f. Exercise, exercise, is one grand secret of health, both for body and soul. *"He that watereth shall be watered himself."* It is a deep and golden saying of our Master's, but seldom understood in its full meaning - *"It is more blessed to give than to receive."*
 - 1.) ***[Proverbs 11:25]-The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.***
 - 2.) ***[Acts 20:35]- I have showed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.***

3. Would you understand what the times require of you in reference to the Church of England? Our time-honored Church is in a very perilous, distressing, and critical position.
 - a. Her rowers have brought her into troubled waters.
 - b. Her very existence is endangered by Papists, Infidels, and Liberationists without.
 - c. Her life-blood is drained away by the behavior of traitors, false friends, and timid officers within.
 - d. Nevertheless, so long as the Church of England sticks firmly to the Bible, the Articles, and the principles of the Protestant Reformation, so long I advise you strongly to stick to the Church.
 - e. When the Articles are thrown overboard and the old flag is hauled down, then, and not till then, it will be time for you and me to launch the boats and quit the wreck.
 - f. At present, let us stick to the old ship.

XX. Christ Is All

A. Proof texts.

1. ***[Colossians 3:11]- where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.***
2. ***[Philippians 1:21]- For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.***

3. *[Galatians 2:20]- 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.*

B. Christ is all in all the counsels of God concerning man.

1. When this earth had no being, man, with all the high thoughts he now has of himself, was a creature unknown. Where was Christ then?
 - a. *[John 1:1]- In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*
 - b. *[Philippians 2:6]- who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:*
 - c. *[John 17:5,24]- And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am ; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.*
 - d. *[Proverbs 8:23]- I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.*
2. When this earth was created in its present order, sun, moon and stars - sea, land and all their inhabitants, were called into being and made out of chaos and confusion. Man was formed out of the dust of the ground. Where was Christ then?
 - a. *[John 1:3]- All things were made by him ; and without him was not any thing made that was made.*
 - b. *[Colossians 1:16]- for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:*
 - c. *[Hebrews 1:10]- And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands.*
 - d. *[Proverbs 8:27-30]- When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: when he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;*
3. When sin entered the world, Adam and Eve lost that holy nature in which they were first formed. Had He dealt with them according to their deserts, there had been nothing before them but death, hell, and everlasting ruin. Where was Christ then?
 - a. *[Genesis 3:15]- and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*
 - b. Christ was held up as the true light of the world, in the very day of the fall; and never has any name been made known from that day by which souls could be saved, excepting His.
4. When the world seemed sunk and buried in ignorance of God. They had no right knowledge of God; and man, left to himself, was utterly corrupt. *"The world, by wisdom, knew not God."* Excepting a few despised Jews in a corner of the earth, the whole world was dead in ignorance and sin. What did Christ do then?
 - a. *[1 Corinthians 1.21]- For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.*
 - b. He left the glory He had had from all eternity with the Father, and came down into the world to provide a salvation.
 - c. He took our nature upon Him, and was born as a man.
 - d. As a man He did the will of God perfectly, which we all had left undone: as a man He suffered on the cross the wrath of God which we ought to have suffered.

- e. He brought in everlasting righteousness for us. He redeemed us from the curse of a broken law.
 - f. He opened a fountain for all sin and uncleanness.
 - g. He died for our sins.
 - h. He rose again for our justification.
 - i. He ascended to God's right hand, and there sat down, waiting till His enemies should be made His footstool.
 - j. He sits now, offering salvation to all who will come to Him, interceding for all who believe in Him, and managing by God's appointment all that concerns the salvation of souls.
5. When sin shall be cast out from this world. - Wickedness shall not always flourish unpunished - Satan shall not always reign - creation shall not always groan, being burdened. There shall be a time of restitution of all things. There shall be a new heaven and a new earth; wherein dwelleth righteousness, and the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. Where shall Christ be then? And what shall He do?
- a. *[Romans 8:22]- For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.*
 - b. *[Acts 3:21]- whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.*
 - c. *[2 Peter 3:13]- Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*
 - d. *[Isaiah 11:9]- They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.*
 - e. Christ Himself shall be King.
 - f. He shall return to this earth and make all things new.
 - g. He shall come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, and the kingdoms of the world shall become His.
 - h. The heathen shall be given to Him for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession.
 - i. To Him every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that He is Lord.
 - j. His dominion shall be an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.
 - k. *[Matthew 24:30]- and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*
 - l. *[Revelation 11:15]- And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.*
 - m. *[Psalm 2:8]- Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.*
 - n. *[Philippians 2:10-11]- that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*
 - o. *[Daniel 7:14]- And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.*
6. When all men shall be judged. The sea shall give up the dead that are in it, and death and hell shall deliver up the dead that are in them. All that sleep in the grave shall awake and come forth, and all shall be judged according to their works. Where will Christ be then? Christ Himself will be the Judge.
- a. *[Revelation 20:13]- And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.*

- b. *[Daniel 12:2]- And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.*
 - c. *[John 5:22-23]- For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent him.*
 - d. *[Matthew 25:32]- and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:*
 - e. *[2 Corinthians 5:10]- For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*
- C. Christ is all in the inspired books that make up the Bible.
1. It was Christ crucified who was set forth in every Old Testament sacrifice.
 - a. *[1 Peter 3:18]- For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:*
 2. It was Christ to whom Abel looked when he offered a better sacrifice than Cain.
 - a. *[Hebrews 11:4]- By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.*
 3. It was Christ of whom Enoch prophesied in the days of abounding wickedness before the flood.
 - a. *[Jude 14-15]- And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.*
 4. It was Christ to whom Abraham looked when he dwelt in tents in the land of promise.
 - a. *[John 8:56]- Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.*
 5. It was Christ of whom Jacob spoke to his sons, as he lay dying.
 - a. *[Genesis 49:10]- The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.*
 6. It was Christ who was the substance of the ceremonial law that God gave to Israel by the hand of Moses.
 - a. *[Galatians 3:24]- Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.*
 7. It was Christ to whom God directed the attention of Israel by all the daily miracles that were done before their eyes in the wilderness.
 - a. *[1 Corinthians 10:4]- and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.*
 - b. *[John 3:14]- And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:*
 8. It was Christ of whom all the Judges were types.
 - a. Joshua, and David, and Gideon, and Jephthah, and Samson, and all the rest whom God raised up to deliver Israel from captivity - all were emblems of Christ.
 - b. Weak and unstable and faulty as some of them were, they were set for example of better things in the distant future.
 - c. All were meant to remind the tribes of that far higher Deliverer who was yet to come.

9. It was Christ of whom David the king was a type.
 - a. Anointed and chosen when few gave him honour.
 - 1.) Despised and rejected by Saul and all the tribes of Israel.
 - 2.) Persecuted and obliged to flee for his life.
 - 3.) A man of sorrow all his life, and yet at length a conqueror.
 - 4.) In all these things David represented Christ.
 10. It was Christ of whom all the prophets from Isaiah to Malachi spoke.
 - a. ***[1 Peter 1:10-11]- Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.***
 11. It is Christ of whom the whole New Testament is full.
 - a. The Gospels are “Christ” living, speaking, and moving among men.
 - b. The Acts are “Christ” preached, published, and proclaimed.
 - c. The Epistles are “Christ” written of, explained, and exalted.
 - d. The Revelation is of “Christ”. ***
 - e. From first to last, there is one name above every other, and that is the name of Christ.
- D. Christ is all in the religion of all true Christians on earth.
1. Clarifications.
 - a. The absolute necessity of the election of God the Father, and the sanctification of God the Spirit, in order to effect the salvation of everyone that is saved.
 - b. There is a perfect harmony and unison in the action of the three Persons of the Trinity, in bringing any man to glory, and that all three co-operate and work a joint work in his deliverance from sin and hell.
 - 1.) Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost.
 - 2.) The Father is merciful, the Son is merciful, and the Holy Ghost is merciful.
 - 3.) The same three who said at the beginning, “Let us create,” said also, “Let us redeem and save.”
 - 4.) Everyone who reaches heaven will ascribe all the glory of his salvation to Father, Son and Holy Ghost, three Persons in one God.
 2. It is the mind of the blessed Trinity that Christ should be prominently and distinctly exalted in the matter of saving souls.
 - a. Christ is set forth as the “Word,” through whom God’s love to sinners is made known.
 - b. Christ’s incarnation and atoning death on the cross are the great corner stone on which the whole plan of salvation rests.
 - c. Christ is the way and door, by which alone approaches to God are to be made.
 - d. Christ is the root into which all elect sinners must be grafted.
 - e. Christ is the only meeting-place between God and man, between heaven and earth, between the Holy Trinity and the poor sinful child of Adam.
 - f. It is Christ whom God the Father has “sealed” and appointed to convey life to a dead world.
 - 1.) ***[John 6:27]- Labor not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.***
 - g. It is Christ to whom the Father has given a people to be brought to glory.
 - h. It is Christ of whom the Spirit testifies, and to whom He always leads a soul for pardon and peace.
 - i. ***[Colossians 1:19]- For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;***

3. In saying "Christ is all," does not mean that the work of the Father and the Spirit are shut out.
 - a. Christ is all in a sinner's justification before God.
 - 1.) Through Him alone we can have peace with a Holy God, By Him alone we can have admission into the presence of the Most High, and stand there without fear.
 - a.) *[Ephesians 3:12]- in whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.*
 - b.) *[Romans 3:26]- to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*
 - c.) *[Revelation 7:14]- And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*
 - b. Christ is all in a sinner's sanctification.
 - 1.) No man is ever holy till he comes to Christ and is united to Him.
 - a.) *[John 15:5]- I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing.*
 - 2.) No man can grow in holiness except he abides in Christ.
 - a.) *[Colossians 2:6-7]- As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.*
 - 3.) Would you be holy? Then Christ is the manna you must daily eat, like Israel in the wilderness of old.
 - a.) *[Hebrews 12:2]- looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*
 - b.) *[2 Corinthians 3:18]- But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*
 - 4.) The true secret of coming up out of the wilderness is to come up "leaning on the Beloved."
 - a.) *[Song of Solomon 8:5]- Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? I raised thee up under the apple tree: there thy mother brought thee forth; there she brought thee forth that bare thee.*
 - b.) *[2 Kings 4:7]- Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest.*
 - c.) *[Galatians 2:20]- 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.*
 - 5.) Pity those who try to be holy without Christ! Their labor is all in vain.
 - a.) You are putting money in a bag with holes.
 - b.) You are pouring water into a sieve.
 - c.) You are rolling a huge round stone uphill.
 - d.) You are building up a wall with untempered mortar.
 - e.) You are beginning at the wrong end.
 - f.) You must come to Christ first, and He shall give you His sanctifying Spirit.
 - g.) *[Philippians 4:13]- I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*
 - c. Christ is all in a sinner's in his comfort in time present.
 - 1.) A saved soul has many sorrows.
 - a.) He has a body like other men - weak and frail.

- b.) He has a heart like other men - and often a more sensitive one, too.
 - c.) He has trials and losses to bear like others - and often more.
 - d.) He has his share of bereavements, deaths, disappointments, and crosses.
 - e.) He has the world to oppose – a place in life to fill blamelessly - unconverted relatives to bear with patiently - persecutions to endure – and a death to die.
- 2.) Who is sufficient for these things? What shall enable a believer to bear all this?
- a.) *[Philippians 2:1]- If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,*
 - b.) *[Hebrews 4:15]- For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*
 - c.) *[Psalm 22:14]- I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.*
 - d.) *[Lamentations 3:57]- Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon thee: thou saidst, Fear not.*
 - e.) *[Psalm 94:19]- In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.*
 - f.) *[Psalm 124:2-5]- If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us: then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us: then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul: then the proud waters had gone over our soul.*
- d. Christ is all in a sinner's hopes for time to come.
- 1.) No living man but the real child of God - the sincere, thoroughgoing Christian - can give a reasonable account of the hope that is in him.
 - 2.) No hope is reasonable which is not Scriptural.
 - 3.) A true Christian has a good hope when he looks forward: the worldly man has none.
 - 4.) A true Christian sees light in the distance: the worldly man sees nothing but darkness.
 - 5.) A true Christian's hope is that Jesus Christ is coming again
 - a.) Coming without sin.
 - b.) Coming with all His people.
 - c.) Coming to wipe away every tear.
 - d.) Coming to raise His sleeping saints from the grave.
 - e.) Coming to gather together all His family that they may be forever with Him.
 - 6.) A believer is patient because he looks for the coming of the Lord.
 - a.) He can bear hard things without murmuring.
 - b.) He knows the time is short.
 - c.) He waits quietly for the King.
 - 7.) A believer is moderate in all things because he expects his Lord soon to return.
 - a.) His treasure is in heaven; his good things are yet to come.
 - b.) The world is not his rest, but an inn; and an inn is not home.
 - c.) He knows that *"He that shall come will soon come, and will not tarry."*
 - 1.) *[Hebrews 10:37]- For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.*
 - d.) Christ is coming, and that is enough.
 - 8.) It is indeed a *"blessed hope!"*
 - a.) *[Titus 2:13]- looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;*

- 9.) People talk of their “expectations” and hopes from this world. None have such solid expectations as a saved soul.
- a.) *[Psalm 62:5]- My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.*

10.) In all true saving religion Christ is all: all in justification - all in comfort - all in hope.

E. Christ will be all in heaven.

1. All men and women who reach heaven will find that even there also “*Christ is all.*”
2. Christ crucified will be the grand object in heaven like the altar in Solomon’s temple.
 - a. *[2 Chronicles 3:4]- Now these are the things wherein Solomon was instructed for the building of the house of God. The length by cubits after the first measure was threescore cubits, and the breadth twenty cubits.*
 - b. *[2 Chronicles 4:1]- Moreover he made an altar of brass, twenty cubits the length thereof, and twenty cubits the breadth thereof, and ten cubits the height thereof.*
 - c. *[Revelation 5:6]- And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.*
 - d. *[Revelation 21:23]- And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.*
3. The praise of the Lord Jesus will be the eternal song of all the inhabitants of heaven.
 - a. *[Revelation 5:12-13]- saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*
4. The service of the Lord Jesus will be one eternal occupation of all the inhabitants of heaven.
 - a. *[Revelation 7:15]- Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.*
5. The presence of Christ Himself shall be one everlasting enjoyment of the inhabitants of heaven.
 - a. *[Revelation 22:4]- and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.*
 - b. *[Psalm 17:15]- As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.*
6. What a sweet and glorious home heaven will be to those who have loved the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity!
 - a. *[Ecclesiastes 6:9]- Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the desire: this is also vanity and vexation of spirit.*
7. How little fit for heaven are many who talk of going to heaven when they die, while they manifestly have no saving faith, and no real acquaintance with Christ.
 - a. You give Christ no honour here.
 - b. You have no communion with Him.
 - c. You do not love Him.
 - d. Alas! What could you do in heaven? It would be no place for you.
 - e. Its joys would be no joys for you.
 - f. Its happiness would be a happiness into which you could not enter.
 - g. Its employments would be a weariness and a burden to your heart.

F. The depth of the foundations of that little expression, “Christ is all.”

1. Christ ought to be all in a visible Church.
 - a. Splendid religious buildings, numerous religious services, gorgeous ceremonies, troops of ordained men, all, all are nothing in the sight of God, if the Lord Jesus Himself in all His offices is not honored, magnified, and exalted.
 - b. That Church is but a dead carcass in which Christ is not “all.”
 2. Christ ought to be all in a ministry.
 - a. The great work which ordained men are intended to do, is to lift up Christ.
 - b. We are to be like the pole on which the brazen serpent was hung.
 - c. We are useful so long as we exalt the great object of faith, but useful no further.
 - d. We are to be ambassadors to carry tidings to a rebellious world about the King’s Son, and if we teach men to think more about us and our office than about Him, we are not fit for our place.
 - e. The Spirit will never honour that minister who does not testify of Christ - who does not make Christ “all.”
 3. Christ ought to be all in His various offices.
 - a. The High Priest, the Mediator, the Redeemer, the Saviour, the Advocate, the Shepherd, the Physician, the Bridegroom, the Head, the Bread of Life, the Light of the World, the Way, the Door, the Vine, the Rock, the Fountain, the Sun of Righteousness, the Forerunner, the Surety, the Captain, the Prince of Life, the Amen, the Almighty, the Author and Finisher of Faith, the Lamb of God, the King of Saints, the Wonderful, the Mighty God, the Counselor, the Bishop of Souls - all these, and many more, are names given to Christ in Scripture.
 - b. Each is a fountain of instruction and comfort for everyone who is willing to drink of it.
 - c. Each supplies matter for useful meditation.
- G. Practical conclusions.
1. Is Christ all? Then let us learn the utter uselessness of a Christless religion.
 - a. There are only too many baptized men and women who practically know nothing at all about Christ.
 - b. Their religion consists in a few vague notions and empty expressions. “They trust they are no worse than others.
 - c. They keep to their church.
 - d. They try to do their duty.
 - e. They do nobody any harm.
 - f. They hope God will be merciful to them.
 - g. They trust the Almighty will pardon their sins, and take them to heaven when they die.” This is about the whole of their religion!
 2. Is Christ all? Then learn the enormous folly of joining anything with Christ in the matter of salvation.
 - a. There are multitudes of baptized men and women who profess to honour Christ, but in reality do Him great dishonour.
 - b. They give Christ a certain place in their system of religion, but not the place which God intended Him to fill.
 - c. Christ alone is not “all in all” to their souls.
 - d. No! It is either Christ and the Church - or Christ and the sacraments - or Christ and His ordained ministers - or Christ and their own repentance - or Christ and their own goodness - or Christ and their own prayers - or Christ and their own sincerity and charity, on which they practically rest their souls.
 3. Is Christ all? Then let all who want to be saved apply direct to Christ.

- a. There are many who hear of Christ with the ear and believe all they are told about Him. They allow that there is no salvation excepting in Christ. They acknowledge that Jesus alone can deliver them from hell and present them faultless before God.
 - b. *"Much of religion turns on being able to use possessive pronouns. Take from me the word 'my.' and you take from me God!"* – Martin Luther
 - c. **[Luke 23:42]- And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.**
4. Is Christ all? Then let all His converted people deal with Him as if they really believed it. Let them lean on Him and trust Him far more than they have ever done yet.
 - a. There are many truly Christian souls who rob themselves of their own peace, and forsake their own mercies.
 - b. Make sure that Christ is really and thoroughly his all in all. Beware of allowing yourself to mingle anything of your own with Christ.
 - c. Take heed you do not make a Christ of your faith. Rest not on your own faith, but on Christ.
 - d. Beware, lest, unaware to yourself, you make a Christ of the work of the Spirit! Rest not on the work of the Spirit, but on Christ.
 - e. Beware lest you make a Christ of your feelings and sensations! They are poor, uncertain things and sadly dependent on our bodies and outward circumstances. Rest only on Christ.
 - f. Look more and more at the great object of faith, Jesus Christ, and to keep your mind dwelling on Him. So doing you would find faith, and all the other graces, grow, though the growth at the time might be imperceptible to yourself. He that would prove a skilful archer must not look at the arrow, but at the mark.
 5. Is Christ all? Then Let us all learn and strive to do so more and more. Let us live on Christ. Let us live in Christ. Let us live with Christ. Let us live to Christ.
 - a. **[Hebrews 12:14]- Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:**

XXI. Extracts From Old Writers.

A. Concerning sanctification by Robert Trail.

1. What sanctification is.
 - a. *"Sanctification is the same with regeneration; the same with the renovation of the whole man.*
 - b. *Sanctification is the forming and the framing of the new creature; it is the implanting and engraving the image of Christ upon the poor soul.*
 - c. *Sanctification is what the Apostle breathed after - 'That Christ might be formed in them'. That they might 'bear the image of the heavenly.'"*
 - 1.) **[Galatians 4:19]- My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,**
 - 2.) **[1 Corinthians 15:49]- And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.**
 - d. *"There are but two men only that all the world is like; and so will it fare with them, as they are like the one, or like the other: the first Adam, and the second Adam. Every man by nature is like the first Adam and like the devil: for the devil and the first fallen Adam were like one another. 'Ye are of your father the devil.' saith our Lord, and he was 'a murderer from the beginning.'*
 - 1.) **[John 8:44]- Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own : for he is a liar, and the father of it.**

- e. *All the children of the first Adam are the devil's children; there is no difference here. And all the children of the other sort are like to Jesus Christ, the second Adam; and when His image shall be perfected in them, then they shall be perfectly happy. 'As we have also borne the image of the earthly, so shall we also bear the image of the heavenly.'*
 - 1.) ***[1 Corinthians 15:49]- And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.***
- f. *Pray observe; we bear the image of the earthly by being born in sin and misery; we bear the image of the earthly by living in sin and misery; and we bear the image of the earthly by dying in sin and misery; and we bear the image of the earthly in the rottenness of the grave; and we bear the image of the heavenly Adam when we are sanctified by His Spirit.*
- g. *This image increases in us according to our growth in sanctification: and we perfectly bear the image of the heavenly Adam when we are just like the Man Christ, both in soul and body, perfectly happy, and perfectly holy; when we have overcome death by His grace, as He overcame it by His own strength.*
- h. *It will never be known how like believers are to Jesus Christ, till they are risen again: when they shall arise from their graves, like so many little suns shining in glory and brightness. Oh, how like will they be to Jesus Christ! Though His personal transcendent glory will be His property and prerogative to all eternity."*
- 2. Wherein it agrees with justification.
 - a. *"They are like one another as they are the same in their author; it is God that justifieth, and it is God that sanctifies. 'Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth.' I am the Lord that doth sanctify you, is a common word in the Old Testament."*
 - 1.) ***[Romans 8:33]- For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,***
 - 2.) ***[Exodus 31:13]- Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.***
 - 3.) ***[Leviticus 20:8]- And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I am the Lord which sanctify you.***
 - b. *"They are alike and the same in their rise, being both of free grace; justification is an act of free grace, and sanctification is the same. 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy, He saved us by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.' They are both of grace."*
 - 1.) ***[Titus 3:5]- not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;***
 - c. *"They are alike in that they are both towards the same persons. Never a man is justified but he is also sanctified; and never a man is sanctified but he is also justified; all the elect of God, all the redeemed, have both these blessings passing upon them."*
 - d. *"They are alike as to the time, they are the same in time. It is a hard matter for us to talk or think of time when we are speaking of the works of God: these saving works of His are always done at the same time; a man is not justified before he is sanctified, though it may be conceived so in order of nature, yet at the same time the same grace works both. 'Such were some of you,' saith the Apostle, 'but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.'"*
 - 1.) ***[1 Corinthians 6:11]- And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.***

- e. *“They are the same as to the operation of them by the same means, that is, by the Word of God: we are justified by the Word, sentencing us to eternal life by the promise; and we are also sanctified by the power of the same Word. ‘Now ye are clean,’ saith our Lord, ‘through the Word that I have spoken unto you.’ ‘That He might sanctify and cleanse His Church,’ saith the Apostle, ‘with the washing of water by the Word.’*
 - 1.) **[John 15:3]- Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.**
 - 2.) **[Ephesians 5:26]- that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,**
 - f. *“They are the same as to their equal necessity to eternal life. I do not say as to their equal order, but as to their equal necessity: that is, as it is determined that no man who is not justified shall be saved, so it is determined that no man who is not sanctified shall be saved: no unjustified man can be saved, and no unsanctified man can be saved. They are of equal necessity in order to the possessing of eternal life.”*
3. Wherein it differs from justification.
- a. *“Justification is an act of God about the state of a man’s person; but sanctification is the work of God about the nature of a man: and these two are very different, as I shall illustrate by a similitude. Justification is an act of God as a judge about a delinquent, absolving him from a sentence of death; but sanctification is an act of God about us, as a physician, in curing us of a mortal disease. There is a criminal that conies to the bar, and is arraigned for high treason; the same criminal has a mortal disease, that he may die of, though there was no judge on the bench to pass the sentence of death upon him for his crime. It is an act of grace which absolves the man from the sentence of the law, that he shall not suffer death for his treason - that saves the man’s life. But notwithstanding this, unless his disease be cured, he may die quickly after, for all the judge’s pardon. Therefore, I say, justification is an act of God as a gracious Judge, sanctification is a work of God as a merciful Physician; David joins them both together. ‘Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases.’ It is promised, That iniquity shall not be your ruin, in the guilt of it; that is justification: and it shall not be your ruin, in the power of it; there lies sanctification.”*
 - 1.) **[Psalm 103:3]- who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;**
 - 2.) **[Ezekiel 18:30]- Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord God. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions ; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.**
 - b. *“Justification is an act of God’s grace upon the account of the righteousness of another, but sanctification is a work of God, infusing a righteousness into us. Now there is a great difference between these two: for the one is by imputation, the other by infusion.*
 - 1.) *“In justification, the sentence of God proceeds this way: the righteousness that Christ wrought out by His life and death, and the obedience that He paid to the law of God, is reckoned to the guilty sinner for his absolution; so that when a sinner comes to stand at God’s bar, when the question is asked, Hath not this man broken the law of God? Yes, saith God; yes, saith the conscience of the poor sinner, I have broken it in innumerable ways. And doth not the law condemn thee to die for thy transgression? Yes, saith the man; yes, saith the law of God, the law knows nothing more but this; ‘the soul that sinneth must die.’ Well, then, but Is there no hope in this case? Yes, and Gospel grace reveals this hope. There is One that took sin on Him, and died for our sins, and His righteousness is reckoned for the poor sinner’s justification; and thus we are absolved. We are absolved in justification by God’s reckoning on our account, on our behalf, and for our advantage, what Christ hath done and suffered for us.*
 - 2.) *“In sanctification the Spirit of God infuses a holiness into the soul. I do not say He infuses a righteousness; for I would fain have these words, righteousness and holiness, better distinguished than generally they are. Righteousness and holiness are, in this*

case, to be kept vastly asunder. Our righteousness is without us; our holiness is within us, it is our own; the Apostle plainly makes that distinction. 'Not having mine own righteousness.' (Phil. iii. 9.) It is our own, not originally, but our own inherently; not our own so as to be of our own working, but our own because it is indwelling in us. But our righteousness is neither our own originally nor inherently; it is neither wrought out by us, nor doth it dwell in us; but it is wrought out by Jesus Christ, and it eternally dwells in Him, and is only to be pleaded by faith, by a poor creature. But our holiness, though it be not our own originally, yet it is our own inherently, it dwells in us: this is the distinction that the Apostle makes. 'That I may be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.' (Phil. iii. 9.)

a.) [Philippians 3:9]- and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

- c. *"Justification is perfect, but sanctification is imperfect; and here lies a great difference between them. Justification, I say, is perfect, and admits of no degrees; admits of no decays, admits of no intermission, nor of any interruption: but sanctification admits of all these. When I say justification is perfect, I mean, that every justified man is equally and perfectly justified. The poorest believer that is this day in the world, is justified as much as ever the Apostle Paul was; and every true believer is as much justified now as he will be a thousand years hence. Justification is perfect in all them that are partakers of it, and to all eternity; it admits of no degrees. And the plain reason of it is this - the ground of it is the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ, and the entitling us to it is by an act of God the gracious Judge, and that act stands for ever; and if God justifies, who is he that shall condemn? (Rom. viii. 33.) But sanctification is an imperfect, incomplete, changeable thing. One believer is more sanctified than another. I am apt to believe that the Apostle Paul was more sanctified the first hour of his conversion, than any man this day in the world."*

1.) [Romans 8:33]- Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

2.) "Sanctification differs greatly as to the persons that are partakers of it; and it differs greatly too as to the same man; for a true believer, a truly sanctified man, may be more holy and sanctified at one time than at another. There is a work required of us - to be perfecting holiness in the fear of God (2 Cor. vii. 1). But we are nowhere required to be perfecting righteousness in the sight of God; for God hath brought in a perfect righteousness, in which we stand; but we are to take care, and to give diligence to perfect holiness in the fear of God. A saint in glory is more sanctified than ever he was, for he is perfectly so; but he is not more justified than he was. Nay, a saint in heaven is not more justified than a believer on earth is: only they know it better, and the glory of that light in which they see it, discovers it more brightly and more clearly to them."

a.) [2 Corinthians 7:1]- Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

4. From Traill's Sermons, upon 1 Pet. i. 1-3, vol. 4, p. 71. Edinburgh edition of Traill's Works. 1810.

B. Consider the necessity of holiness by Thomas Brooks.

1. *"Consider the necessity of holiness. It is impossible that ever you should be happy, except you are holy. No holiness here, no happiness hereafter. The Scripture speaks of three bodily inhabitants of heaven - Enoch, before the law; Elijah, under the law; and Jesus Christ, under the Gospel: all three eminent in holiness, to teach us, that even in an ordinary course there is no going to heaven without holiness. There are many thousand thousands now in heaven, but*

not one unholy one among them all; there is not one sinner among all those saints; not one goat among all those sheep; not one weed among all those flowers; not one thorn or prickle among all those roses; not one pebble among all those glistering diamonds. There is not one Cain among all those Abels; nor one Ishmael among all those Isaacs; nor one Esau among all those Jacobs in heaven. There is not one Ham among all the patriarchs; not one Saul among all the prophets; nor one Judas among all the apostles; nor one Demas among all the preachers; nor one Simon Magus among all the professors.”

2. *“Heaven is only for the holy man, and the holy man is only for heaven: heaven is a garment of glory, that is only suited to him that is holy. God, who is truth itself, and cannot lie, hath said it, that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Mark that word ‘no man.’ Without holiness the rich man shall not see the Lord; without holiness the poor man shall not see the Lord; without holiness the nobleman shall not see the Lord; without holiness the mean man shall not see the Lord; without holiness the prince shall not see the Lord; without holiness the peasant shall not see the Lord; without holiness the ruler shall not see the Lord; without holiness the ruled shall not see the Lord; without holiness the learned man shall not see the Lord; without holiness the ignorant man shall not see the Lord; without holiness the husband shall not see the Lord; without holiness the wife shall not see the Lord; without holiness the father shall not see the Lord; without holiness the child shall not see the Lord; without holiness the master shall not see the Lord; without holiness the servant shall not see the Lord. ‘For faithful and strong is the Lord of hosts that hath spoken it.’ (Josh. xxiii. 14.)”*
 - a. ***[Joshua 23:14]- And, behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.***
3. *“In this day some cry up one form, some another; some cry up one Church state, some another; some cry up one way, some another; but certainly the way of holiness is the good old way (Jer. vi. 16); it is the King of kings’ highway to heaven and happiness: ‘And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.’ (Isa. v. 8.) Some men say, Lo, here is the way; other men say, Lo, there is the way; but certainly the way of holiness is the surest, the safest, the easiest, the noblest, and the shortest way to happiness.*
 - a. ***[Jeremiah 6:16]- Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.***
 - b. ***[Isaiah 5:8]- Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth !***
 - c. *“Among the heathen, no man could enter into the temple of honour, but must first enter the temple of virtue. There is no entering the temple of happiness, except you enter into the temple of holiness. Holiness must first enter into you, before you can enter into God’s holy hill. As Samson cried out, ‘Give me water, or I die’; or as Rachel cried out, ‘Give me children, or I die’; so all unsanctified souls may well cry out, Lord, give me holiness, or I die: give me holiness or I eternally die. If the angels, those princes of glory, fall once from their holiness, they shall be for ever excluded from everlasting happiness and blessedness. If Adam in paradise fall from his purity, he shall quickly be driven out from the presence of Divine glory. Augustine would not be a wicked man, an unholy man, one hour for all the world, because he did not know but that he might die that hour; and should he die in an unholy estate, he knew he should be for ever separated from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power.”*
 - d. *“O, sirs, do not deceive your own souls; holiness is of absolute necessity; without it you shall never see the Lord. (2 Thess. i. 8-10.) It is not absolutely necessary that you should be great or rich in the world; but it is absolutely necessary that you should be holy: it is not absolutely necessary that you should enjoy health, strength, friends, liberty, life; but it is*

absolutely necessary that you should be holy. A man may see the Lord without worldly prosperity, but he can never see the Lord except he be holy. A man may to heaven, to happiness, without honour or worldly glory, but he can never to heaven, to happiness, without holiness. Without holiness here, no heaven hereafter. 'And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth.' (Rev. xxi. 27.) God will at last shut the gates of glory against every person that is without heart-purity."

- 1.) ***[2 Thessalonians 1: 8-10]- For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing. For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.***
 - 2.) ***[Revelation 21:27]- And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.***
- e. *"Ah, sirs, holiness is a flower that grows not in Nature's garden. Men are not born with holiness in their hearts, as they are born with tongues in their mouths: holiness is of a Divine offspring: it is a pearl of price, that is to be found in no nature but a renewed nature, in no bosom but a sanctified bosom. There is not the least beam or spark of holiness in any natural man in the world. 'Every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil continually.' (Gen. vi. 5.) 'How can man be clean that is born of a woman?' (Job xxv. 4.) The interrogation carries in it a strong negation, 'How can man be clean?' that is, man cannot be clean that is born of a woman: a man that is born of a woman is born in sin, and born both under wrath and under the curse. 'And who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?' 'But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.' (Job xiv. 4; Isa. lxiv. 6.) 'There is none righteous, no not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.' (Rom. iii. 10, 11.) Every man by nature is a stranger, yea, an enemy to holiness. (Rom. viii. 7.) Every man that comes into this world comes with his face towards sin and hell, and with his back upon God and holiness.*
- 1.) ***[Genesis 6:5]- And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.***
 - 2.) ***[Job 25:4]- How then can man be justified with God? Or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?***
 - 3.) ***[Job 14:4]- Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one.***
 - 4.) ***[Isaiah 64:6]- But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.***
 - 5.) ***[Romans 3:10-11]- as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.***
 - 6.) ***[Romans 8:7]- Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.***
- f. *"Such is the corruption of our nature, that, propound any Divine good to it, it is entertained as fire by water, or wet wood, with hissing. Propound any evil, then it is like fire to straw; it is like the foolish satyr that made haste to kiss the fire; it is like that unctuous matter which, the naturalists say, sucks and snatches the fire to it, with which it is consumed. All men are born sinners, and there is nothing but an infinite power that can make them saints. All men would be happy, and yet they naturally loathe to be holy. By all which you may clearly see that food is not more necessary for the preservation of natural life, than holiness is necessary for the preservation and salvation of the soul. If a man had the wisdom of Solomon, the strength of Samson, the courage of Joshua, the policy of Ahithophel, the dignities of Haman, the power of Ahasuerus, and the eloquence of Apollos,*

yet all those without holiness would never save him. The days and times wherein we live call aloud for holiness. If you look upon them as days and times of grace, what greater and higher engagements to holiness were ever put upon a people, than those that God hath put upon us, who enjoy so many ways, means, and helps to make us holy? Oh, the pains, the care, the cost, the charge, that God hath been at, and that God is daily at, to make us holy! Hath He not sent, and doth He not still send His messengers, rising up early, and going to bed late, and all to provoke you to be holy? Have not many of them spent their time, and spent their strength, and spent their spirits, and spent their lives to make you holy? O, sirs, what do holy ordinances call for, but holy hearts and holy lives? What do days of light call for, but walking in the light, and casting off the deeds of darkness? What is the voice of all the means of grace, but this, Oh, labour to be gracious? And what is the voice of the Holy Spirit, but this, Oh, labour to be holy? And what is the voice of all the miracles of mercy that God hath wrought in the midst of you, but this, 'Be ye holy, be ye holy'? O, sirs, what could the Lord have done that He hath not done to make you holy? Hath He not lifted you up to heaven in respect of holy helps? Hath He not to this very day followed you close with holy offers, and holy entreaties, and holy counsels, and holy encouragements, and all to make you holy? And will you be loose still, and proud still, and worldly still, and malicious still, and envious still, and contentious still, and unholy still? Oh, what is this, but to provoke the Lord to put out all the lights of heaven, to drive your teachers into corners, to remove your candlesticks, and to send His everlasting Gospel, that hath stood long a tip-toe, among a people that may more highly prize it, and dearly love it, and stoutly defend it, and conscientiously practise it, than you have done to this very day? (Rev. ii. 4, 5; Isa. xlii. 25.) I suppose there is nothing more evident than that the times and seasons wherein we live call aloud upon every one to look after holiness, and to labour for holiness. Never complain of the times, but cease to do evil, and labour to do well, and all will be well; get but better hearts and better lives, and you will quickly see better times. (Isa. i. 16-19.)

- 1.) **[Revelation 2:4-5]-Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.**
- 2.) **[Isaiah 42:25]- Therefore he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle: and it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.**
- 3.) **[Isaiah 1:16-19]- Wash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:**

4. From Brooks' "Crown and Glory of Christianity; or, Holiness the only way to Happiness" - Brooks' Works, vol. 4, pp. 151-153, 187-188. - Grosart's edition. 1866.