

Author's Preface

Nearly all the chapters and the title of the book were given to me one afternoon in June, 1896, while traveling on the train from Toronto to Detroit. I have not been able to put into the book all the things that I had hoped to, and have had to write out many of the chapters at intervals, amid other pressing labors. Amid the multitude of books in recent years on Christian holiness, most of them treat of the human side, explaining sin, consecration, faith, and religious duties. A very few of them treat mainly of the Divine side, of the perfection of the Divine nature; and I know of none that expounds the mode of existence of the three Divine Persons in the Godhead. If reading this book will enable some of God's dear children to understand Him, to love Him, and to worship Him, with a more intelligent and ardent devotion, that will be my ample reward, in the day when the Lord Jesus shall come to make up His jewels.

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Chapter 1 — Our Own God

God is our nearest relative. From the very fact that He produced us out of nothing except the power of His own Word, and sustains us every moment from falling back into the dark gulf of non-existence, which is virtually a perpetual act of creative love. He enters more minutely into our nature and lives than it is possible for any other being in all creation to do. No one can possibly love us as God does, because no one knows us so thoroughly, or has made such an investment in us, as our blessed Creator, our one and only true God.

Not only is this true, but we are so created, that when the Scriptural conditions are met, we can know God with an intimacy, and vastness, and sweetness, and power, far beyond what we can know of any creature that God has made. Our own fathers and mothers do not come as close to us as God does, and neither can we enter the secret chambers of their spirits, and learn the qualities of their hidden lives with anything approaching to the inner heart knowledge we may have of our own God through the indwelling and operation of the blessed Holy Ghost. As a proof that sin perverts and reverses everything in the human soul, the very God that sinners declare to be unknowable, and call themselves “agnostics” (a Greek word which in the Latin is “ignoramus,” and in plain English is “fool”), the God that these self-named “fools” suppose to be far away from the touch of human knowledge, is the very Being that, under

right spiritual conditions, we can know with more cloudless assurance, and more tender, all-pervading, personal acquaintance, than any one else in creation.

1. We know God, and appropriate Him to ourselves, pre-eminently in our spiritual nature, in our love nature. God is love. The substance of His character is pure love, including every perfection which the Bible reveals of Him in an infinite degree, and doubtless there are many perfections in God of which we have no conception in our present state. It is because God is love, that it is through our love nature we know Him, and go deeper down into a blessed acquaintance with His person, and life, and ways, than through any other part of our nature.

It is through the organs and delicate senses of the body that we know the marvelous beauties and wonders of the material world, with its thousand-fold harmonies, and adaptations, its overawing grandeurs, its bewitching beauties, and beneficent utilities.

It is through our intellects that we become acquainted with the vast, radiant worlds of science, of mathematics, of the connection between causes and effects, of time, motion, numbers, poetry, and philosophy, that constitute an immense silent choir that fills creation with voiceless intellectual music. But creation with all

its splendors is not our God, and the whole realm of mental knowledge is not our God, and these things are but the outer fringes of His presence, the first steps to an acquaintance with Him.

It is only through love, not mere natural affection, but through Divine love imparted to our heart nature, that we pass through the outer veil of creation, and know God through His beloved Son, Jesus, with a swiftness, a certainty and a personal communion, that surpasses all the boasted knowledge of science, and furnishes the only true interpretation of creation and providence.

St. John says, that “if we dwell in love,” if that is the atmosphere in which we breathe, “then we dwell in God.” It is love that knows more than any other capacity of our being. Love has a quick art of knowing, and seeing and interpreting all things by a sort of lightning flash of intuition, that leaps over the plodding process of slow reason and knows things more surely without learning them, than reason does with all its logic. It is love that appropriates, and lays claim to things, and takes possession of them. We may see an object, a person for instance, and know him faintly by our senses, and then learn much of him through the intellect, but when love comes into action, it seizes upon the object, and wins it, appropriates it, takes possession of it, and says “my own.” We possess God, and make Him our own, all our own, through love for Him.

2. God is our own in such a peculiar individual way, privately and personally, so as to thrill us with a joy with which no stranger can intermeddle. God can never be to any other creature in all the universe, just exactly what He is to us. Have we ever thought for five minutes of the grandeur of being created with a unique, individual personality all to ourselves, with a private nature, a great soul world in ourselves, a distinct orb of conscious, immortal existence. We are walled in from all other creatures, with a deep privacy of nature into which no one in all the universe can enter except the Lord our God, our loving Creator. Probably this is the greatest glory of our creation, that each of us has in our personality a sacred sanctuary in the ocean depths of his soul, with a door that never opens except to the touch of that eternal, blessed One, Who created us out of His love. He then redeemed us from an awful fall out of what seems even a greater love than creation. There are no higher facts than the personality of God, and the everlasting and private personality of our own selves.

Upon each one of us, the Lord has inscribed thousands of private marks that distinguish us from every other creature He has made. Upon every feature, and every bone, and every mental faculty, and every shape of our emotions, there is printed a peculiar form which belongs to no other one person in the world.

God has woven around each of our lives, a network of special providence that is marvelous to contemplate, and that is never duplicated with any angel or man. Each of our lives, if written out from God's standpoint, and under Divine inspiration, would form a little Bible, and have in it something like the pathetic charm of the lives of the old patriarchs. We cannot live anyone else's life, nor see with his eyes, nor trust with his faith, nor love with his heart. Each one must for himself in particular become acquainted with God, and learn the same lessons of the spiritual life that have been learned over and over for thousands of years, and which no one has ever been able to impart to another soul. Throughout life's journey, God is our only traveling company Who knows all, Who enters into all, Who loves us through all, and from Whom we have no secrets. He deals with each of us in ten thousand special ways peculiar to ourselves, and by virtue of which we cry out, like one of the apostles, "My Lord and my God." We never come of age with our Heavenly Father, but are always minors, so that there is an overshadowing tenderness in His being forever and forever, our Father, our own Father!

When we are brought into the family of God, and through a life of prayer become acquainted with Him, we cannot look upon Him as simply external to ourselves. It is true His presence and power are spread out everywhere in all creation, but from our standpoint, His presence in a peculiar way seems to center in ourselves. Just as wherever we stand on the earth's surface, we are in the center of the

horizon's rim: so we, each of us, from our standpoint, are in the center of God's attributes, presence, providence, and grace. Who but an infinite God could have so formed creation, as to make it seem to each person that he stands in the center of the horizon, and the world, and to make it equally true that each child of His stands in the center of His mighty providence and grace? This is God's complement to our individuality.

God becomes our own in so many secret relationships established between us. As the years go by, what fond ties are knitted between Him and ourselves; what thrilling endearments have been exchanged; what pathetic memories of His multiplied forgivenesses and what sacred memories also of His various chastisements, which have been full of melting kindness! What peculiar and multiplied answers to prayer! What astonishing blending of providences! What an alternation of favor and discipline, like the beautiful shuttle that weaves out the seasons of the year, of summer and winter, of laughing springs, and thoughtful, melancholy autumns, in our lives!

Words have passed between us and God which could never mean to others what they have to us—countless silent covenants in prayer, either spoken or pronounced mentally, special applications of Scripture verses that exactly fitted into our heart and lives in a way they could never fit into any other life. There have been significant providences that meant a thousand times more to us than they

did to anyone else; soft and healing touches of His hand that no other hand could give, and evidences of unfailing fidelity, until our whole hearts cry out “who is so great a God as our God?”

3. We can only know God, and appropriate Him as our own, in conformity with His infallible, inspired Word. The only true God is the One revealed in Scripture, an infinite Being, Who is a pure spirit, possessing every excellence and perfection in an infinite degree. He is living eternally in three Divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as disclosed to us in the Old and New Testaments. There are multiplied theories and imaginations about God, widely differing from “our own God” revealed in Scripture. No one can come into personal acquaintance, and loving union with God, except through the Scripture method of repentance, faith in an atoning Savior, and by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

God never reveals Himself to any soul except in accordance with His Word. Every so-called religious experience that does not agree with Scripture is a demon religion, and the work of evil spirits. A true saint is always orthodox to the core. There are about as many false notions about God in so-called Christian lands as there are idols in heathen lands. There never has been a real saintly character found as the fruit of false religion. God cannot lie, and hence He cannot unveil His adorable self to a false faith, or a counterfeit,

perverted form of religious teaching. The soul that is too proud to get purified by the precious blood of Jesus, will never find access to the blessed life of knowing, and communing with, the ever-living God. Fellowship with God is not a mere play of intellect, nor flight of poetry, nor a gush of human sentimentalism. It is a deep, sacred, holy agreement of heart, and nature, and person, and exclusive love, between the perfectly submissive creature and his Creator and Redeemer.

This fellowship is vast enough to include human sentiment, and the exercise of reason, and the finest poetry, and the most gorgeous imagination, but is greater than all these, just as the thunder storm is far mightier than the beautiful rainbow that floats upon its receding skirts. Apostolic experiences of knowing God, come only to those souls who have Apostolic faith in the Lord Jesus as a divine, atoning Savior, forgiving our sins, and after that, sanctifying our hearts through His most precious blood, and giving to us the blessed Holy Spirit, to work in us the Words of Christ, and reveal to us the Father and the Son.

4. To serve God out of a personal love for Him is the condition of all true peace and happiness, and the fountain of holy character. While there are manifold varieties of religious experience, and many distinct types of piety, yet there are two classes into which all the servants of God on the earth can be divided; namely, those who serve Him

mainly out of love, and those who serve Him mainly out of duty. Law and love are the two hemispheres in the service of our God. Those who serve out of love must have in them the law of God and the principle of duty; and on the other hand, those who serve Him as a duty, striving to keep His law, have also some measure of love. But every soul who serves God, has his spiritual home in the hemisphere of either the love side, or the law side.

While the service out of the principle of duty is essential in some stages of grace, yet it never has in it the summer heat to produce full-grown saints, or the best products of life.

When the soul passes into the torrid zone of salvation, and serves God out of a perfect and personal attachment and affection for Him, there is then accomplished in the most natural and beautiful way, all the virtues and practical fruits of righteousness and holiness, which those who serve mostly from duty are always striving after and never reaching. Instead of loving the service of God, we are to love God Himself and serve because we love Him. In other words, God is to be the object of our love, and not our service the object of it.

Again, out of our personal love for God, grows the broadest liberty of spirit, and deepest tranquility of heart, and the most tender, beautiful flow of charity for all creatures. All spiritual bondage, religious narrowness, and legal struggles to bear fruit by doing our duty is because our souls have

never been let out into the warm, summer sea of personal love for God. Love performs the greatest of all duties, without ever taking time to reflect on whether it is doing its duty, for pure love puts into its service a good deal more than mere duty.

God loves to be loved. Hence those who serve Him out of personal love are admitted into deeper acquaintance with Himself, and receive His Fatherly caresses in a manner that other souls would not appreciate and hardly believe possible in this life. God is not partial, but it is nothing less than pure equity, and eminently fitting, that He should give Himself most freely and tenderly to those who abandon themselves without reserve into His hands.

As enchanting scenery in nature, and the power of sweet sounds, and the bewildering beauties of poetry, belong most to those whose capacities are most widely open to take them in, so the unutterable blessedness of God belongs most to those whose capacities are under the greatest power of the Holy Spirit. Love can in reality never give its heart of hearts to anything but love. We own God by personal love for Him.

This is the fountain of strongest character, of the best fruits of righteousness, of the most heroic daring, of the most arduous undertakings, of the most venturesome boldness, of the most graceful and thoughtful manners, of the deepest self-sacrifice, of the noblest generosity and kindness.

5. Nothing so inspires us in our life work as the deep, peaceful conviction that the living God is all our own. He is our last end in all our plans and labors. When we are working for God, and in God, and working with God, there is a quiet, deep perseverance, a patient courage, and an assurance of the success of our work, which it is impossible for the soul to have when working for self, or for the things of this world.

Nothing can fail that has God's purposes and life in it. When we become truly enlightened by the Holy Spirit, we have in reality nothing to live for but Jesus, to drink of His mind, to obey His calling, to follow His providences, to fill the vocation in life to which He calls us, to be possessed with His motives, His prayers, His charity, to bury our interests in His, because His are so much better than our own, and to have a supreme abiding desire to finish the work that He calls us to do.

This was the abiding passion of Jesus Himself, to finish the work His Father assigned Him. And this was the all-mastering motive of Paul, to run the race assigned him by Christ, and win the prize held out to him by Divine promise. Men of the world, and countless numbers of professed Christians, know nothing whatever of a life-work that does not have self for its central inspiration, and its last end. How little they know, that all

work which is not done in God's will most certainly shall pass away!

“He that doeth the will of God shall abide forever,” and the same truth is equally true, the work which is done in the will of God shall abide forever. We make God our own by loving Him better than we love our life, and we make His work our own by putting a value on it far beyond any plan or work of our own. The true worth of any word, or sermon, or song, or book, or building, or mission, or donation, or prayer, depends exactly on how much of Christ there is in it.

A little thing, with God's purpose in it, has a strange, abiding, persevering life that will survive a thousand great showy things that look for a time as if they would fill the world. When we know that we are working for God, with a pure unselfish motive to please Him, and feel assured that He calls us to do that work, and is standing behind us in the work, we are practically invincible against discouragement, for having died to self, the whole enterprise is identified with the Lord. Such a soul may be without means, without friends, and loaded down with infirmities, persecutions, and seemingly insurmountable difficulties; and have to plod on in obscurity, or shame, or reproach, or poverty, for years; and have inward assaults from Satan, but that secret, fathomless assurance, that it is working with God, and for God, fills it with a bright, quiet, immortality of perseverance. The greatest part of a good work is always out of sight,

where the soul is working with God in holy prayer and purpose.

St. Paul cried out, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" The converse is equally true that if we are for God, lovingly and entirely for Him, what man or demon can successfully be against us?

6. When we come into union with God, He becomes the inward fountain of our lives. He is the source of all our peace, and joy, and inspiration, our only true Comforter, and as He promised to Abraham, "our exceeding and great reward." We were created to fit into the Divine attributes just as beautifully as the senses of our body fit into the sights, and sounds, and odors of the magnificent created world about us. As we make restful, crimson sunset our own through the eye, and the perfume of flowers our own through the nose, so we make the blessed perfections of God our own treasure through those faculties and capacities of our nature that fit into them.

The perfections of God support us by their contrast to our lack of them, which is simply our empty capacity for receiving them.

God's justice arouses our fear, and gives us a sense of the need of righteousness, and is the grand preacher that leads to repentance and submission. His mercy wins our hope, and calls forth our venturesome faith. His power is what our

weakness leans upon, and over and over again becomes the soft bed upon which our struggling and tired hearts lie down for rest. His omnipresence that fills every point in space, and never lets go one atom out of His sight, is the cure for our discouragement and uneasiness when we apprehend that He is in everything to us. His unlimited knowledge, that perfectly understands everything in the universe, past, present, or future, is the blessed satisfaction to our ignorance.

When we rest in God, we get the benefit of all that He knows, just the same as if we knew it ourselves. It is one of the secret joys of our heavenly Father, that He can use His knowledge for the benefit of His ignorant creatures.

The little child of the captain of a ship, with its father on the ocean, gets the benefit of all the knowledge that its father has about navigation; and in like manner, the great Captain that steers all these swiftly sailing worlds over the seas of space, lets the riches of His infinite knowledge softly enfold His poor creatures, who are just beginning to pick up the first rudiments of knowledge, and whose ignorance prevents them from knowing what may transpire the next moment.

God's love, in a very special way, fits into our personality. Just as personality is the supreme fact in the universe, so love is the supreme thing in personality. Love must flow from some

individual, and cannot exist as an external principle.

Personality necessitates communion, fellowship, friendship, ties of agreement, and mutual feelings. Even in the Godhead, there is of eternal necessity, the three Divine persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, of the same spirit substance, Who in their glorious personalities love each Other, commune with each Other, agree with each Other, and have an uncreated and unspeakable bliss in appreciating each Other.

Hence the love of God is for our individuality, and it is that love that meets and satisfies our personality. What shall we say of that glorious perfection, the Divine fidelity, by virtue of which He is a covenant-keeping God, and never breaks a promise, or for one instant forgets to keep His word, through all the successive generations of men!

It is God's fidelity that forms the granite rock upon which our confidence stands, or walks, or reposes. What an immense resting place for our faith is the adorable faithfulness of God! The passage, "have faith in God," most literally translated is, "grasp God's faithfulness." The Scriptures refer to God's fidelity, His faithfulness, His covenant-keeping character, more frequently than to any other perfection in the Divine nature.

The more than thirty thousand promises in Scripture are each one separate vouchers of God's

attribute of fidelity. Let it be so, for the paramount sin of the race is unbelief, and our faith needs abundant feeding. God's faithfulness is exactly that perfection which our hungry faith must constantly eat and drink. To study God's faithfulness will prove celestial wine to our weak confidence.

God's providence—there is nothing in all the world like it; so mysterious, so multiplied, so exact, so vigilant, so minute, so intricate. It is like an immense loom, with millions of threads and flying shuttles, that may seem to be moving in opposite directions, and tangled in every way, yet forever weaving out a pattern of God's ways, with every figure and color in the right place, sufficient to thrill the intellects of saints and angels.

God's providence is the playground of His fidelity. His fidelity is the loom, and His providence is the placing of the separate threads in the pattern. To study God's providence is a panacea for doubt. He who notices a providence will never fail to have a providence to notice, for it is an exhaustless ocean, out from the depths of which new waves are ever breaking forth upon the shore. Our hope is forever resting upon God's unfailing providence. The immutability of God is the place of our most solid and abiding rest. How His blessed unchangeableness perfectly fits into all our frailty, our vacillation, and the mutations of earthly things and human friendships!

God's immutability which is expressed in the uniformity of natural law age after age, is the rock on which His changeable creatures can assuredly rest. But for His unchangeable truth, the qualities of matter would play us foul, and water might burn us. The sun might rise in the west, or north, and every sequence of causes be upset, to the utter ruin of all life and happiness. Scripture says, "It is because God changes not that the sons of men are not consumed." The very thought that Jesus might change from the dear, blessed, lowly, loving Savior He was when on earth would make our souls quiver with alarm. How sweetly and peacefully we lay ourselves down on those words, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and for ever."

Chapter 2 — How God Loves Us

It is well-nigh impossible for us fallen creatures to believe a mere fragment of what the Bible tells us about God's love for us. We are so unloving ourselves, and so saturated with unbelief, that we are slow of heart to believe all the revelation as to how God feels towards us. Our Creator has had to devise the most extravagant ways and means to awaken in us a faith in His love and to win us to a perfect confidence in Himself and His most affectionate care for our welfare.

The full statement of God's love for us fairly stuns our understanding, and seems too good to be true. We have heard of instances where persons traveling from the city to the lonely mountains, conversed with the old settlers who knew nothing of the great modern inventions. When these untaught backwoodsmen have been told of recent inventions, how you can talk through a wire to people a hundred miles away, or by a phonograph listen to the voice of a man years after he is dead, or by the X-ray see the bones in a man's body, and other such wonders, the ignorant mountaineers have denied the whole account as a fool's dream, and as being things beyond all possibility.

This illustrates that deep-seated incredulity that human nature has concerning the wonders of Divine love, and the supernatural things revealed in Scripture concerning the possibilities of

religious experience, and the answers to prayer, for soul, body, and temporal things. Our faith has to take preliminary steps to appropriate the boundless love of God. This is like the working of the mind of a child who by steps apprehends the ocean by first seeing a little pond of water, then a lake, and then is told that the ocean is like that lake, only so large that the sailors cannot see the shore, and it takes days and weeks to cross over it.

Those of us, who by the new birth have come into the family of faith, have learned something of God's love for us, which has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

Let us creep up to the shore of that infinite, shining ocean of Almighty and uncreated love, and find a kneeling place on the hard white sands of Scripture statements, and look far away over the shining waters. By counting over the ways in which we are loved we seek to awaken in our own poor hearts a return of love up to our measure, "for the love wherewith God hath loved us."

1. God loves us with a creative love. This is a kind of love of which we can have no adequate conception, for it lies outside the functions and capacities of ourselves as little creatures. The creation of something out of nothing never can come within the limits of our power. Creation is the sublime solitary prerogative of Almighty God.

We cannot understand the feelings that a Creator must have toward a helpless creature, which by His fiat He has lifted out of nothing, and which He sustains every instant with a continual act of preservation, which must at every moment be equal to the act of creation.

With what fondness and tender endearments of affection, a Creator, Whose nature is love, must brood over the creature that has been fashioned out of the energy of His own right hand! This is a species of love forever above the range of our experience, and that glows in the happy solitudes of the Creator's heart. As our Creator, God has feelings for us for which we have no measurements, and no analogies upon which to build a comparison, or to form a conception.

Men talk about inventing things, but in reality we invent nothing, for our so-called inventions are only discoveries of adaptations, and qualities, and utilities, of material forces which were invented by the Creator, and hid in His works from the beginning. It is impossible for us to form a conception of anything without first having something already created as an analogy, upon which to base our imaginations.

For instance, no man could ever have formed a conception of a fish, living and propelling itself in the water, without first knowing of such a creature. But after once seeing a fish, we can imagine numberless kinds, and sizes, and colors, and motions, of fishes far different from any that

exist. Thus the feeling of love that God must have for us as coming out from His creative goodness is a sort of love different in kind from any feeling that we can have, and to which we have no proper clue for understanding. The nearest approach to it is that indescribable feeling a true mother has for her little infant, but even that is not the same kind of love, for it is a creature feeling for a creature, and the continued existence of the infant is not suspended every instant on the will of the parent.

2. God loves us with an eternal love. The Holy Ghost spake through Jeremiah, "Thus saith the Lord, I have loved thee with an everlasting love." Only think of it, before the worlds were made, out from the eternal past, God looked upon us with His foreknowledge, and saw us as we are at this moment, floating on the immensity of His creative power, and fastened His love upon us!

When Napoleon reviewed his troops from the Pyramids in Egypt, he said to his soldiers, "At the top of those Pyramids, forty centuries are looking down upon you." Sublime as his expression was in the eyes of men, it is nothing to be compared to the true soldiers of Jesus Christ, who can look up to the giddy heights of an eternal past, and say that there flows down upon us a stream of eternal love. We cannot begin to comprehend it, and it is simply to be believed, that I, a mere atom in the immensity of creation should have in some sort had a place in the mind of God from eternity.

All the acts of God inside of the Divine nature are of eternal necessity, such as the generation of the Son in the bosom of the Father, and the procession of the Holy Spirit from the depths of Divine love. God cannot be otherwise than He is, and is essentially three Persons in one Being, as the begetting Father, the only begotten Son, and the proceeding Holy Spirit. But outside of the Divine Being, all of God's actions are perfectly free. His first free act, as Paul tells us, was His purpose of the incarnation of His Son, and the next free act was His love for us, that we might be conformed to the image of His Son, and be blameless before Him in love. From the very beginning, God has been planning and thinking most loving purposes concerning us, and embracing us in the gentle hand of His foreknowledge, and the beautiful creation around us fashioned in the geological ages gone by, was but the building of a cradle for us little infants to rock in, and lining it with a thousand conveniences, so tenderly adapted to our wants.

Surely if we look back at that mighty current of foreknowledge and fore-love, that streams down upon us from God's eternal past, our hearts should kindle with a warmer gratitude and affection for Him.

3. God loves us with all His heart. There is nothing scanty, or limited in His affection for the creatures

which He has made to show forth His glory. The commandments that God gives to us spring essentially from His own blessed nature. When He says, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength,” it is simply what He Himself is doing toward us. His love for us amounts to a Divine predilection, and possesses like a passion, all His life and perfections.

His love for us is more than mercy, more than wisdom, more than justice, more than knowledge, more than power, because it uses all of God’s attributes in the behalf of our creation, preservation, salvation and glorification. God’s love for us is so boundless, so incessant, so all-mastering, that everything else in Heaven and earth must give place to it. To satisfy God’s love for us, His own dear Son must be surrendered, and incarnated, and pass through humiliation, and through multiplied and most exquisite suffering and shame, unknown to any other creature; the Holy Ghost must be given, grace must be pushed with all speed, countless multitudes of bright strong angels must fly, and work and watch over us for thousands of years; wisdom must be taped to carry forward gigantic schemes of providence; Jesus must weep, His blood must flow; the Holy Ghost must groan; all because God loves us so much, that all His perfections and attributes must be mustered in our behalf. Truly God loves us with every part of His infinite nature.

4. God loves us personally, in our individuality. He does not lump us in the gross, nor as atoms in a mass, all grouped together. God never loses us in the bulk of other creatures, but, with all the immensity of His Godhead, carries each one of us, with all that goes to make up our individual lives just as distinctly, and separately, and tenderly, in His loving attention, as if we were the only creatures that He had to care for. Personality is the crowning fact in all the universe. In all the religions invented by the devil, like Pantheism, the aim is to ignore personality, and deal with creatures in a conglomerate mass. Hence Brahminism teaches the absorption of the individual soul ultimately into an unconscious state. Modern Christian Science, which is simply the refined worship of demons and ancient Brahminism with an English face on it, denies the personality of God.

The things that God loves most, the devil hates most. Nothing is more precious to God than the everlasting, distinct personality of His creatures; but Satan and tyrants look upon men as only a bulk of “dumb driven cattle” to serve their greed and ambition.

God loves and prizes us in our individuality to such an extent that He has filled us with ten thousand private marks, in our souls, and bodies, and lives, and experiences, that never will be duplicated in any other creature. It is a constant astonishment to my mind, how God can make

hundreds of millions of human beings, and no two of them just exactly alike; no two faces, no two voices, no two pairs of eyes, nor pairs of ears, nor pairs of hands, nor pairs of feet, nor two sets of teeth in all the millions of men. In the structure of the bones, and sinews, and the wrinkles in the palm of the hand, and on the foot; in our individual walk, in the way we each learn our letters, or think, or talk, or write—in every part of soul, and body, there are peculiarities written in each individual, that never have existed, and never will exist in any other individual.

God could give an angel a description of our right thumb, or the particular way that we weep, or smile, and without any other mark to tell us by, that angel could fly from Heaven, and pick us out from hundreds of millions of other creatures with unerring precision. I stand bewildered at this inexhaustible fertility in the creative mind of our God. Any man who can look at these facts, and be an infidel, must be a consummate fool, who has sold his common sense to the devil.

God has so fashioned us that we each have a deep, secret world in our inner hearts, of thoughts, and loves, and yearnings, into which no fellow creature can perfectly enter. Our God is the only One Who can go to the bottom of our inner selves, and know all the hidden chambers of our being, and the only One Who can meet all the requirements of our separate individual personality.

5. God loves us constantly. Our fellow creatures love us when we seem lovable, or worth loving. Creature love, in the nature of things, is soon exhausted; it soon breaks down, and gets discouraged. The love of a mother will come as near to the love of God in holding out, and keeping up through all sorts of life's vicissitudes, as any other love known on earth. But all mothers do not love alike, and the best of their creature love has a limit. Right where human love has run its race, and broken down—fatigued and exhausted—the love of God comes up fresh and full, bounding and radiant, with a sweet cheerfulness, as if it had just begun. Oh, how the love of God, year after year, has followed us through the wilderness of wandering, over the wild mountains of wayward foolishness, through cold stormy nights, and has listened for our cry for help!

Did you ever notice how the love of God hunts down poor sinners, through the gaities of youth, the passions or ambitions of middle life; through the thorny paths of crookedness, and wickedness; through dissipation, and utter wreckage of health, and home, and character; through prisons, and poverty, and abandonment? Oh there is nothing in all the world like the love of God!

Why is it that God loves us so, and that His love pursues us so constantly, right in the face of the thousands of wrongs and insults that we have given to it? It is because God created us out of love for us, and gave us an everlasting personality,

more sacred to Him than all the gorgeous worlds that float about us, and because He wants our love in return. Even when sinners forever settle it, that they will be in league everlastingly with the devil, still God loves His own creation, and that part of a man which came from God will be loved by Him to all eternity.

6. God loves us with a crowning, rewarding love. It is impossible in the true sense, for God to ever owe us anything. On the other hand, we owe Him everything, for as the Apostle says, "What have we that we did not receive?" As little children give gifts to their fathers, with the very money which their fathers give them, so the very love and worship that we give to God are from the created capacities and the grace that He first gives us. There are three wonders to God's love for us; the first is, that He should create us out of nothing and endow us with such marvelous gifts and faculties; and the second wonder is, that His love for us should lead Him to redeem us at such enormous cost from an awful fall; and the third wonder of His love is, that He should invent a way to pay us for our little services to Him, and give us such stupendous rewards for such little things as we do and suffer for Him.

If we resist a temptation, or spend an hour in prayer, or give money to the poor, or speak a kind word to a soul, or read thoughtfully the Bible, or meditate upon God's perfections, or bear a little

reproach for Jesus, or do any little thing for Him, He seems to be eager to reward us for it. He gives us such sweet blessings, such tokens of favor, as if we had really befriended Him, when the fact is we have only been seeking our own salvation, and all the while have owed Him a debt ten thousand times greater than we could possibly pay. God loves us so well that He seems to invent excuses for blessing and rewarding us. Even a cup of cold water, given in His Name, is to have a reward. How easy it is to think about God, and yet Malachi tells us, that when Christ comes to make up His jewels, there will be much reward for those “who thought upon God’s Name.”

So many times our dear Savior uses the word “great” in connection with coming rewards, so that for a few sufferings, for a few tears, for a few toils, which in reality are essential to our own welfare, Jesus says “great is your reward in Heaven.” It looks as if God was beside Himself in love for us. Just see, out of His love He gave us this wonderful existence, and then gave us grace to repent, to believe, and to love Him in return, and out of His love gave us the sanctifying Spirit, to live and labor for Him; and then out of His love He contrives to reward us, with honors, and glories in the ages to come. He gives us the love to love Him with, and then rewards us for loving Him with His own love. Did you ever see the beat of it in all the world?

Chapter 3 — How We Can Love God

It will help us to form a proper conception of the value of God's commandments, to reflect on the marvelous results that would take place in the world, if all the populations of earth would simply keep the first great command, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and mind, and strength. Nearly every person we meet has a theory for the betterment of mankind, and for ameliorating the ills of this world, but not one person on earth has a correct theory on this subject, unless he has obtained it through the revelation of God's Word.

No individual can live a real, peaceful, happy, and useful life, without being regenerated, and sanctified, and loving his Creator with all his heart. Ever since the Gospel has been given to the world, only a small proportion of men have been willing to submit perfectly to the very law which conduces to their highest good. . . .

But if the sons of men would from the heart, keep the first commandment, what heavenly changes would in a few weeks pass over the face of the world. All the politics of every nation on earth, as they now exist, would entirely cease. Jails, penitentiaries, court houses, police forces, armies and navies, would pass away. Thousands of occupations for greed, or ambition, or sinful pleasure, would never more be pursued. The industries of men would be simple, perfectly

honest, without guile, without overtaxing the worker, and filled with happy labor. The educational institutions would turn the intellect away from false philosophy into the true science of creation, and open up beautiful fields of knowledge in every direction, finding God everywhere.

Even though sickness and death should remain, yet so much would be done to care for the poor, and sick, and so many prevailing prayers of faith offered up to God, that trouble and sickness of all kinds would be reduced to a minimum. Only think what immense changes would take place on earth, by the worldwide keeping of only one commandment of our God. This helps us to get a larger view of Who God is, of what His Word is, and of what His love is; when one single short commandment has enough in it to turn this almost demonized world into a veritable paradise.

If it had not been that our souls have been degraded by sin, God would never have had to command us to love Him. But for sin, we would see it was a blissful privilege to love our God, and instead of having to be commanded to love Him we would rather have begged Him to permit us to love Him. It is sin that has necessitated the giving of the law. When we are properly enlightened, the loving of God with all the heart is the sweetest joy in all creation, and if we only knew enough about Who God is, and what He is to us, we would be on our knees imploring Him for the privilege of loving Him.

The reason why so few people love God is because they do not have in them by nature the kind of love to love Him with. God can only be truly loved with His own love. We must have Divine love imparted into our hearts, by the operation of the Holy Spirit, before we can truly and Scripturally love God.

There are two words in the Greek Testament for love. One word, philo, signifies any natural human affection, which all men have. The other word, agape, signifies Divine love, the feelings and character of God. Just as we get human affection by our natural birth, so we get the Divine love by our spiritual birth into the Kingdom of God. Multitudes of religious teachers fail to distinguish the great difference between the philo love and the agape Divine love, and thereby are led into many foolish blunders concerning spiritual things. Even after Divine love has been imparted to us, we need to be thoroughly sanctified, and baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire, in order to give this Divine love perfect liberty, and ample sweep through all our capacities.

There are seven phases of love which we can return to our blessed Creator and Redeemer for His love to us.

1. Grateful Love. The love of gratitude is one of the first forms of Divine love that springs up in the newly converted heart. The love of gratitude is

filled with thanksgiving. It sings that sweet song of love uttered by Jesus, "I thank thee, Oh Father, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them to babes." It takes a timbrel, and joins Miriam in her joyful song that God has triumphed and the enemy is overthrown in the sea. It sings with Hannah at the dedication of little Samuel, to "the Lord Who hath raised up the poor out of the dust, and set them to be Princes in His Kingdom."

The love of gratitude delights in counting over the mercies of God in the past, and turns them over and over in fond recollection, like a miser counts his gold, yet with the very opposite spirit of the miser, for it is unselfish praise to the Giver of all good. The love of gratitude, like Mary, "ponders things in its heart" that others think lightly of, and appreciates what others would call little blessings, trifling mercies, insignificant answers to prayer. Grateful love sees the magnitude of God in a thousand little things unnoticed by those who have not yet learned to look through eyes of love.

This phase of love is very humble, and full of the spirit of repentance, and meek submission, and feels unworthy of so much Divine goodness. It measures all its blessings by the preciousness of the Hand that bestows them. Love of gratitude is forever sending up to God the sweet incense of thankfulness, and like Saint Ann of Toronto, says a hundred times a day, "Thank you, Father," "Thank you, Father."

2. Elective Love. This phase of loving God is that by which we compare Him with all other beings in creation, and contrast the superiority of God above and beyond all the creatures with which we are acquainted, considering the excellence of His ways, His authority, His care, His compassion, His mercies. It is this form of loving God that shows us more clearly the emptiness, the deceitfulness, the transitoriness of everything that seems good in the world.

It is this elective love by which we compare our own God with angels, and saints, and our common fellow creatures and then choose God over and above all others as we would choose a diamond in preference to a lump of clay. We rejoice in the more excellent treasure, feeling a contempt for all things, for all honors, for all pleasures, that would intrude to take the place of God.

This kind of love would despise an angel if that angel attempted to take the place of our own God. It is this love by which we elect the living God to be all our own, and by which we spurn all other gods and all false prophets, and all false religions. Our hearts burn with indignation against anything that would attempt to usurp the place of God, or to share in the least the honor and praise due only to the Lord.

It is this elective love that the Apostle refers to when he tells us “to sanctify the Lord God in our

hearts.” It is this elective love by which we dash every idol and snap every tie, and turn from any pursuit, and break any friendship, and spurn any earthly honor, or any churchy ambition that interferes with the claims of God. By elective love we extol the sovereignty of God, and trample on everything that comes in competition with His glory. It crowns Christ Lord of all. Detachment of spirit from the things of earth is the special fruit of this kind of love.

3. Complacent Love. This is the kind of love which is peacefully contented and satisfied with God, and delights in all His blessed perfections. This is the kind of love referred to by the Psalmist, “Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon the earth I desire beside thee.” It is what Solomon sings about, when he saw the Divine Bridegroom in vision, and said, “He is the fairest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely.” The love of complacence loves God because of Himself alone, because it perceives the eternal beauty of His nature, the sweetness of His character, the unutterable vastness of His attributes, the delicacy and perennial charm of all His perfections.

The soul very seldom gets even into the outer edges of this form of loving God for His own infinite blessedness, until it is deeply sanctified and illuminated by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Blessed are the pure in heart, because they shall

see, even in this life of faith, the blessedness of the character and person of God.

While elective love looks at other beings and things to contrast their nothingness with God, complacent love is so taken up with God Himself, and so satisfied with His perfections, that it seems to forget everything and everybody else. It is as if the purity, and presence of God, for the time being, filled the entire horizon with such a soft, beautiful light, that nothing else was visible.

The love of complacence rejoices that God is just what He is, and that He never can change. It fairly dances with delight, that there never will be, to all eternity, any other God; and that, as it looks out over the endless future, not the least shadow of change will ever pass over the all-radiant character of God. The value of a treasure depends on its perpetuity. A small amount of wealth, secured to us for a life, is infinitely preferable to a vast fortune, our title to which would last only one hour. Hence the joy of complacent love is not only in what God is to us now, but in the assurance that He can never be, to endless ages, any other than the ever blessed God that He is now, and ever has been.

Would the happy fishes in the sea want any change in the ocean? Would the songsters of the air want any change in the chemistry or density of the atmosphere? How much more the true lovers of God will never want any mutation in the person, or the character, or the ways of God. Complacent

love finds a secret delight in all the attributes of God, and admires the way He does things, and reposes with unspeakable tranquility upon the character of God.

4. The Love of Desire. It is by this form of love that we thirst and pine after God. This is the kind of love David felt when he said, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple"; and again when he said, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, Oh God."

There are three kinds or degrees of spiritual thirst; the first is for pardon, the second is for purity, and the third is for the fullness of the living God Himself. To properly desire God, the heart must be in a condition to appreciate Him, to have a congenial union with Him, and to enjoy the traits of His character.

It would seem that Daniel had this love of desire for God in an eminent degree. Where we read that the angel told Daniel "he was a man greatly beloved," the margin reads "he was a man of desire," that is, a man of intense longings after God. No one can be a Christian without a true heart-hunger after God, but there are countless forms and degrees of this desire in different souls.

It is love of desire that draws the soul out in a stretch to know God in His three Divine Persons, to know His communion, and to be filled with each attribute and perfection in the Divine nature. Nothing in all creation can satisfy our immortal spirits but the living God Himself. It is this sweet pain of thirst for God that draws us to much secret prayer, to study what God is, to neglect other things as trifles that we may win the light of His face and the flow of His Spirit. It is the intensity of this desire for God that pulls hearts out of mere ordinary religion, and entices them to climb the steps of true holiness, where they can rest on the upper summits of the mountains of grace, where the day breaks soonest in the morning, and where the mellow light of evening lingers the longest.

The tide of all creation, except where it is perverted by Satan, sets with resistless currents toward the throne of God. All things apart from God, sooner or later, weary us. He alone is forever fresh, and to loving hearts He is always like a new discovery to the eye.

5. Sympathetic Love. It is by this kind of love that we feel for God, and espouse His interests, and become intensely jealous for His honor and glory. The Greek word for “sympathy” means to “suffer with,” to take partnership in feeling the injuries and wrongs done to another. It is this love of sympathy that feels keenly the insults that wicked men and demons offer to God. It is this kind of

love that David felt burning like a fire in his heart, when he said, “Do I not hate them that hate thee, I hate them with perfect hatred.”

It is this kind of love that sees God ignored, and wronged, and outraged, by the brutishness and the wickedness of men all around us. It is this love that cannot endure to hear God’s Name taken in vain, to hear His Word denied, or trifled with, to see His Sabbaths degraded, and to hear His blessed character impugned, or caricatured. It feels like weeping over the way God is neglected, and left unloved, and unthanked, and untrusted, and unappreciated by His creatures.

This is the kind of love that burns like a furnace in the heart of reformers, when they clad themselves in zeal like a coat of mail, and thunder at wickedness, in Church or State, in men or parties. Such put their lives in jeopardy, and would rather die than to see their blessed God insulted, and trampled upon. This love of Divine sympathy is that which Phinehas had, when he flamed with indignation at those who insulted God, and took his sword, and slew them. God rewarded him by saying, “It was counted unto him for righteousness unto all generations” (Psa. 106: 21-31).

It is this kind of love for God that sees His interests everywhere, and is keenly sensitive to His rights, and His honor in all things. It is this beautiful, hot jealousy for the glory of God that cannot bear false Christs, or false prophets, or to see professed ministers putting on religious pomp,

and lording it over God's heritage, and taking the place of Christ in judging their fellows.

This love of Divine sympathy is very prompt, and wide awake, and can detect false doctrine, and gross infidelity, where others see no harm. It is this kind of love that makes heroes, and martyrs. Its heart sickens with the miserable goings on of men, and it would fain screen the infinite God by its own affectionate compassion and sympathy for His honor. It was this kind of love that once in the Middle Ages, during a great worldly display, made a pious old monk cry out with tears, "Poor God, poor dear God, everybody is honored except you; you are the only One Who is most neglected, and ignored, in all the world."

6. Benevolent Love for God. This is the overflow, the surplus as it were, of love, by which the soul wishes that God may have all the praise, and the glory, and the happiness, which it is possible for Him to have.

The poor panting heart wishes it could in some way be a blessing and a benefit to God, although it is conscious that it is nothing, and that God is so perfect that nothing can be added to His infinite happiness and blessedness. We must remember that God has two kinds of glory; first, the glory that is inherent inside the Divine nature, and then the glory that is external to God, in His creation of worlds and creatures. The glory that resides inside

the Divine nature consists in His natural perfections, in His eternity, His sanctity, the communion of the Three Divine Persons, and the infinite joy which He has in Himself. The external glory of God consists in the magnitude, the variety, and the splendor of created worlds and the various ranks of angels, men and the lower orders of sentient creatures. Added to this is the glory which He obtains by redeeming fallen men by the systems of grace, of providence, of rewards and punishments, of the application of His mercy and justice to His creatures, and the praises, the love, and the worship that are rendered back to Him from His creatures.

Now you see, it is impossible for God's inherent glory in His own blessed Self to ever be increased. But His external glory can be ever widening in extent, and increasing in luster, from the application of His grace and truth to His creatures. This is the field over which benevolent love for God spreads itself, and is always wanting God to reap larger harvests of praise, and glory, from creation.

7. Adoring Love. It is this kind of love for God that worships, and adores, and gazes with fond delight, lost in wonder, love, and praise. This kind of love sits in silence, and contemplates God with a sacred awe, and a deep passive appreciation of Himself. It does not stop to search into the separate attributes of God, which is the pleasing task of meditation, but it sees as it were all the

perfections of God merged into one ocean of spotless white, of serene, unruffled majesty and glory.

Adoring love is the culmination of all other kinds of love. To worship God is more than prayer, or theology, or law, or duty, or service, or faith. It is a supreme delight in God. In adoring love, the soul basks in His light, smiles at His favor, sweetly trembles at His majesty. It is charmed with His beauty, drinks in His sweetness, and finds no words adequate for praise, but just to look, and wonder, and hold its breath, and admire, and love, and love, and wish for ten thousand hearts to love Him more and more.

Chapter 4 — The Three Divine Persons

While no one can be a New Testament Christian without an unquestioning faith that there are Three Divine Persons in the Godhead, of the same substance, eternity and glory; yet there are very few who have searched into the Bible doctrine upon this subject, sufficient to find out the mode of the Divine existence, or the offices of these three Divine Persons, or the experiences we may have in communion with them. In treating upon this blessed theme, we want to examine some Scriptures on the subject. We will then endeavor to form a clear view of the mode of God's existence, and then the special functions of the adorable Trinity.

It is a beautiful task to study about God. The human mind can never be employed on any subject so full of rich reward as when trying to find out the knowledge of God. To search after the character and perfections of God is the highest science, the deepest philosophy, the loftiest poetry, the sublimest history, the truest theology and the most thrilling biography.

1. Let us examine some Scripture passages that unmistakably set forth that the true and living God is a community of three Divine Persons. In the Old Testament the word Elohim, translated God, is

in the plural form, indicating more than one Person. God is spoken of by the name “Father,” about ten times in the Old Testament. The second Person in the Godhead is spoken of as the “Son of God” nearly as many times, and the Holy Spirit as a Divine Person is spoken of scores of times.

When we come to the New Testament where the Son of God is manifest in flesh and blood, the veil that seemed to hang over the Divine Trinity in the Old Testament is entirely removed. Nothing can be more clear than the revelation of the Godhead, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost in the Gospels and Epistles.

In Matt. 3:16-17, we read, “When Jesus was baptized, the Heavens were opened unto Him, and the Spirit of God descended like a dove, and lighted upon Him, and a voice from Heaven said, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Here we see the Son of God standing on the earth in His humanity, and then the Holy Spirit descending from the Father and resting on the incarnate Son in a visible form, and then the unseen but distinctly heard Person of the eternal Father, speaking from Heaven. Here are not only three Divine Persons, but they are acting in perfect unity, and their relative positions exactly set forth their special offices, as the authoritative Father, the submissive and obedient Son, and the proceeding and anointing Holy Spirit.

In Matt. 28:19, Jesus commands His ministers “to go and make disciples among all nations, baptizing

them in the name (or into the name) of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Here again is the Trinity of Persons with perfect oneness of nature. A name in Scripture indicates the nature of the person or thing bearing the name, and hence you notice the name is one, but the Persons are three, baptizing them not into the names, but into the name, that is, into the Divine nature of one God, Who is the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

In John 14:16-17, 26, we read, “I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth.” And again, “but the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things.” And again in John 15:26, “When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me.”

In all three of these passages, we have a perfect statement of the three Divine Persons, acting in perfect unity, yet each Person in the same relative position—the Father as the Fountain of all authority; the Son as obeying the Father, revealing, and teaching, and praying, in His prophetic and priestly offices; and then the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father, by the command of the Son, as the anointing and powerful Comforter.

We read in Acts 1:7-8, that the Father had retained all things in His own power, “but ye shall receive

power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you (or, as the margin reads, the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you) and ye shall be witnesses unto me.” Here is the same invariable order of function in the blessed Trinity, namely the supreme authority of the Father, the mediation and redeeming work of the Son, for Whom believers are to witness; and then the Holy Ghost coming from the Father and the Son, to fill believers with power and boldness sufficient to send them to the ends of the earth, or to be martyrs.

In Eph. 2:18, we read that through Christ, “we both have access by one Spirit, unto the Father.” Here is the same unchanging order of the three Divine Persons; Jesus is the Mediator, through Whom we have access by the operation within us of the Holy Spirit, unto the Person of the Father, Who is the Divine Fountain Head, the ultimate resting place of our souls. More than a score of similar passages could be cited, in which the three Persons of the Godhead are mentioned, and always the invariable order of office belonging to each Person.

2. The mode of Divine existence. Let us put together all the various thoughts which we gather from the Bible, as to the order of the Divine Personalities, and find out how there are three Persons of eternal necessity, and only three, and the relation they sustain to each other.

It will not hurt us, but help us, to do a little deep thinking, and go slow in these sublime mysteries. After we get through, it will be so much easier to understand a great many things about God, and the Bible, and our own religious experiences which have in the past so puzzled and perplexed numberless Christians.

There is only one God. The Scriptures declare this over and over. Hence Unitarians and Mohammedans are gravely false when they charge us Christians with worshipping three Gods. There is one and only one Divine Being, Who is a Spirit-substance, without beginning, without ending, without increase, without diminution, with absolute power, knowledge, truth, love, justice, wisdom, goodness. He fills all immensity, possesses every possible perfection in all infinite degree, and is eternally immutable.

In this one Divine substance of Spiritual Being, there are of necessity and eternally, three co-ordinate Persons—the Father, the eternally begotten Son, the Word of the Father, the eternally proceeding Holy Spirit. There are not two Fathers, nor two Sons, nor two Holy Spirits, nor two Gods; but one Father, one Son, and one Holy Spirit, Who exist in one blissful, uncreated unity of substance and being. The Father is the Fountain in the Godhead, supreme in authority and love Who utters forth His Word in a second Person and pours forth His Spirit in a third Person.

The Father is never commanded, is never sent on a mission, is never subjected to humiliation, like the Son. He is never sent forth like the Spirit nor is visible to human vision like the Son—Lamb, or the Spirit—Dove. As Paul says, He forever “dwells in a light that no man can approach unto.” We are told in Scripture that the Father made His Son to have dominion over all things, visible and invisible, with one exception, and that was the Father. It is the supreme office of the Father to love, and give.

The second Person is the only begotten Son, the Word of God, the Father. Of necessity the Divine Being must utter forth the blissful knowledge He had of Himself; and this utterance, this outspoken Word, this infinite delight, which God has in His own perfection, breaks forth of necessity into a glorious Person, called the Word of God, the Son of the Father’s love. It is through God’s understanding that He knows Himself, and His self-knowledge inside the bosom of God constitutes the eternal generation of the Son. Ever since God existed, He certainly saw and understood His own infinite blessedness, and as God’s self-knowledge of His own bliss constitutes the very Person of His Word, of His dear Son, you see that of necessity the Son is of the same eternity with the Father.

When God said within Himself, “Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee,” (Psa. 2:7), we are to understand it as an eternal act, inside the glorious Godhead, without beginning, and without ending. God’s knowledge of Himself is not an act once done and finished, but an act incessant, and ongoing

forever and ever. Therefore the ecstatic joy of God's looking into Himself, and understanding Himself, and speaking forth that self-knowledge, which constitutes the generation of the Son inside the Divine bosom, is transpiring at this moment, in all the vastness of the Divine Nature, just as it has been transpiring in the eternal past, and will continue through the eternal future. No angel mind, that has been gazing for countless ages into the glad perfections of God, could begin to tell us of the infinite bliss that God has in seeing His own glory, in understanding the riches and perfections inside of His own bosom. It is in this unimaginable bliss that the Father has in Himself, which forms the Person of His Son, that we see the reason why Scripture piles on the emphasis about Christ being the "beloved Son," "His dear Son," "the only begotten Son," and the "Son of His love."

When the eternal Father gazes down into the blissful immensity of His own fullness, it is not a mere look, a mere glance of the eye, but it is vital, and substantial, and reproductive. It is this abiding act of His infinite fecundity which forms another Divine Person; co-equal, and co-eternal, with His own Person, that adorable, begotten Son, Who dwells in the bosom of the Father. He is the articulation of the Father's self-knowledge, the pronouncing of the gladness of God's understanding, and hence is named "the Word, which was in the beginning with God, and which was God."

The Person of the Holy Ghost is constituted by the union of the love of the Persons of the Father, and the Son, for each other. The Father loves the Person of His outspoken Word, with all the strength of His omnipotence; and the only begotten Son loves the Person of His Father to the uttermost extent possible to Divinity. The union of these two streams of melting, burning love is so powerful, so unctuous, that it constitutes a third personality inside of the one Divine essence, and that is the Person of the Holy Spirit, Who proceedeth, floweth, like a river of burning omnipotence, without beginning and without ending, from the Father and from the Son.

The Holy Ghost is not begotten like the Son, and is not outspoken from the Father, but Scripture emphatically states “He proceedeth” from the other two Divine Persons. Just as the second Person is produced by God’s knowledge of Himself, so the third Person is produced by God’s love of Himself. Just as the Son is light, wisdom, knowledge, understanding, revelation, truth, so the Holy Spirit is heat, emotion, feeling, energy, unction, power, love.

We could gather over a hundred passages of Scripture, that would perfectly fit in with this statement of how the three Persons in the Godhead exist. The Holy Spirit was spoken of by the ancient fathers, as the “Divine Jubilee” because in His Person the joyous love of Father and Son were united. He was also spoken of as the “Divine Kiss,” for in His Person was the fruition of

the reciprocal greeting of the two loves of the Father and the Son.

The Holy Spirit is always compared to things in motion, like air, heat, fire, exuding oil, a living dove, and a flowing river. He is never compared to standing water, but to a flowing river, a gushing stream. Motion is force, power; hence the Holy Spirit is constantly referred to in Scripture as the power of God, the Energizer, the Person Who imparts Divine feeling, Divine motion. As Christ is generated by the Divine understanding and reveals to us the truth of the Father, so the Person of the Holy Spirit, proceeding from the burning mutual love of the Father, and the Son, causes us to feel, to experience, to rejoice, in what the Son reveals.

The Holy Spirit proceeds from, and always obeys the Father and the Son, but there is not a single Scripture where the Spirit exercises any authority inside the Divine nature, but His authority is over creatures. The fecundity of the Father is seen in the production of the Word; and the fecundity of the Father and the Son is seen in producing the eternally proceeding Spirit. The Holy Spirit has no fecundity inside the Godhead, and is the limit to Divine personalities. But as if to compensate His blessed Person, His fecundity is manifest outside the Divine nature, in giving life to numberless creatures. When the Son of God had created all things, it was the Spirit that brooded over creation, and filled creation with living creatures and it is by the fruitful Spirit that penitent sinners are born again.

A beautiful type of this is set forth in Scripture in the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Every Bible reader will recognize the fact that Abraham is a biographical type of God the Father, and that Isaac is a type of God, the Son, that peaceful and obedient Son Who obeyed His Father, even to being offered up in sacrifice. But how few Bible readers ever remember, that just as truly as in either of the other cases, Jacob was a type of the Holy Spirit, because of his fruitfulness, from whom came the twelve tribes, the twelve Princes in the kingdom, corresponding with the twelve gates in the Bridehood city, and corresponding with the twelve manner of fruits spoken of in Scripture, which is produced by the Holy Spirit or the tree of life.

3. The various offices of the three Divine Persons correspond most accurately with the three great functions in our bodies—the heart, the head and the hand. God, the Father, is the infinite heart in the Godhead, the original, unseen, living fountain, from which the other Persons flow. In every living creature, the heart is the first thing that is formed. From it, the next organ that is produced is the head. From these there come forth the hands, or wings. Every part and atom of a human body was at one time in the heart. The eternal Father is, in the Godhead, what the heart is in the body—the fountain, the spring, hidden out of sight—and its special function is to live and give, for with every pulse it is giving. God is love. The Father so loved

“that He gave His only begotten Son.” The Holy Ghost is the gift, the promise of the Father.

The Father has appointed His Son to be the head over all things. Paul tells us, all things are to be headed up, or reheaded, in Christ. The head is the organ of knowledge, understanding, wisdom, revelation, dominion, Kingship, judging, speaking—all of which functions are in Scripture, in multiplied ways, ascribed to our blessed Lord Jesus. As in the production of every natural life, the head is the first organ that is produced out of the heart, so God’s Word is the first begotten, the firstborn, the adorable Person, Who comes next to the eternal Father.

As the hand is the third organ formed from the pulses of the heart and head, and is pre-eminently the organ of power, of executive strength, of ministry to all the body, so the Person of the Holy Ghost, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, is the hand, the power, the executive Minister, the unction, the all-efficient Agent of the Godhead. The hand obeys the heart and the head, as the Holy Ghost implicitly and powerfully carries out the will of the Father and the Son. As the hand is that organ that ministers to all needs—feeding, bathing, nursing, soothing, caressing, lifting, and moving—with executive beauty, or delicacy, or power, the affections of the heart, or the judgments of the head, so the Holy Ghost is spoken of as performing these corresponding ministries in the things of God.

Thus in our own bodies, our own God has set up a type of His glorious being, and the functions of the three Divine Persons. Have you ever noticed how the power of the Holy Ghost is spoken of in Scripture, as “the hand,” and as “God’s right hand,” and as “His holy arm”? For years, I used to wonder why the Bible so many times says that “God spake by the hand of Moses.” I understand it now, since the glorious Trinity has been so sweetly and powerfully revealed to me. Moses spake by the Holy Ghost Who is the right hand of God’s power. The very instant that a heart is formed the head and hands are also within it, of the same substance, and age, though not manifest. In like manner from all eternity, in the bosom of the Father, the heart of the Godhead, the love-fountain of all being, there was the blessed Son and the Holy Spirit, of the same substance, essence, and glory, to be successively manifested to us creatures in time.

Chapter 5 — Divine Manifestations of the Heart

Our Savior reserved the most profound and interior teaching about the spiritual life for the closing hours of His ministry. He selected Saint John to record, from the 13th to the 17th chapters of his Gospel, the deep and marvelous words that He spoke on the night of the Passover. No words in all the Bible go deeper down into the spiritual life, and especially in the believer's relation to God, than the words in these chapters. Especially does our Lord bring out in the 14th and 15th chapters the most ample doctrine about the Holy Spirit, and crowns it all with that marvelous prayer in John 17.

For three years Jesus taught His disciples about the Father, and for about three hours after eating the last supper, He expounded the Person and ministry of the Holy Ghost in words of fathomless depth. A great official, in retiring from public office, might bring forward his successor in office, and with eloquent eulogy introduce him to the nation. Just so, as Jesus was closing His earthly ministry and was about to ascend back to the Father, He brought to the special notice of His disciples His Successor, the Comforter, the Person of the Holy Ghost. He would take His place and abide within the believers, and manifest to them both the Lord Jesus and the Father during the

Church age, until Christ's second coming to gather His saints, and the setting up of His Kingdom on earth.

The most perfect religious experiences always tally with the words of Scripture. The subject of Divine manifestations to the heart of the perfect believer is set forth by our Savior in the 14th chapter of John with a scope, precision, and beautiful order, not surpassed anywhere else in the Bible. What a third heaven of grace is unfolded in the following words, "If ye love me, and keep my commandments, I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter to abide with you for the age. He now dwelleth with you, but (when you have your Pentecost) He shall be in you, and then ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. I will not leave you orphans; but he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and we will come, and make our abode with him." Here we have most explicit promises of the incoming, and the indwelling, and the manifestation of the three Persons in the Godhead to the perfect believer in Jesus, and the perfect lover of Jesus.

1. Let us notice the order in this Divine manifestation. We notice that the different Divine Persons are spoken of here in the reverse order in which their names almost universally occur in Scripture. In the order of historical statement and doctrine, it is Father, Son and Holy Spirit; but in

this chapter, where the Divine Persons are to be manifested in Scriptural experience, Jesus promises to send the Holy Spirit, and then He will come (Erchomia, in spirit, and not parousia, the visible second coming), and manifest Himself to the heart; and then He mentions that the Father will abide with an especial love in the believer. This reversal of the general order in which the Trinity are mentioned is true to experience.

As revelation comes to us from the Godhead, it starts from the Father, the fountain of all being, and then the Son speaks to us from the Father, and then the Holy Spirit flows out upon us from the Father and the Son. But when we take our journey back to the bosom of the Father, it is the experimental order of Divine manifestation, that we receive the Holy Spirit, and He will manifest the Son to us, and through the Son we have access to the bosom of the Father. You must understand that I am not now speaking of repentance, or pardon, or heart cleansing, but of the blessed manifestation of the three Divine Persons to the already regenerated and purified believer. In the words above quoted from our Savior, there is no reference to repentance, or to justification, or to cleansing, as all those things are pre-supposed. He is unveiling the inner chambers of the soul's communion with the triune God, that radiant palace of spiritual joy where God's elect come in touch and vision with His blessed perfections.

2. The manifestation of the Comforter to the heart. I was a sincere Gospel minister for many years, before I penetrated the meaning of the Apostolic benediction, “the love of God the Father, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all.” The word “communion” in the Greek is from a word which means to be “domesticated” with, to be a room mate with, implying the most intimate acquaintance and fellowship. When the Divine Persons are manifested to our souls, they each one affect us in a particular way.

God is a unit in nature, substance, love, and glory, but each Divine Person has a unique and ever blessed individuality, which the other Persons do not have. Neither Jesus nor the Holy Ghost can take the place of the unbegotten and the unproceeding Father, the supreme fountain of all Godhead, and all being; Who loves, and gives, and commands but never obeys, and is never sent on a mission. Neither can the Father or the Holy Spirit take the place of the Person of the only begotten Son, the outspoken Word from the Father’s bosom, Who is eternally generated by God’s understanding of Himself, and must eternally be the second Person in Divinity. Neither can the Father or the Son ever take the place of that pure eternal stream of uncreated loving Fire, Whose personality is formed of the mutual, ineffable loves of the Father and the Son, the ever blessed Holy Ghost.

We are a unit in ourselves, and each of us is one creature with the body, soul, and spirit—with the

heart, intellect, and will. But in our own nature the heart can never perform the special functions of the intellect and will; and the intellect can never perform all the exercise of the heart; and the will can never monopolize the functions of thinking or loving. Hence we see God has made us in His own image, and for His blessed self, and each of the Divine Persons fits into our nature in a special way, and with special results corresponding to the various offices of the Divine Persons.

The Holy Spirit, while He works every step in grace for the Father, and the Son, yet in His own personality, when manifest to us, affects mainly our will power. As the Father has the office of the heart in the Godhead, loving and giving; and as the Son occupies the office of headship, speaking, revealing, and judging; so the Holy Spirit has the office of Divine power, the right hand of God, the unction, the zeal of the Trinity. Hence when the believer is baptized with the Holy Ghost, the most special way that the Spirit operates is by empowering and energizing the soul, as if the whole man was turned into a gigantic will, a resistless engine of burning zeal.

Those who know by experience what it is to receive the Holy Ghost in His blessed personality, will readily call to mind how His incoming seemed to turn everything in them into a brave, ardent will power. One result was that of motion. The mental faculties at once began to act with lightning swiftness. The soul had in it something like rushing rivers, or blowing winds, or other forms of

energetic motion. The timid soul at once took on a type of heroism that could face a frowning world. Great undertakings that hitherto had seemed utterly impossible were entered upon with a dauntless courage. The affections, the reason, the imagination, the words or testimonies—all took on a strange and unaccustomed energy. You may have a boiler full of cold water, and a furnace full of cold fuel, but when the fuel is set on fire, and the water boils, and steam is generated, something must move. The human soul is like water, and the truth of Scripture is a Divine fuel, and when the Holy Ghost falls and sets the fuel of Divine truth on fire in the soul, there will be produced a form of energy just as truly as steam in the engine.

Jesus in His ministry and teaching furnished the Church with Divine fuel, and when the Holy Ghost fell at Pentecost, He set the fuel on fire and produced a species of celestial power that drove the Gospel engines to the uttermost parts of the earth. Thus the special way that we can tell the manifestation of the Person of the Holy Spirit is by touches of energy, courage, zeal, unction, fire and other effects of Divine will power upon our souls.

3. The manifestation of the Lord Jesus. After promising to send the Comforter, Jesus says, “I will come to you.” “I will manifest myself to you.” The word “come” in this promise is not the second coming of our Lord. Frequently good people speak very erroneously for lack of knowledge. The

darkness among Christians on the personal and visible return of the Lord at the end of this present age, with its concomitant events, is just as dense as that on the subject of sanctification by faith, if not more so. We sometimes hear Christians refer to the second coming of Jesus by saying, “He has already come to my heart.” When Christ says in the above quotation, “I will come to you,” the Greek word is *erchomai*, which means coming in any sense of the term, as night is coming, winter is coming, or joy is coming.

The Greek word that is used to indicate the visible and personal return of our Lord from Heaven back to this earth is *parousia*, which is always used to indicate a visible person. Hence we must never confound the promise of Christ coming to us in our hearts with His glorious appearing at the end of this age. After the Holy Spirit takes possession of the sanctified heart, it is His work, according to Scripture, to take the things of Christ and show them to us.

With the manifestation of the second Person in the Divinity to us, the more special efforts of that manifestation are upon our spiritual understanding. There is a marvelous correspondence between the Person of the Son of God and our mind. Christ is the outspoken Word of the Father, and His personality is constituted by God’s knowledge of Himself. Hence He is named the Word, the Mind, the Wisdom, the Knowledge of God, and is appointed by the Father to be the Head over all things—the King, the Judge of all

creatures—for Jesus says, the Father judgeth no man but hath committed all judgment to the Son. For this reason the personality of our Lord Jesus fits in with our reason, our intellect, our apprehension and imagination.

Scripture tells us over and over, that all things were created by the Son of God; and apart from Him nothing was made.

This will explain the magnificent things that transpire in the human spirit when the Son of God is manifested to us by the Holy Ghost. When the glorified Christ manifests Himself to us, the whole region of our mental nature is flooded with light, knowledge, discernment, quickness, and vastness of Spiritual vision. We behold indescribable scenes of healing, heavenly beauty and of a ravishing loveliness in Christ crucified, and Christ glorified beyond all the dreams of our natural fancy.

As the Holy Ghost is Divine fire, so the Son of God is Divine light. With His blessed manifestation to us, internal darkness, and spiritual uncertainty, and theological misgivings pass away. The things of revelation stand out distinctly in clear-cut vision. His manifestation touches our intuition, and we acquire whole worlds of heavenly knowledge about God, and Scripture, and doctrine, and about ourselves, and Satan, and the state of the Church, and the work of Jesus, and His precious blood, and the certainties of Heaven and hell. This comes with a swift, lightning process which makes us know more in a few hours or

days, than all books could teach us in a thousand years.

With this manifestation of the Son of God, there comes to our spiritual perception a marvelous beauty of Divine things. Jesus becomes positively lovely in our thoughts, with a serious, impressive, far away, sanctifying attractiveness, that puts a blight on earthly charms, and fills us with a happy dissatisfaction with all things outside of Himself.

Another peculiar effect of the manifestation of the Person of Christ to us is the clear discrimination it produces in our understanding of the Divinity and humanity belonging to Him. In His personality He is Divine, possessing all the perfections of eternal Godhead, but to this Divine Person there is joined a human body and human soul, in everlasting union, never to be separated. Inasmuch as the blessed humanity of Jesus is lifted, as Paul tells us, far above all principalities, and powers, of things in Heaven and earth, and is the crown, the gem, the glory, the ornament, at the top of all the created universe, it is most certain that the humanity of the Son of God is the most perfect, the most beautiful, the most precious, the most richly endowed, of any creature among angels or men. The Holy Ghost speaks in Scripture of the humanity of Jesus, "being fairer, more attractive, than all the sons of men."

4. The manifestation of the Father. “My Father will love you.” What can this mean? The Father loved sinners so exceedingly, He gave His only Son up to a disgraceful death. But this promise is something else. There are different kinds of love. The Father loves sinners with the love of compassion, the love of pity. He loves His obedient children with the love of complacency, the love of fellowship. There is a deep, interior, sacred, elect love that the Father will have for those who love and obey His Son Jesus.

When we are justified, the Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, and we instinctively cry, “Abba, Father.” That experience belongs to the first principles of grace, but it is a good deal more than that, which Christ is telling us in this 14th chapter of John. He says we are to love Him, and then keep His commandments, and then receive the Person of the Holy Ghost, and then the Father will open up to us a deeper, sweeter love from Himself than we have ever known before—the Father will come, and make His abode within us.

It is an axiom in Bible doctrine, that whatever God does external to Himself is done by the perfect concurrence and unity of all the Divine Persons; and so when God enters the heart of the new-born believer, in reality all the Trinity enter there in their essence and presence; but we are now speaking of the manifestation of each of the Divine Persons to the soul.

While all the Divine Persons enter the purified heart in the unity of Divine essence, yet the unveiling, the manifesting, of those different Persons to intelligent faith almost always takes place in successive order. In one instant a man may become the possessor of a vast fortune, but he cannot in one instant count the fortune, or examine the different kinds of property, or intelligently investigate the merits, or beauties, or values of the various pieces of property that have become his. Some of it may be in stocks, or mines, or farms, or ships, or railroads, or houses, or cash money. The fortune was an instantaneous gift, but the manifestation to his knowledge of the different departments of the estate, requires time, and successive steps, in becoming acquainted with the various pieces of his wealth. It is because we are creatures, and in our present state very feeble creatures, that we acquire knowledge in detail, and successive order; and especially is this true in the earlier stages of any religious experience.

With the instantaneous baptism with the Holy Spirit, what an untold fortune of Divine wealth is given to the believer! The joyous heart is fairly dazed and bewildered at the sudden accession of so many Divine gifts. It will take time, and exercise, and prayer, and spiritual meditation, and perhaps many trials, and testings, before the believer comes into a solid, intelligent, abiding appreciation and clear recognition of the heavenly fortune he has entered upon. More especially is this principle true when applied to the manifestation of the three Divine Persons.

Personality is the highest fact in all creation; and to distinctly and intelligently recognize the Divine Trinity, and have sweet communion with the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, is almost an unknown experience in the early stages of grace, and belongs to established and tried faith.

Now what shall we say of the manifestation of the Person of the eternal Father? It is not a growth, though it comes while the soul is growing in grace. It is not sanctification, but the unveiling of a Divine personality in the sanctified heart. It is not merely the Spirit of adoption, but a deep acquaintance with the Person of the Father after the soul knows Him to be the Father.

Just as the Person of the Comforter affects mostly our will, and as the Person of the Son affects mostly our understanding, so the manifestation of the Person of the Father affects mostly our love nature, our affections. The teaching that Jesus gave His disciples about knowing the Father, and having communion with the Father, was of such an extraordinary character, that right in connection with this subject, Philip said to Him, "Lord show us the Father, and that will be sufficient for us." Philip knew that God was his Father, but he craved the manifestation of the Father's Person. The adorable, original fountain of all Godhead and all being would satisfy every desire of the heart.

With the manifestation of the Father, there comes a warm melting of all the affections into a tender,

boundless ocean of charity, gentleness, overlooking of the fault of others, a compassion for sinners and those who are out of the way. Have you ever noticed that in all the places in Scripture where Christian progress is described, they all wind up with charity? In Col. 3 Paul mentions first putting off our sins, then putting off the old man, then putting on the image of Christ, then putting on seven Christian graces, and then on the top of all these, putting on charity—the seal, the bond of saintly perfection.

In 2 Peter 1, the Apostle tells us we are to escape earthly corruption, and then be partakers of the Divine nature, and then add to our faith virtue, and knowledge, and temperance, and patience, and godliness, and brotherly kindness, and then charity. There are many other just such delineations of the steps in Divine grace set forth in the infallible Word of God, which is the exact pattern wrought out in the soul in living experience. The word “charity” is really Divine love. True, we get Divine love in the new birth, and pure love in sanctification, but in this stage we are to be possessed with Divine love, filled with it, and covered with it.

With the manifestation of the Father, the believer enters into a more secret, and quiet, and passionate communion with God. Just as the Father is spoken of in Scripture as the most hidden Person in the Godhead, the one most deeply veiled from human eyes, so when the believer, having been baptized with the Holy Spirit,

comes into a more perfect knowledge with the Person of the Father, his spiritual life retires more and more from the things of sense. Young saints are fussy and impetuous, and often have a zeal that runs away with their knowledge. Mature saints have learned to walk softly and quietly with God, in those enchanting, sequestered valleys of Divine wonders, where they are melted and overawed with the silent grandeurs of the Divine perfections.

Christian biography furnishes us with hundreds of instances in which established saints, like Lopez, De Renty, Guyon, Fenelon, Faber, Fletcher, Bramwell, Rodgers, Maxwell, Summerfield, Rutherford and many others, who gave themselves up to fellowship with God and a life of prayer, have had such manifestations of the Persons in the Godhead, that their souls were so inflamed with love—pure, boundless, melting love—that they felt in their bodies a heavenly burning. The Prophet Jeremiah said that God’s Word burned like a fire in his bones.

Another feeling with the manifestation of the Father is that of vastness. The fences around the soul and mind are taken down. The Spiritual landscapes stretch away into illimitable fields of verdure and beauty. The heart expands round and round the world, and mantles all nations, and kindreds, with loving prayer and missionary zeal. The spiritual understanding runs over all bounds of tradition, or man-made theology, and stretches away in lucid lines of discernment from worlds’

end to worlds' end, and charity—wide, tender, considerate charity—becomes the normal state, the abiding habit of the soul, that lies in tranquil love before the face of the Father, our dear Father, our everlasting Father, Who is eternally the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is a common experience in the manifestation of the three Divine Persons, for the soul to be specially occupied alternately with either the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit, in a special way. Bishop Taylor said that there were times, when for days, his prayer and communion would be particularly with the blessed Jesus, and again with the Father, and at other times with the Holy Spirit. It is not that any of their sacred Persons are forgotten, but while they are all held in the vision of faith, the heart seems, for a season, taken up more particularly with one of the blessed Trinity.

Chapter 6 — Emblems of the Trinity

Every truth in the Divine nature has been expressed in a variety of ways in creation, in just so far as it is possible for created things to set forth the Infinite and uncreated One. Instead of Divine things being scantily hinted at, the created universe seems to run over with an excess of types and laws and analogies of the life, nature and government of God. It is true we cannot understand the illustrations of God in creation until we first get our illumination from Scripture and the Holy Spirit. After we come to the original fountains of light, and then go back to nature with an anointed vision, we are fairly dazzled with the marks we find that God has imprinted on His works.

Abundance is one of the characteristics of God, and of all His works and dealings; and while there are instances of His rigid economy, yet those instances only heighten the splendor of His munificence. When He told His disciples to gather up the fragments that nothing be lost, the economy only intensified the super-abundance of the twelve baskets of fragments. As in all the works of nature, and the provisions of grace, there is an excess over and above bare necessity, so in the revelation of truth there is always a super-fullness beyond the bare needs of making the truth known.

This is because God is a Being of infinite beauty as well as infinite love, and the very nature of love is to be liberal, as the very nature of beauty is to be rich and profuse. Hence God does things according to His own attributes, and the magnificence of His nature, and not according to the scanty notions of His creatures. This is why He floods the world with unmeasured beauty, under the seas, and on the mountains, which no man can see. He pours His love out over all sentient creatures, even the little birds and insects, where there can be no intelligent response to His affection. The great truth of three Divine Persons in the one ever-blessed substance of God's nature is imprinted all through the works of creation, and in such a way as to show the order of office in the three Persons. Let us notice a few types in creation of the Divine Trinity.

1. The ocean has always been recognized as a majestic emblem of the Deity. This type grows on us the more He is revealed to the heart by the Holy Spirit. But the ocean exists in three forms, as sea, cloud and rain; yet all of one substance and of one nature, yet existing in distinct forms and specific offices. Again, the ocean gives forth, or generates from its bosom, the vapor which constitutes the cloud, and out of the cloud there is poured forth the rain to nourish the earth and produce fruitfulness and verdure. Thus, from the bosom of the eternal Father, is generated the eternal Word, "Who was in the beginning with God," and Who is

the brightness of the Father's glory. Then from the Persons of the Father and the Son there proceeds the Holy Ghost, Who is Divine rain, poured out over the moral universe to produce "the fruits of the Spirit," and verdure of grace.

Furthermore, all three of these forms of the ocean exist with equal age, for the cloud and rain are in reality as old as the sea, though manifesting themselves in successive order, for the cloud is in the sea, and the rain is in the cloud, though not manifest. In like manner the Son of God eternally exists in the bosom of the Father, and the Holy Spirit eternally abides in the Father and the Son. As the cloud comes from the sea to manifest the virtues of the sea and pours out those virtues in rain, so Jesus affirms "He came forth from the Father" to make known the character of the Father and to pour out the blessedness of that character in the showers of the Holy Spirit.

2. The sun is another universally recognized emblem of God, both in Scripture and out of it. But the sun exists in a threefold form, as first the body of liquid fire, and then the light that is generated from that bosom of flame, and the heat penetrates and warms the solar system.

We recognize both in science and in practical life the distinction between the sun and the light and the heat, yet we know they are all of the same substance or force or motion. Sometimes they are

all treated of as one, and at other times as being three distinct things, which is exactly the way the Scriptures and spiritually-minded Christians speak of God. Just as we say, "God is love," so we say, "The sun is fire." Christ is the light that comes from the Father to reveal all things as sunlight reveals creation, and the Holy Spirit is the invisible Person of God that softens hard hearts, melts the conscience, and with a gentle, powerful heat moves the will to choice and perseverance. Thus Jesus is called the "light," the "wisdom," the "knowledge," the "revealer of God," because it is His office to operate more directly upon our understanding, while it is the office of the Holy Spirit, as the Divine heat, to act more directly upon our own willpower, moving us to action, as it is the heat of the sun that in the Spring stirs all vegetation into action.

3. The human family has been recognized by the most saintly and scholarly minds from the days of the apostles as a created emblem of the Trinity. There are only three relations that originally constituted the family circle—the father, the mother, and the child. Scripture tells us that God created man in the likeness of the Trinity. "Let us make man in our image," and then it says, "in the image of God created he them," showing a plural God, and a plural man, and as the Godhead was of one substance with plural persons, so man was of one substance with plural human personalities.

When Adam stood before his Creator he contained within himself both Eve and her offspring. Adam was both father and mother to Eve, and was the image of God in his threefold function of being man, and yet a paternal man, and a material man, for all the motherhood of the race was just as literally in Adam as all the fatherhood of the race was, and mark you, all three of these functions, as man, as father, as mother, existed from the moment that he was a man, so that one function was just as old as the other, which is a most startling emblem of the eternity and co-ordinate existence of the three functions of the three Persons of the Godhead. From Adam came Eve, and from the mutual love and union of those two proceeded their offspring, but all existed primarily in Adam. Thus the Father, out of the blissful knowledge of Himself, produces the only begotten Son, and from the eternal and mutual communion of the Father and the Son there proceeds in an eternal stream of joy the blessed Person of the Holy Ghost, for the Son of God reveals and exemplifies the infinite maternity of the Godhead just as really as He does that of paternity and of Sonship. The three Persons in the Godhead are a Divine community, holding ineffable fellowship together, of which the joys of the holiest and happiest earthly family is the faintest shadow.

4. The immaterial nature of man comprises a threefold mode of nature, as heart, and mind, and will, which is another striking type of the Divine

Trinity. The heart of the affectional nature of man is the fountain out of which proceeds the intellectual nature and the active or volitional nature.

From the Scriptures it would seem that the Person of the eternal Father is the heart of the Godhead and Person of the Word; the Divine Son is the Head over all things, the understanding; and that the Holy Spirit is the will, the active, energetic power, the executive of the Godhead. Hence we read that “God is love,” and that “Christ is the wisdom of God,” and of “the power of the Holy Ghost,” or under another form, we read of “the love of the Father,” “the grace of the Lord Jesus,” and “the communion of the Holy Ghost.”

It is the office of the mind either in literature, or art, or speech, to reveal what is in the heart, just as Christ reveals the Father. Then it is the office of the will to bring things to pass, and actually carry out the affections of the heart and the plans of the mind, as it is the office of the Holy Spirit to carry the Father’s love, and the Son’s grace and plans into real and powerful experience, life and history. Yet all three of these functions of the soul exist simultaneously, yet have a priority of office and action corresponding precisely with what Scripture reveals of the order and office of the three Persons in the one ever-blessed God.

There are many other emblems of the Trinity in creation, such as body, soul, spirit; or earth, water and air; or suns, planets and moons; also many

types in the laws of nature, in chemistry, botany, geology, and other departments of nature too numerous to mention here.

As I said at the beginning, there is a superabundance of instances in which God has imprinted His adorable Trinity of Persons upon nearly every page of created things. There is no way of understanding Scripture, or a full religious experience, except through the knowledge of the Divine Trinity in one Godhead.

Chapter 7 — God's Friendship

There are many ties that come down from God like golden threads, and twine themselves about us to bind us to Him. He is our Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, Ruler, Father, Judge, and many other relationships, but there is one tie amid them all that is somewhat different from all others, and that is friendship. God is our Friend, and we can, through sanctifying grace, and walking in the steps of Abraham, become the real friends of God.

1. The friendship of God is something more than pardon, or heart purity, or the baptism with the Holy Ghost. It is the coming together of our souls with God on something that looks like equality of interests, and fellowship. Friendship is a peculiar bond which is not confounded with other ties of relationship. We may have friendship for our friends, parents, or children, or brothers and sisters, or masters or servants, but pure friendship may exist outside all these relationships.

Friendship involves some sort of equality of reciprocity—mutual tastes, mutual interests, mutual confidence, mutual agreement, and community of thought, and sympathy. Friendship must be free from anything like authority, or dominion, or the legislation of duties, or selfish, mercenary motives. True friendship cannot be

bought, or commanded, or teased, or frightened into existence, but is a delicate thing and must come spontaneously, like flowers in the Spring. It must not be scolded, or chafed, or begged. It is the perfume that flows out from the coming together of secret affinities in the soul.

Friendship is the echo of two souls who are like mountains properly adjusted to each other. Now go over all these points, and see how they set forth the pure friendship between God and His trusting creature. What an unutterable condescension for our infinite heavenly Father to so come down, and seemingly put Himself on an equality with us, as to take us into a real positive friendship with Himself! When a father romps with his little child on the floor, and plays horse for the child to ride upon, for the time being there is no thought of his parental authority, or dignity, or being a law-giver, or a Judge, or a provider, or a protector to the child, but only an equal, merging himself for the time being into a playmate for his little darling.

This gives us a faint idea of what God becomes to us in being our Friend, and lets Himself down into the limits of our interests and feelings. Friendship with God is set forth in Scripture as the basis of prevailing prayer. Jesus says, "Which of you shall have a friend to whom you can go at midnight, and ask bread for one in need?" Abraham was the friend of God, and on the basis of that friendship he interceded for the people of Sodom. Every tie that binds us to God has a beauty, but there is

something in Divine Friendship that has a power and charm all its own.

2. The friendship of God outlasts that of all others. God is the only Friend Who never fails us. How frequently and easily the friendships of earth grow threadbare and wear out. As children, we all had little friends that we thought would last forever, but in a few years the delicate romance passed away, and the friends drifted from us. Then came youth with its friendships that we thought were rooted in granite, but they obeyed the same law of change and transitoriness. And then came middle life, with its more thoughtful and serious friendships, which after a while were rent with cruel misunderstandings, and unexplained silences and so languidly declined. And then we drift on to the lonely, quiet havens of old age, into which we anchor our riper years, to find that change and decay have characterized all earthly things, including what we once supposed were friendships riveted with steel.

It is not always because friends have been unfaithful, but often the pressures of life have separated us. We were but poor creatures, and each has had his special calling, peculiar burdens, diverse paths of travel, and the constant changes of new scenes, new circumstances, new acquaintances, new thoughts, new feelings. Like passing ships at sea, we lived a while in the sight of each other's sails, and enjoyed the beautiful

signaling by flags or rockets from soul to soul, but we each had to make a several port, and so we slipped over the rim of the sea, and lost sight of each other.

But God is the dear old, faithful Friend, from Whom we never sail away, and Who always is going our way, and making for the same port, and Whose interests are always our own. The very things that have killed off the friendship of other people have only made God more and more a Friend to us. Just where other friendships wear out, God's friendship wears in. The things that make others forget us are the very things that make God remember us. Just where our failures and infirmities and sorrows over-tax the patience of earthly friends, God's friendship breaks out afresh like finding a gold mine on a piece of poor land whose fertility had been exhausted. God's friendship was not conditioned on our beauty, or prosperity, or success, or popularity; but on our personality, and our being His own creatures who need Him forever. God's friendship for us was never touchy, nor fastidious, nor rash, nor overbearing, nor critical, nor dependent on what other people thought about us. God has proved Himself over and over to be the Friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

3. God's friendship goes deeper down into our nature than is possible for any creature friendship. His friendship not only takes cognizance of the

needs of our bodies, and minds, but penetrates to the inner depths of our spirit nature. His friendship is stronger than all others, because He knows us better. While He knows the natural meanness, and deception, and frailty of our moral nature, more than anyone else, yet away beyond that He knows what we can be made, and what in our heart of hearts we long to become. And so His blessed eye can see something in the outcome of our lives, and our salvation, that will in the end perfectly astonish those acquaintances who think we never can amount to very much. Often times our creature friends see just enough in us to get tired of us, and ignore us, but if they could go deeper down, and see what God sees, their love would be far different.

We can say things to God that we never could say to anyone else. We feel more at ease with His blessed, pure eyes searching us through and through, than we can under the gaze of a fellow man. God never tattles about us, never misunderstands us, never puts on any stilted, artificial dignity, never tries to hurt our feelings, never throws our forgiven sins back into our faces, never scolds us because of our natural deficiencies, never brags on His own aristocracy and superiority to us, never lets His friendship be suspended on a thread of mere technicality, never ostracizes us to give audience to people of more popular reputation.

His friendship makes us feel at home with Him. We have as much right to all His secret fellowship and

His tender caresses, and to all that His blessed Self is for us, without stint, without reserve, as truly and as boundlessly as for any saint or angel that ever was. God's presence does not oppress the privacy of our secret lives, but His infinite majesty rests down upon us like the pressure of the atmosphere, without being a burden. His very infinity gives us a childlike familiarity with Him, which we never could take with any of the great ones of earth, or even with our nearest earthly relatives.

Men, even Christian men, who pass for great saints, and who are fairly canonized before death, when they are allowed to have money, or great renown, or religious authority, must be plumed and uniformed. They must live in extravagance, and head great processions, and be dictatorial, and lord it over God's heritage, until they play the fool in the name of religion. On the contrary, our blessed God wears all the splendor of infinite majesty, without bluster, or boasting, or trace of that vulgar thing that men call aristocratic pomp. He opens His friendship to each of us, without partiality. We are never common to God. He never loses His respect for any of us. He never calls us hard names, or pours sarcasm on our failures. Oh what a God we have! Who of us cannot say with Solomon, "He is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend."

Chapter 8 — How God Forgives

In order to get a clear vision of any one of God's blessed perfections, we need to go through His own Book, and gather up all the historical and biographical incidents, and all the proof texts bearing on the subject. A collection of all the instances in Scripture of how God pardons, spreads before our eyes a marvelous field of mercy and compassion and of the promptness and impartiality of loving grace, which is simply amazing.

Notice all the instances of His forgiveness of sinners, whether of individuals or of nations, as in the case of the Ninevites. Then notice the instances of forgiving the sins of His own people, and we have but a picture of the extravagance of Infinite love, seeking to put away sin, and bury it out of sight as quickly as possible, as the deep blue sea buries the trash thrown into it.

All of God's dealings in every direction are characterized by an immensity and majesty and a kingliness of conduct, inconceivably beyond the ideas of men, even beyond imaginations of the best of men. He always acts like a God and it taxes the faith of us poor creatures to believe in the infiniteness of the statements that God is love.

1. He arranges to forgive us in such a way as to humble us. He pours His mercy on us with such abundance and with such repetition that it sinks us into the dust and makes us feel our unworthiness. The overflow of God's compassion for us, when rightly apprehended, intensifies the sense of our inferiority, and kindles afresh the feeling of hatred for ourselves. If He forgave us as men do, even as the best of saints do, we should detect in it a scantiness and a limitation which would leave some room for us to have a little self esteem. But when He forgives us with such an unspeakable and exhaustless stream of mercy, our sense of self-worth is utterly drowned by floods of pardon. And so it is the very infiniteness of His forgiveness that sinks us lower and lower in our own nothingness.

2. He forgives in such a way as to win us into a fathomless sorrow for sins. Instead of denouncing us and treating us as creatures foreign to Himself, He actually incorporates our interests with His own, and takes our sins upon Himself. He goes with a bowed head and weeping eye, and a sad face, as if His heart would break with our manifold sins and meannesses. He takes the form of a servant and walks with a crushed heart and submits to innumerable indignities, as if He were the sinner.

It is this uttermost humiliation on His part that reveals to us how a sinful creature ought to feel

towards his own sins. The ever blessed God acts the part of a poor, frail creature to show us how a creature ought to behave. He weeps to teach us how to weep. He is saddened with the unspeakable wretchedness of sin, to reveal to us how to feel towards it. The very God Who made us out of nothing comes down from His inconceivable glory and clothes Himself with our grief and disgrace, to teach us how to repent and how to despise our sins and our sinfulness of nature which could so oppress the very heart of infinite pity and love.

Oftentimes a child can be led to loathe its disobedience, and sob with a broken heart when it sees how its loving parent weeps and grieves over the child's disobedience. Did any mother ever yearn over her child and weep over its sins, or has any human father ever made his children's sorrows his own, as the infinitely loving God has done for us? It is an instance of the unimaginable wisdom of God, that His love has invented a way, not only to forgive us, but to forgive us in such a way as to send us to the ocean depths of sorrow for sin. The very manner of His forgiveness softens our stony hearts and draws us in the very act of pardon to His knees with a double love.

3. He forgives us without boasting over it. In this respect it is so far beyond human forgiveness. If one man shows any favor to another, or forgives him, or lends him assistance, it seems a part of the very frailty of his nature to frequently allude to

it, or else in some indirect way, to boast of it, or to secretly gloat over it in the mind as a stroke of magnanimity. But God swallows us in a boundless sea of compassion, and inundates us within and without with limitless grace, without priding Himself on it or gloating over it. If a dew drop should stretch itself to fill a thimble, it would indeed be a great feat, but the ocean will fill the thimble and never think of boasting over the act. In like manner God's facility in forgiving offences is beyond all example of created minds. There is such a vast dignity in His love, and a liberality in His compassion, that our minds have to be inspired to get even the faintest conception of it.

This very narrowness in our conceptions of God's love hinders our salvation. We judge of Him through the glass of our own hardness and bitterness of nature and it stretches our faith to the uttermost to believe that God will forgive us with the readiness and thoroughness, and limitless love, which the Bible teaches. He forgives us without a reprimand, or a scolding rebuke, or a harsh and mortifying reminder, but with such ease and sweetness, and gracefulness and liberality as to make us feel that our welfare is His own, and that we could bruise His own majesty as soon as unnecessarily humiliate His penitent, trusting creature.

4. He forgives us far beyond our own vision, both of our own sins and of the effects of them. We

never can see the real depths and extent of all our guilt for committing even one sin. And then when we come to estimate all the multiplied consequences of our own sins upon others, they stretch away beyond all our imaginations. Yet our Heavenly Father, through Jesus, has taken a minute account of every scintilla of our guilt, and of the million-fold effects of our sins, and charges His grace with the complete settlement of all these innumerable and far-reaching evils with a magnanimity of favor which simply bewilders a real devout mind.

5. He forgives us speedily. His love yearns to blot out all our sins and all remembrance of them from His administration. He forgives just as soon as He possibly can, and, as in many Scripture instances, even before the penitent has half-way finished his confession. A loving Omniscience reads the thoughts and intents of the heart, and before the penitent has had time to put his confession into words or to even begin repairing the damages of his wrongs, God forestalls the penitential prayer with a lightning-winged pardon. Read the account of how God forgave David, and how the Father forgave the prodigal, before his pitiful confession was half uttered. Infinite love seems to tremble with intense eagerness to rush into our hearts, and as a crevice in the heart is opened by real contrition, pardoning grace flows in with the swift ease of electricity. God has made nothing in the universe swifter than Himself, and yet nothing in

the Godhead is swifter than forgiving love. Why need any one die unpardoned? Why need any heart be loaded with guilt for an hour? Gravitation does not seize upon a falling body half so quickly as forgiving love seizes upon a soul that falls in the arms of mercy.

6. He forgives incessantly. God is incessantly pouring a warm gulf stream of forgiving grace over a thousand unknown defects. He not only forgives all the sins of which we consciously repent, but also defects and infirmities and innumerable short-comings which the most thoughtful Christian will recognize and humbly confess. Even when he is aware of nothing in his heart but love, he will have an abiding conviction that every moment he needs the merit of Christ's blood. And only think, God is doing all this for myriads and myriads of His children through all the generations of mankind. He takes each penitent, each pining, hungering heart to His bosom of love. He forgives each one with a freshness, and sweetness, and generosity as if each one was a special favorite of His eternal choice. Oh, what an infinite Lover of souls God is! Well does the Holy Ghost say through Isaiah, "Let him return unto the Lord and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God for He will multiply forgiveness" (Isaiah 55:7). Only imagine how fathomless that forgiving love must be, which can prescribe to a poor creature that he is to forgive a fellow-creature seventy times seven within the space of one day.

While forgiving grace is the doorway that admits us into the kingdom of God, it is also a contemporary grace that follows us every step of the journey, and the deeper our knowledge of God becomes, the more lovingly will we adore the way that God forgives us. Think of the thousands of times He has pardoned us since we first cried for mercy, and the more keenly we apprehend all these pardons the more ardently our hearts will love Him, for those who have had much forgiven will love much. The more thoroughly we comprehend forgiving love, the more diligently will we cease from all sin.

Chapter 9 — Divine Interference

The word interference comes from two Latin words, inter, between, and faceo, to make, or to work. Hence Divine interference covers the vast range of creation in which God mingles His operations with those of His creatures, and always leaves a space between creature and creature, and between causes and effects, and between the visible and invisible, and between the known and unknown, and between Spiritual and material things. Here He reserves the absolute right to work as it may please Him, without destroying the free agency of His moral creatures. There is no study in all the universe like the study of God, for it is ever fresh, and fascinating, and fathomless to our understanding.

To all eternity God will be an unfathomable ocean of unknown wonder to us, and yet as fast as we learn anything of Him, it only increases our zest and capacity for learning more, and for more sweetly relishing what we do learn. Now, this trait in the Divine conduct of His minute, and incessant, and startling interference in all the realms of nature, providence, and grace furnishes a radiant field for our loving, prayerful thoughts.

1. God always leaves a place for Himself to work in beautiful secrecy in every department of His

kingdom. He does not fence Himself out from His own works. Some scientists teach that no two atoms of matter absolutely touch each other, but are sufficiently close together for cohesion. They argue this from the fact that water, or oil, or air, can be forced through nearly every known substance, and that it is now known by the X-ray that light as well as heat can go through everything in the world. Be that theory as it may, it is most certain that God has left a space between every personality, and every organic body, and every atom of substance, where He can erect His unseen throne, and sway an unfathomable sovereignty in every life, and every event. From the greatest to the least, He has carried forward His ceaseless superintendence without noise, without ostentation, but with most exact justice and tenderest fatherly love. When Moses wrought the ten plagues in Egypt, the devil's ministers imitated the works of God, but when they came to the third plague of turning dust into lice, the magicians found it was beyond their depth, and they said, "this is the finger of God."

That Divine finger which had been working as it were under a glove, now became bare, so that the enemies of God had to recognize it. There is something significant in calling the special operation of God "His finger," for it signifies pointedness, the concentration of God's power upon some given point, which is different from a universal miracle that spreads everywhere. The term, "finger of God," also imports the personality of His interference, that He is a Person, that He

deals with the personalities of His creatures and never gets them confused. The term also signifies the supernatural and special work of God, over and above the uniformity of natural law. While He has established uniform processes of cause and effect throughout the universe, He has not made the creation a cast iron machine, and bolted Himself outside, but has fixed it full of pores and secret avenues into which His omnipotence and wisdom can silently glide. At any instant He can touch the secret springs of the vast mechanism and interfere with changes, suspensions, or reversals, for purposes of righteousness and the showing forth of His glory.

A man who denies the miracle-working power of God in His own creation knows nothing of God and very little of creation. When we look around us in nature we find everywhere instances where God has left ample space between apparent causes and effects, where He alone can work, and as it were fill in the gap for His poor, helpless creatures. In every direction of life the helplessness of man is seen in the fact that he is unable to accomplish any of his plans without unconsciously depending on the Creator to step in and help him out.

Our strength is always falling short of the end we want to reach, and if it were not for God's interference to supplement our efforts we could accomplish nothing on earth. By our will-power we can put food in our mouths and swallow it, and instantly it is beyond the reach of our volition. If God did not step in, and by His mechanism in the

stomach, turn the food into blood, we should perish. By our will-power we can plow the ground and plant the seed, and then we have to stop and wait for our benevolent Creator to send the moisture and warmth and cause the sprouting and growing. Between the time that our will-power plants the seeds and gathers the grain, look at the great gap which God has filled in by His loving will through the pores of nature.

This truth could be amplified into volumes. Take agriculture, science, invention, commerce, personal comfort in every direction in which we live and work, and notice how little it is that is accomplished by our actual will-power, and how much it is that God accomplishes. He is always, in a quiet and loving way, taking hold of our little efforts, and as it were lengthening them out, supplying all the deficiencies of our ignorance and weakness to accomplish mighty results! Then see how modestly He hides His hand behind the screen of what we call natural law, and allows poor little man to take the credit of doing the whole work. Hear him boast of how he made that crop, or how he ran that steamship across the ocean, or how he sent that telegraphic message, when, if the amount of actual human volition were taken out of the operation, it would leave more than ninety-nine per cent. of the entire process to have been accomplished by the Creator.

2. In the realm of salvation God reserves to Himself a hidden laboratory. In all the hidden work of grace in the soul there is the same unexplored region of Divine interference which no created mind can pierce. Here He produces experiences according to His own will. We repent of our sins, and do what we can to right the wrongs of our past, and then commit ourselves to the mercy of Jesus Christ as the Scriptures direct us, and then we have reached the uttermost limit of our will-power in the matter. Then the "finger of God" comes into more distinct action, and works in us moral changes, spiritual experiences, and great revolutions of thought, and feeling, and energy, of which we could previously have no understanding. Notwithstanding all that we may learn about the grace of God in the new birth, when we are led onward to the great work of interior sanctification, it is in many respects just as much a new and unknown world of bewilderment as to how God will work as was that of conversion.

We are all led by different paths, through unique testings and trials, and through crisis after crisis of giving up our will and way to God. It is like so many waterfalls which a stream passes over on its way from the mountain to the sea, till we reach the point of unconditional and unlimited abandonment and obedience to our Lord. Then the Holy Spirit, Who has been secretly leading us, breaks forth into a bright and powerful manifestation of His work, producing in us experiences of the very life of God of which we had no former conception.

While these interior experiences seem to follow a general law, like the production of crops in nature, yet the infinite Spirit allows Himself ample room for numberless diversities of operations, in which He seems to work out a particular pattern of God's life in every soul, and puts a private mark into everyone's sanctification, so that no one shall be lost in the vast multitude. While God wants us to observe His laws He does not want us in bondage to His laws, but in sweet, private, personal captivity to Himself alone. Hence, while He works in the spiritual realm as in the physical by a general uniformity, yet He will not allow even His own established laws to prevent Him from breaking forth at any time, or place, with a special individual exercise of sovereignty. He chooses to work or not to work, to give or not to give, to produce this or that form of experience, to this or that soul, as it may please Him. There is a sphere for our free will in the making of a saint, just as in the making of a crop of grain, and the omnipotence of God does not fetter our free agency any more while working a field of holiness than in working a field of corn. Yet in both instances our free agency is limited and, beyond a certain point, if God does not step in and produce the results, nothing is accomplished.

3. In what we call the realm of providence the Divine interference is often the most startling and impressive. It is in this department of His

government that general law does not seem so rigidly established. The Holy Spirit tells us in Scripture that “the battle is not always to the strong, nor the race to the swift, nor riches to men of understanding.” He gives us to understand that while, as a general rule, the relationship between certain causes and effects is so fixed that in most cases the strong do conquer, and the swift do win the race, and the clever man does make the money, yet the law is not infallible. Between these causes and effects, there is a mysterious space which God alone occupies, and where He exercises an infinite, sovereign, personal, minute, loving, impartial jurisdiction. Here, in answer to prayer, or in compassion to the poor and oppressed one, or for the purpose of punishing the wrong, or for the brilliant outshining of His glory, He can suddenly upset the machinery, or reverse the nature of cause and effect, and make the helpless one conquer the strong, and the lame take the prey, and the slow little cripple win the race, and the ignorant and feeble-minded acquire the wealth.

There are five things that God takes delight in choosing as instrumental for His glory, which the world not only ignores, but does not understand how God can use them. They are the “foolish things” of the world, the “weak things,” the “base things,” the “despised things,” and the “things which are not.” Not only the world, but most Christians, are so accustomed to think that everything must be run by certain methods, that they make little or no allowance for the sudden or extraordinary supernatural interference of an

Infinite Person, Who forever reserves to Himself the right to work as He pleases among angels, men, or devils, in nature, grace, or providence, and oftentimes to the utter confusion of theologians as well as philosophers.

God is constantly doing things that people, even good people, supposed could not be done. He is lifting up those whom people thought could never be lifted. He is sanctifying those whom people thought were past redemption. He is mightily using those who were esteemed only the refuse of earth. He is answering prayers right against what was imagined to be a cast-iron law. He is bringing to nought things that looked as firm as Gibraltar. He is silently intersecting the deepest laid schemes. He turns the almost angelic wisdom of Ahithophel into confusion at the momentary cry of a broken-hearted man. He melts an iceberg with a tear, or congeals a wild, passionate soul with the glance of a helpless eye.

Some modern houses are threaded all through with electrical appliances, so that a burglar lifting a window, or stepping on the carpet, may turn on the light, or ring the alarm bells. So God has threaded the universe, and all the social fabric with a secret, subtle vigilance, and the creature never knows at what moment a startling, supernatural, unexpected light or sound may break in upon him. We ought to know better and better, that if we are in perfect union with God, loving Him above every other love, and seeking to please Him above every other pleasure, all of His

established laws, all of His interferences in creation, or in grace, will be for our good, our most tender protection, and our highest advancement.

It is the vision of perfect faith, which apprehends this incessant and particular interference of God on our behalf, that enables us to rest quietly on His bosom, in spite of all the threatening aspects of outward things. It is this all-piercing, all-quieting vision of faith which makes God like a great serene sunset to our souls.

Chapter 10 — Desires For God

All true desires for God must spring from man's inner spiritual nature. We have a threefold organism of body, soul and spirit. Each of these parts of our being have their appetites and affections. The appetites of the body are for things outward and material in their nature. The appetites of the mind are largely in sympathy with those of the body, and yet embrace a much larger and loftier range than the five senses, as the mental appetites involve the principle of curiosity, a desire for knowledge, and beauty, and music, and power.

But deeper down than all these are the appetites and cravings of the spiritual nature. However, these cravings of the inner spirit are never brought into exercise except under the operations of Divine grace. A person living in sin has his spiritual nature in a dormant state, and knows nothing of the capabilities in him of Divine things. The spiritual is by far the strongest of man's threefold nature when it once becomes thoroughly vitalized and brought into play by the Holy Spirit. The desires of the mind are capable of domineering over those of the body, but the desires of the spirit have in them a capability of far outreaching and overcoming the desires of both the intellect and the body. But as most persons live on the lower plane of their being, they have no conception of the overwhelming power that is possible to their

spiritual nature. There are three degrees of desire for God which the heart may have under grace.

1. The desire for God's favor. When the soul becomes awakened to its lost and sinful condition, there springs up in the conscience a sad, painful yearning for the favor and sympathy of God. The soul feels conscious of its abasement and of its guilt; it is covered with a sense of shame; it has a painful, lonely feeling, of being out-of-doors in the cold night, shut away from the home friends of the Father's family.

The soul at this stage is not able to apprehend the thought of perfect heart purity, neither can it have any proper conception of the purity of the Divine nature. It feels the ban of the law; it has a culprit sensation, a friendless feeling; and it craves for a loving voice, a tender word, a sense of pardon, to be at peace with its Maker. Its instinctive cry is, "God be merciful to me a sinner." This desire is not so much for God Himself as it is a longing for some expression of God's compassion. It is a thirst for Divine favor.

2. A desire for God's character. This is the thirst which the true believer has in seeking for the full efficacy of the cleansing blood of Jesus. Unlike the former desire, it does not spring out of a sense of guiltiness but out of a consciousness of a deep

need of inward purity. The heart at this stage loves God, but finds in itself much remaining self-life—darkness concerning God’s law, weakness in obeying his propensities contrary to the nature of Jesus, and the presence of these inward feelings becomes painful and tiresome to the believer.

The very love he has for God cries out for more love, but he sees plainly that the very propensities of the heart are just what hinder the inflow of more Divine love. So he comes to loathe the earthly and selfish dispositions of the soul, and grows heart sick over his many failures in rendering a free and loving service to God. There has dawned upon his understanding, by the light of the Spirit, a beautiful glimpse of the purity and the sweetness of the character of Jesus. He is tenderly drawn with this beautiful vision of the Lord, and from that time he cannot rest till pure within. He cries out, “Create in me a clean heart, O God,” “Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow,” “Thy will be done in me as it is in heaven.” This is the form of desire which Jesus referred to when He said, “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.”

In the desire for pardon we feel as if we were outdoors, in the stormy night, and we yearn to get inside of our Father’s well-warmed house, and have Him speak kindly to us. But in the second desire for inward cleansing we have a sense of being inside the house with our reconciled Father, but there is a sense of inward unfitness for our surroundings. We yearn for such a perfect and

deep internal agreement of our affections and choices to God and His kingdom, that we will feel perfectly free in His home, and blessedly restful in His presence, and calmly joyous in His service. This form of desire for God is a great deal stronger than the desire for His favor, because it is a deeper insight into His character, and is permitted by a personal love for Him. This desire takes a more radical hold upon the deepest parts of our moral nature.

When a soul becomes possessed of a desire for the pure image of God, for thorough heart-cleansing, it will be continually seeking that state, at home or abroad, in religious meetings or in secular employment, alone or in society. The ordinary incidents and trials of life will serve as stimulants to urge the soul on to its desired haven; it rests only in the cleansing fountain of its Lord.

3. Desire for God Himself. We long for the Divine personalities, for the loving, complete and unbroken union with God, just as fully as it is possible for our nature to be united to His nature. This stage of desire for God is the crown and glory of our spiritual possibilities. This form of desire is that for which all other desires were made. All other degrees of desire were but preparatory to this desire.

In this stage of thirsting after God there is a sense of Divine favor and a sweet rest in the cleansing

blood of Jesus, an inward sense that the shore lines that bound us are cut, and that we are launching out into the fathomless, boundless ocean of Divine love, light and spiritual understanding. There springs up in the depth of our human spirits a sort of Divine passion to go to the uttermost in the life, and humility, and love of the Divine nature, and to become as perfectly acquainted with the three Divine Persons in the Godhead as it is possible to become while living in the flesh. This desire is pure, and healthy, and inspiring.

Just as there are different bodily appetites in degree for food, so there are different stages of desire for God. A person who is sick in body often feels a brief, whimsical desire for a certain food, but when his food is brought to him he cannot eat it. So there are souls in a fever state of grace who have spasmodic desires for Divine things, which are the result of a moral, diseased condition. Then there are persons recovering from a long illness who have a ravenous appetite for food, which is abnormal, and indicates a diseased condition. This also has a counterpart in a sort of wild abnormal yearning, in the spiritual state. Then there are persons who are famished by starvation, and whose appetite for food is more than normal. But there is in it a perfectly healthy condition, a normal hunger for food which is accompanied with pure, healthy symptoms; the food will smell sweet; the mouth will water at the sight of the food; and it will have a sweet taste in the mouth.

So there is a hunger for God which is perfectly pure and normal, and is accompanied by beautiful, healthy symptoms, such as these: everything about God becomes attractive and enticing to the inner spirit; His Word is deep and sweet and rich to the understanding; His will is seen as only an expression of limitless love; His Name is cherished in joyous affection; His character is always unfolding with new charms; and from new points of vision the coming of His kingdom is looked upon as a panacea for this earth's ills. His personality is cherished with deep and purest friendship; His providence is watched with the highest, careful attention; His guidance is sought in every little detail of life, and God Himself is looked upon as the whole end of existence.

This is the same desire that David had, when he said, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." This is the pure, special desire that burned in the heart of Moses, when he cried to the Lord, "I beseech thee, show me thy glory." It is that heavenly, angelic craving for God that Paul had when he said he desired to depart and be with Christ, which was far better.

This form of desire for God is perfectly consistent with being filled with the Holy Spirit—in fact, this desire grows out of the fullness of the Spirit. It is through this perfect desire that the Spirit is continually flowing into the believer, and ever widening the channel of Divine life in him, and

ever revealing to him more clearly the Divine personalities.

The prophet Daniel had this form of desire in an extraordinary degree. Where our common version says, "He was a man greatly beloved," the margin reads, "He was a man of desire." That is, his inner spirit was in a continual frame of sweet craving after God. This is the inward condition of real saintliness of character. There are many persons who profess full salvation who seem to have but a feeble type of this all-mastering desire for God; it does not seem strong enough in them to take possession of all their thoughts and faculties and to draw them out into deep, continued, mental prayer.

The effects of this pure desire after the living God are manifold. Among these effects of an all-searching desire for God may be mentioned the following: it produces the best service for Him. To serve God from fear is infinitely better than not to serve at all. In fact, the least degree of religion is not to be despised. Then to serve God out of the conscience is still better; it produces soberness of mind, convictions of duty and a sense of the majesty of Divine law and of an operation of the wrath of an offended God. But serving God out of conscientiousness can never produce a high type of piety, for it must contain more legality than love.

But to serve God out of personal love for Him, and to have a Divine passion which craves to pour itself out in an ever-increasing service, without

any prudential carefulness as to punishment or reward, but out of an intense craving to do all it can for the object of its love—this produces the highest form of service and the most extravagant degrees of self-sacrifice.

Again, this perfect desire for God Himself weans the soul from everything on earth more perfectly and more sweetly, than anything else can do. It burns out the attachments to property, and earthly friendships and high standing. It makes us perfectly dead to all things on earth without putting any sourness, or moroseness, or melancholy into the fountains of the heart.

Again, this desire for God is like a balsam of strength to the will; it puts a supernatural vigor into the understanding; it gives a quiet but irrevocable decision to all the choices. Love will overcome difficulties that are largely insurmountable by every other force in nature, and this perfect craving for God is love on fire. Hence it overcomes difficulties in the service of God that would otherwise be impossible.

Finally, this perfect thirst for God opens up to our understanding an insight into the degrees of God which the human faculties could never otherwise discern. It discovers the presence of God where otherwise it would not be suspected, and discerns possibilities in Divine union beyond our ordinary language for expression. The blessed God unveils the secrets of His being to the one that perfectly craves Him just for His own sake. These are

foretastes of the beatific vision, and through this desire our spiritual eyes practice for the gaze on His face in the open vision of glory.

Then pray for desire, for love's wistfullest yearning,

For the beautiful pining of holy desire;

Yes, pray for a soul that is ceaselessly burning,

With the soft fragrant flames of this thrice-happy fire.

O, then wish more for God, burn more with desire.

Covet more the dear sight of His marvelous face,

Pray louder, pray longer, for the sweet gift of fire

To come down on thy heart, with its whirlwinds of grace.

God loves to be longed for, He loves to be sought,

For He sought us Himself, with such longing and love:

He died for desire of us, marvelous thought,

And He yearns for us now to be with Him above.

Chapter 11 — Channels of the Spirit

It is the office of Jesus to reveal to us the Word of truth, and it is the office of the Holy Spirit to reveal in us the power of truth. Jesus is the Word of God, and hence the Revealer of all doctrine, all truth concerning the Father, or the Holy Spirit.

Everything that the human race knows about God has been revealed through Jesus, for He, “coming from the bosom of the Father has declared the Father.” The Holy Spirit takes all the things which the Son has revealed of God by word, or doctrine, and applies it by a powerful inward manifestation to the human soul.

Christ has told us more about the Holy Spirit in the Gospel by St. John than in all the balance of the Scripture beside. Among His most wonderful statements concerning the Holy Spirit are the words in John 7:37-39. In the last day of the great feast of tabernacles, which was the greatest of Jewish feasts, “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 inner heart shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive, for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not glorified.”

The central thought in this passage is that believers are to be so united to Jesus, that He can

make them individual channels for the outflowing rivers of the Holy Spirit upon the dry, moral deserts around them. In getting a clear insight into the meaning of this wonderful truth we must analyze the passage in detail.

1. The pre-eminent organ of the Holy Ghost is the individual man. "If any man thirst." Note all through Scripture, the constant Divine emphasis on the individual person.

"He that believeth," not they. "If any man hear my voice," not men. Personality is the highest form and crown of all existence. Federated bodies of men, or institutions, or churches, or forms of government, or doctrine are never spoken of as the highest organs of the life of God, or channels of the Holy Spirit. God honors the immortal, personal, individual soul of man above all things, or systems, or combinations. He convicts, converts, sanctifies, calls, anoints, sends forth, and utilizes the individual man and woman as His highest form of agency, working in co-operation with Himself, and through whom He pours His truth and love in their highest manifestation.

So He calls us one by one, regardless of what others may do, to yield ourselves in our supreme singleness of being up to Him, to be purified and united to Himself, in the highest, sweetest, and most intimate union that can exist in the universe,

outside of that eternal unity of the three Divine Persons.

2. “Thirst.” To thirst for water is the capacity of life. To thirst for God is the capacity of a created spirit. There are three kinds or three degrees of the soul’s thirst for things Divine. The first is the thirst for pardon; and then the thirst for purity; and then the deep, beautiful thirst for the living God Himself.

The thirst for pardon is not so much a direct thirst for God, as it is a sorrowful thirst of an aching heart to get relief. It is like the thirst of a sore wound, which craves for water to wash the blood away, and alleviate the fretting fever. It is the aroused conscience thirsting for innocence. It is a sad, pining, aching, hunger of soul to get right, to get rid of the past. It is more of a desire to get in harmony with God than it is to be filled with God. It is a sorrowful, plaintive cry for the smile of God, more than for His blessed nature. It is that kneeling, weeping approach to the outer hem of God’s garment, more than to the clear knowledge of His Divine Person. Nevertheless it is a thirst springing from the inner spirit of man’s deepest nature, and without which there never can come those finer and sweeter thirsts in the spiritual life.

After our sins are pardoned and we begin to learn our hearts better— the various conflicts in the soul between grace and our natural depravity—we are

led into another thirst, that of inward purity of heart. This form of thirst has its peculiar features, as distinctive as those for pardon. There is a growing disgust with ourselves, and a proportionately growing desire for heart-agreement with Jesus. There is an increasing distrust in ourselves, our wisdom, goodness, will-power and work, and a great longing to get rid of ourselves, to turn ourselves over utterly to the management of God. There is an uneasy, restless, tired spirit, that would rather die than serve God with a divided heart.

As before we thirsted for the favor of God, so now we thirst for the likeness of God. The soul has caught a glimpse of the character of Jesus, and pines for His image; and every pure thing it sees, such as the pure stars at night, pure running water, or the white light of the sun, preaches to it of purity of heart.

When this thirst for cleansing is strong enough to draw the soul into a state of unlimited abandonment to Jesus, and an appropriating faith for His perfect cleansing, the thirst is met and satisfied. Then after the first gushes of perfect love have subsided, and the sanctified state is being tried, the illuminated believer recognizes within him a Divinely-begotten thirst for the very essence of God, for the cloudless effulgence of the three Divine Persons, and a perfect, delicate, minute, and powerful union of the human spirit with the very nature and personalities of the Godhead.

This thirst should be the normal state of every Christian. This thirst is characterized by that prayer which Moses prayed, long after his “burning bush” experience, “I beseech thee, O Lord, show me Thy glory.” The thirst is to be met by the abounding fullness of the Trinity, revealed and imparted by the Holy Ghost. We first thirst for God’s smile, and then for God’s image, and then for God’s essence and Person.

3. “Let him come to me.” The Holy Spirit is given to the believer immediately from the hand, and by the authority, of Jesus.

To come to Christ, means to come in a Scriptural way, that is come to Him just as He is offered to us in Scripture, as perfect God and perfect Man, as our Savior, Sanctifier and Lord; as our Substitute, suffering the death penalty for us, and as our final Judge. To come to Christ as a merely good man, or as only an example, or to merely come intellectually, is to dishonor Him. Such coming never receives any salvation, and hence never receives from Christ, the Holy Spirit.

The rock that was smitten by the rod of Moses, from which the pure water gushed forth, was a type of Christ being smitten by the law, that He might pour forth the Holy Spirit. Now as every one wanting water must needs go to the rock for it, so there is no way of receiving the Holy Spirit except by going to the crucified and risen Jesus. There

are all sorts of false religionists who dishonor Christ crucified, such as Unitarians, Universalists, Swedenborgians and Christian Scientists, who never receive the Holy Spirit. These deny His Divinity, and personality, and know nothing of His indwelling because they dishonor the adorable Jesus from Whom the Holy Spirit proceeds, and by Whom the Spirit is given.

4. "Let him drink." "He that believeth on me." Our Savior uses these two words, "to drink," and "to believe," as interchangeable terms, because the physical act of drinking and the spiritual act of believing are so perfectly alike. Drinking is an act of faith on the part of the body and believing is the act of drinking on the part of the soul. As the throat swallows water, so the heart swallows the words of Jesus, and by swallowing the Word of God, the Divine Living Christ is taken down into the depths of the heart. Faith has two parts to it; first to apprehend or see something, and then to appropriate, to take in, to repose upon that which is thus apprehended.

Thus we first see the water, and then put it to our lips and drink it. In like manner we first apprehend Jesus as a personal Savior, or Sanctifier, and then the heart, the will and the affections open, and take Him in. We thus receive Him, drink Him and rest our all in Him. It is this definite, personal, cordial, affectionate, positive taking hold of Christ and drinking of Him, by

which we take the very fountain of the Holy Spirit into our hearts, that puts us in a condition where the Holy Spirit can flow out through us. This explains why it is that our faith in Christ always measures the extent to which we receive the Holy Spirit.

Those who receive Christ as their Justifier, receive from Christ that measure of the Spirit which accompanies pardon, and bears witness to the new birth. And those who receive Jesus as their Sanctifier, receive from Christ that full measure of the Spirit which accompanies sanctification, and the assurance of the indwelling Person of the Holy Ghost as the Comforter.

But remember that in these acts of receiving Christ, there are different degrees of intensity, boldness and largeness, in different persons. Therefore all converted persons, or all sanctified persons, do not receive exactly the same measure of the Holy Spirit, but according as they have apprehended and received unto themselves the living Jesus. And after sanctification, there are many degrees of receiving Christ in His person, character, attributes and glory, which will always measure the fuller communion and outflow of the Holy Spirit.

5. "The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified." Right in this connection, as to the intimate relation between

drinking in Christ and receiving the Spirit, let us notice this connection mentioned in this passage, between Christ being glorified and giving forth the Holy Spirit. By Christ's death on the cross, He purchased salvation for us, and removed every barrier to our restoration to God. By His resurrection from the dead and ascension up to the right hand of the Father, He obtained, as God-man, the perfect kingly authority to pour forth the Holy Spirit upon the human race to convict sinners, to convert penitents, to sanctify believers and to fill, inspire and illuminate the saints.

Before Christ's death, the Holy Spirit made His personal abode in the bosom of Jesus, and filled Him without measure, so that Christ was a walking Fountain, with the pent-up waters of that limitless sea of the Holy Spirit within Him. Now when Christ was crucified, that Fountain was unsealed, the Rock was smitten to let out the hidden streams, the Olive-berry was crushed to let forth the precious oil. Therefore without the crucifixion of Jesus, no human soul could ever have received the Holy Spirit. Those saints in the Old Testament who received the Spirit, received Him in advance, and as it were on credit before pay-day, through the anticipated, vicarious death of Jesus.

Now the ascension of Christ clothed Him with infinite sovereignty and authority to send forth the third Person in the Godhead, just the same as the Father, by the authority of His eternal paternity, had sent forth His Son into the world. Thus we

see, the glorification of Jesus was the immediate cause of His pouring out the Holy Spirit.

Now in a similar way we cannot receive the Holy Spirit into us until we likewise glorify Christ in us, by honoring Him with our entire consecration to Him, by our perfect reposing trust in Him, by our exalting Him to the throne of our whole heart, by our honoring of His precious Blood to cleanse us from all sin, by making our bodies His footstool, by making our human spirits the Heaven in which He is lifted up. By thus letting Christ be our absolute Lord and glorifying Him, we get in a condition where He can fill us with the Holy Spirit.

We must always keep in mind this unbroken link between glorifying Christ and the pouring forth of the Holy Spirit. This solves the problem why people fail to receive the Holy Spirit; it is because they fail to glorify Jesus with a boundless consecration to His blessed Person and a boundless trust in the virtue of His precious Blood to cleanse from all sin. To have the eye flooded with light, look at the sun. To have the soul flooded with the Holy Spirit, fill the eye of faith with Jesus. The more we honor Christ, the more the Holy Spirit will honor us.

6. “Out of his inner being.” This expression reveals to us that the Holy Spirit unites Himself with us in our heart—that is, in our spiritual nature. Our Creator has endowed us with body, soul and spirit, and it is pre-eminently in our spiritual nature

where we are capable of being united to God through the Holy Ghost. There is such a thing in natural life—both animal and vegetable—as lives being congeners, that is, life in the same family where the two lives can be blended into one. Thus in the animal kingdom, animals of the same family can have their lives united in the production of offspring. In the vegetable kingdom, all those fruit trees which have similar seed, such as the cherry, plum, peach, etc., can be grafted the one upon the other, and their lives will blend; and another family of fruit trees—the pear, the quince, the apple—are congeners, and can be grafted the one upon the other.

This vast and beautiful law of life runs up into the spiritual kingdom, and when God gave us an immortal spirit He created us congeners with the Holy Spirit. Hence it is, in that part of our multiform being, that we can be grafted upon the living Christ, most blessedly and wonderfully, through the operation of the Holy Ghost. We are nowhere taught in Scripture that God saves or unites to Himself the lower order of animals. They do not have a spiritual nature, and therefore they can never be congeners with the Holy Spirit.

Thus God does not unite Himself to us through our body, or through our mental or soul-nature. But it is in our spirits that He comes to take up His abode in us. Hence Christ says, that “if we believe in Him, out of our spiritual being will flow rivers of living water, and this He spake of the Holy Spirit.”

But we must notice that this outflow of the Holy Spirit from our hearts is conditioned on our being saved and sanctified and having the barriers to Divine union removed—all of which is implied by our believing in Christ. The human spirit of a sinner has all the natural capabilities of the spirit of a saint, but his heart cannot be united to God until his sins are washed away. His inner life of motive, affection and choice is perfectly subdued and sanctified by the cleansing Blood of Jesus. When the heart is purified through perfect faith in Christ, the hindrances to Divine grace are removed and the Holy Spirit gladly comes in to take up His abode in the purified heart, and to unite the powers, affections, motives, choices, desires and all the moral activities of that heart to Himself. The believer thus becomes the Spouse of the Holy Ghost.

This interior union with God is of two kinds; First, the union of the powers or affections of the soul, and afterwards the union of the substance—the very being itself—with God, which corresponds in a sublime and heavenly manner with the union between the Son of God and His natural human body and human soul. John says, “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, as of the only begotten Son of God.” We cannot fathom that blessed mystery of how the substance of the Divine Word united itself to human flesh and a human soul. We know that this is the great mystery of the Incarnation and is called the Hypostatic Union, that is, the union of

the Divine substance of the Word with the human substance of flesh and blood. Christ had a special body prepared for Him.

Now the Holy Ghost has never been incarnated in the same way as the Eternal Son of God. Yet when the Holy Spirit comes forth from the Father and the Son, converts, sanctifies the believer in Jesus and unites Himself to the inner life and substance of that believer, it corresponds in a remarkable way with the Incarnation of the Son of God, by which the Church of Christ, the true, regenerated, living Church of Christ, becomes the visible body of the Holy Ghost, as the man Jesus was the visible body of the second Person of the Godhead.

We shall never know what all this means in its vastness and splendor until the sons of God are manifested in the first resurrection, and “shine forth” as Jesus promises, “as the brightness of the sun.” It is because our human spirit is a congener with the Holy Ghost, and can be united with Him in one life, that we can bring forth fruit unto God, and yield those fragrant, heavenly blossoms, and delicious fruits, that gladden Paradise with the tempers and dispositions, the graces and energies, the praises and multiplied activities of the blessed life of the Son of God.

7. “Shall flow rivers of living water.” This expression shows us the outcome and blessed results of being filled in the inner heart with the

Holy Ghost. The blessed Comforter is one, but His outflow from the heart is manifold, characterized by our Savior as “rivers.” In understanding this great truth, let us keep in mind, that while the Holy Spirit flows through us, and out of the heart, yet He does not flow from our human nature as His fountain. We must receive Jesus by pure faith into the depths of our hearts, and the living Christ Who is at the bottom of our hearts, is the Divine Fountain from which the Holy Ghost is forever proceeding.

An illustration of this was vividly presented to my mind some years ago at a camp-meeting. I was about to preach and as I bowed in a season of silent prayer, a beautiful picture was flashed like a beam of light into my mind. I seemed to see a large spring of water, clear as glass, about two feet deep. The bottom of the spring was pure white sand, and up through the sand, I saw the clear, beautiful water boiling up from some hidden fountain away back in the earth. It occurred to me instantly that that was an illustration of the outflow of the Holy Spirit through the believer.

The white sand represented the purified nature of a believing heart. Though it be weak and feeble, and of the earth, it can nevertheless be washed by the fountain, and cleansed from earthly stains. The secret fountain hid away back in the earth, represented the blessed Jesus hid in the depths of the believer’s heart. The clear, beautiful water, flowing out from the unseen fountain, and up through the sand, represented the blessed Holy

Ghost flowing out from Christ, through the sanctified nature of the Savior, to run forth in various directions, water the earth and replenish the fruits and flowers.

Keeping this thought in mind will constantly remind us of our utter weakness, helplessness, and nothingness in and of ourselves. It will also remind us that all the purity and goodness and all the outflow of the Holy Spirit from us comes from the blessed Jesus, Who has been received into the unseen depths of our hearts. It is in this way that God constitutes believers the conductors of the living streams of the Holy Spirit.

We can understand this very clearly from the laws of electricity, and from the various substances that are used as conductors of electric currents. Perhaps there is nothing in nature which is an absolute non-conductor of electricity, but there are many substances which conduct the electric motion so feebly that they are called non-conductors—such as glass, feathers, and perfectly dry wood. Beginning with those things which are feeble conductors of electricity—such as paper, a cotton string, damp wood—and going up to those things which are the best conductors, we come to iron, copper, and silver, of which the last is the best known conductor yet discovered. Silver is too costly to be used to a great extent, and so iron and copper are mostly employed as conductors of this strange and immense energy.

Now in the spiritual world there are conductors of the Holy Spirit just as really as physical conductors of electricity. There are certain moral conditions which render a human soul a non-conductor of the grace or Spirit of God. Little children who are yet in childhood innocence and in touch with God, are often used as conductors of the Holy Spirit in convicting older people and touching hard hearts. Young converts, who are in the glow of their first love, are conductors of spiritual force, light and conviction, in a much larger degree.

The sanctified believer, whose heart is full of humility and unselfish zeal, is a much more powerful conductor of the currents of the Holy Ghost than the young convert. But this capacity of transmitting Divine truth, light, love, conviction, encouragement and spiritual knowledge may be increased in degrees which we have not yet measured. All Christians are not equal conductors of the Holy Spirit.

The more we are conformed to Christ crucified, the more truly will the Holy Spirit flow through us as rivers of water.

Chapter 12 — Divine Grafting

It is likely that even in our most spiritual contemplation we have hardly yet caught a glimpse of all the possibilities of being united to God. Our union with Him, through oneness with Christ, can be of such variety, depth, vastness, minuteness, delicacy, sweetness, power and of such increasing intensity as to thrill our whole intelligence with the mere apprehension of it. The process of this union is that of Divine grafting, which is symbolized so extensively in nature, and referred to so explicitly in Scripture.

All around us in creation, we find by vegetable and animal surgery, that in trees, plants, and living flesh, grafting can be carried on, by which one life can fasten itself upon another life so as to be practically indistinguishable in their union. This process of grafting runs all through creation, providence, revelation and grace, and even up into the Kingdom of Glory. We must remember however that this great law, both in nature and in grace, can only be exemplified where the lives or the substances have a kindred nature and a congenial substance.

For instance in nature, all varieties of grape-vines can be grafted upon each other, but grape-vines and trees are not congeners, and cannot be mutually grafted.

And in the animal kingdom, certain kinds of flesh taken from live animals can be grafted upon other living animals, and what is known as skin-grafting has been successfully performed, but the two lives must be of the same great family. The flesh of a fish cannot be grafted upon the flesh of an animal. So up in the spiritual realm, the Divine life in Christ can be imparted only to a creature who possesses a spiritual nature.

Hence the Bible never even remotely intimates that birds and four-footed beasts can be taken into fellowship with God, because they do not have a spiritual nature. They are in a certain sense united to God by creation, and upheld every moment by His all-pervading omnipresence, yet they are not united to God in His moral character, His personal knowledge and communion. Let us notice some of the applications of this great principle of Divine grafting.

1. In the performing of miracles. There are a multitude of instances in Scripture, where God wrought the miracle by utilizing a substance or force already in existence and simply grafting upon it His extra creative power.

When in answer to Elisha's prayer, the Lord multiplied the oil for the poor widow, He did not disdain to use the little pot of oil that the widow already had, but using it as a nucleus, He attached to it a stream of Divine creative power. He

thus engrafted the new creation of many gallons of oil upon the old creation of what He had previously made through the olive tree.

When Jesus turned the water into wine, He repeated the same Divine mystery of grafting a new creation upon the substance of an old one. He had in the beginning created the water, for “the sea is His, and He made it.” The natural wine, they had been using at the marriage feast, was simply water turned into wine through the instrumentality of a grape vine, which had drawn the water from the earth and transmitted it into grape juice. But now the Creator Himself, Who was the “true eternal vine,” was present, and He could dispense with the grape-vine, and shorten the process from four months into less than four seconds. By His Almighty will, He could touch the water and make it blush in the presence of its God into the purest grape-juice. But notice, He did not reject the water, but taking hold of the old creation and accepting it as far as it would go, He super-joined upon it the miracle of a new creation.

The same principle is exemplified in utilizing the few loaves and fishes, and miraculously multiplying them to feed the five thousand. What God has wrought already in creation furnishes a basis for all the miracles that ever have been or ever will be performed. Even the resurrection of the dead is not an entire creation, but a resurrection, that is, a lifting of the mortal state into an immortal state. The new Heaven and the new earth, in all their imperishable glory, will not

consist in the annihilation of the substance of the present earth, but a new creation upon the basis of the old.

2. In the matter of revelation. Here God follows the same order of grafting the Divine upon the human, the supernatural upon the natural. He reveals His truth to man according to his state, his gifts, his occupation or his individual tastes. David, the great warrior, sees an angel in Heaven with a drawn sword. Ezekiel, the scribe, sees a flying roll of parchment written within and without. Daniel, the prime minister, at the head of a great empire, sees God's purpose concerning the kingdoms of the world in their national aspects, down to the second coming of Christ, when the saints shall take the kingdom.

The wise men of Persia who were skilled in astronomy had the birth of the Savior revealed to them by a star in perfect keeping with their knowledge and taste. Thus all through Bible history, God's great revelations come to men through some natural fitness or gift, by which the Holy Spirit appropriately attaches the Divine to the human.

One of the most striking instances of this is found in the tenth chapter of Acts, where God revealed to the Apostle Peter His great missionary purpose, taking the Gospel beyond the Jews to all Gentile nations. While Peter was waiting for dinner, he

spent the time on the house top in prayer and fell into a trance.

Now we see how beautifully God blended the supernatural on the natural. We are told that Peter was hungry, and God sent him a vision exactly corresponding to it—a sheet let down from Heaven, with all manner of living creatures. A voice said, “Arise Peter, kill and eat.” See how his hunger furnished the natural basis for a vision of those meats that would satisfy his hunger, and how adroitly the Holy Spirit grafted a new and world-wide missionary vision upon such a commonplace thing as a hungry stomach.

3. In the operations of grace. In regenerating and sanctifying the believing soul, the Holy Spirit pursues this same great law of grafting the life of Christ into the believing heart, and the graces and fruit of the Spirit upon the natural faculties and functions of the human spirit. This whole world of truth is opened up to us by that significant sentence of the Apostle, “Receive ye the engrafted word, which is able to save your soul.”

This passage of Scripture reveals the principle of Divine grafting which I am illustrating. It shows that just as literally as one variety of fruit tree can be grafted into another and become one life, so the words of Scripture can be, by the Holy Spirit, engrafted into our human spirits, into our

affections, choices, tastes, and thoughts. Thus our whole life becomes one with God's Word.

This is God's purpose of salvation, to saturate our souls with the living Word of God, excluding from us every form and degree of unbelief and error, flooding our understandings with the brightness and beauty of Divine truth, and setting our hearts on fire with Divine love.

The Prophet Jeremiah testified that the Word of God so filled him, it was like fire in his bones. Christ came to destroy the works of Satan, but not to destroy His own original creation of the constitution of man or of nature.

Here is where many fail to rightly divide the Word of truth. Every sinner has a natural constitution, of body, soul, and spirit, which is to last forever. Divine grace is not grafted upon the man's sins, or upon his sinfulness. It is grafted upon the God-given spiritual nature, and by the infusion of converting and sanctifying grace, the man is advanced from mere nature to grace. The great work of grace by which we are renewed and sanctified furnishes another basis in us, upon which the Lord will engraft the Kingdom and estate of glory in the first resurrection.

You see, just as grace can be engrafted into our natural human spirits, so glory can be grafted upon grace. Nature, grace, and glory form three vast worlds or kingdoms in God's universe, and they never can be joined the one upon the other

except by an omnipotent act of the Creator, Redeemer, and Glorifier. When grace is grafted upon a soul, it takes the form and expression of that soul's peculiar make-up and individuality. This accounts for the endless variety in Christian life, and what is a real work of grace in one person may hardly look like grace to another who is of such a different mold.

When the soil is finely plowed, the roots of the growing grain can more easily penetrate it, and absorb its juices for a rich harvest. In like manner, the more thoroughly the heart is broken into all the will of God, the more completely the Holy Spirit can unite Himself to all the faculties and delicate threads of the soul. Hence after the soul is saved there is a great work to be wrought in dissolving, illuminating, expending and uniting it in every part with the fullness of Christ.

4. The Incarnation. The highest example we have in all the universe of grafting Divine things upon the human and the natural is that ever adorable mystery of the Incarnation. The Apostle says: "Great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh." St. John says: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God, and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." Jesus, in His spiritual personality, is eternally generated in the bosom of the Father, and is a necessary and everlasting outspoken word of the knowledge, wisdom, and creatorship and the

revelation of the Father. And to purely spiritual beings before His Incarnation He was the revelation of the Father, but to intelligent creatures living in flesh and blood He became the perfect revelation from the Father by His Incarnation and natural life.

This Incarnation was effected by grafting the eternal, personal Word upon a human soul and human body, especially prepared for Him by the Holy Ghost from the substance and life of the holy virgin Mary, for Scripture says: "A body hast thou prepared me."

This Divine grafting of the Divine and human substances never to be separated in the unity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is the pattern and sample of all Divine grafting in every other department, whether of nature, or grace, or providence, or revelation, or in the regions of glory. It is not only the pattern of which all other Divine grafting is a copy, but it is also the cause of all other grafting, for the Incarnation is the great cause out of which flow all the operations of grace and providence.

Now it is wonderful how the Incarnation of Christ, or grafting the personal Word upon human nature, is repeated over again in a shadow, by having the Divine truth in the written Word grafted upon our hearts, by the same Holy Spirit which produced the Incarnation. A real saint is one into whose very heart, mind, and life, the words of God have been infused by the Holy Spirit until his soul carries the

truth of Scripture in a living spiritual solution, as the ocean holds salt in solution. Thus Christ dwells in us by His Word, that our lives may be one—our loves, our dispositions, our yearnings for God's glory, and our passion for His coming Kingdom made one—not in theory only, but in sweetness, life and power.

Chapter 13 — Moving in God's Time

It is one of the deepest secrets in the spiritual life, to watch the agreement between the inward promptings of the Holy Spirit, and the outward flow and bendings in Divine Providence, and to so time them that they will keep step with each other. In thousands of cases we are liable by the sluggishness of our obedience to linger behind the opportunities of God's providence or by the impetuosity of our self-life to rush ahead of the quiet movements of God's will outside of us. In either case we miss that beautiful conjunction of God's "planets" in the inner and outer life. In the infinite mind of our Heavenly Father, as all creatures and events and possibilities repose on the placid sea of His foreknowledge, there is a proper time and place and framework of circumstance for the appropriate occurrence of all things; as the Holy Spirit has said, "a time to weep, and a time to laugh, and a time for all things."

Our incarnate Lord in His humanity is the model Creature of all men and angels, and in nothing has He set the pattern for all created life more perfectly than that of obedience, not only in the outward act, but in the place and time and spirit of the act.

One of the most beautiful insights into this spirit of moving in God's time, performing the outward act just when the time-piece of the Father's will indicated the hour, is found in the account where

the brethren of Jesus urged Him to leave Galilee and show Himself publicly in Jerusalem, as recorded in the seventh chapter of John. Things were coming to a crisis in our Savior's life; the tides of persecution were swelling higher in Judea, and in order to finish His ministry with His disciples and solidify their faith, He purposed to spend much of His time in the secluded retreats of Galilee. And yet He boldly claimed to be the Messiah, the Savior of the world, and its future king, coming to reign as David over all nations.

It was this seeming disagreement between Christ's profession on the one side and His conduct on the other that puzzled His brethren and family relations. So they said there is no man that seeks to be known, and obeyed, and believed on by all the world, and yet hides himself amid the peaceful hills and valleys of a farming district like Galilee. Hence, they urged Him to make a great outward show of Himself; run His colors to the masthead; let trumpets be blown; display royal insignia; and let the visible display be at the Nation's capital in a style equal to His claims. "If thou do these things show thyself to the world." Now look at this.

In His inner life He was Lord, Savior, Priest and Potentate over the world, and for all time to come. Yet, outwardly, He was but a servant, a despised prophet, and hounded by the leaders in church and state as a marplot and false pretender, doing His most thoughtful work among the illiterate poor, sick people and little children. What an infinite discrepancy between the inner claims of

His soul and the outward adjustment of appearances! It was this that led His own brethren in the flesh to doubt that He was really the Messiah.

“Then Jesus said unto them, my time is not yet come, but your time is always ready.” What an open door into the Heavenly life these words give us! Jesus was living a life from God, and every movement of it was timed in the will of the Eternal Father, without anxiety, without hurry, without any attempt at open display, without the shadow of foreboding as to the least possibility of failure, as if it had cycles of ages in which to ripen into visible fruitage. It moved quietly, deeply, warmly, like the Gulf Stream of all creation, taking its time to reach and thaw the arctic seas of frozen human hearts, yet moving every inch with irresistible force.

1. Let us look thoughtfully at the difference between a merely human and an inspired way of living. Jesus told His brethren that “their time was always ready,” because they were still living in the flesh-mind and their conduct was on the mere plain of nature, prompted by earthly motives, modified by outward appearances, and political experiences, and the discretion dictated by immediate surroundings.

Even multitudes of Christians never think of waiting prayerfully upon God for clear guidance in

the ordinary affairs of life. They do not mix God up with every little matter of life, and while believing in a general, overruling Providence, there seems to be a film on their vision which hinders them from seeing that everything is saturated with the ocean of God's personal presence.

The brothers of Jesus were reasoning as men and thought their elder Brother was wasting time and influence by delaying to display His authority. It looked to them that the golden opportunity of the new kingdom would wither in the field. They did not understand the doing of things in God's order. Those who act from self, lay plans, and make complex arrangements to suit their own convenience or their personal interest, can launch their enterprises at any time, without waiting for God. That is what Jesus meant by saying "your time is always ready."

That which looks to be the very highest wisdom in man-made plans is utter foolishness to God, and is worse than the toy houses which children make in the sand. In addition to being childish, they are also foolish, and are pervaded with self-will, ambition, pride and disobedience. Jesus said practically to His brethren, "You can go when you please, and come when you please, and make your own arrangements because you fancy that you are free men. You have no one to consult but your personal interest or the drift of popular feeling; but I am not so. I am in the world on a special mission, every step of which was sketched in infinite wisdom before the stars swung in their orbits. I am

living for others. It is my highest delight to time all my words and actions to the unseen purpose of the eternal Father.”

2. We learn from this account that all true history which will abide the test of ultimate judgment must first be wrought in secret before it is manifested in open events. The brothers of Jesus complained that He did and said so many excellent things in secret. “For there is no man that doeth anything in secret, and He Himself seeketh to be known openly.” God’s method is to work from the inner to the outer, from the unseen to the visible, from the spiritual to the eternal and literal, from the silent to the outspoken, from the hidden kingdom in the heart to the ultimate, manifest kingdom in all the earth.

Jesus infallibly knew that when words were spoken and actions performed in accordance with the blessed attributes of God, though such actions were done on the lonely seashore, or such words were whispered in the soundless ravines of Galilee, they would in due time, under the fertilizing and cultivating power of the Holy Ghost, come forth in the gigantic forms of mature history, and be uttered in peals louder than seven thunders, when the proper hour had arrived. All great characters are first made in secret. Empires sprout and grow in the noiseless midnight-thinking of imperial minds. Secret prayer manufactures more crowns and scepters than senates or the ballot box.

Let us be sure that we are utterly yielded to God, working for His dear Son, with a single eye to please Him, and under the guidance of His Spirit. Let us see to it that we make our humble toil dovetail into the joints of His special providence, and then we need not draw an anxious breath as to whether we are known or unknown, seen or unseen, praised or dispraised, loved or hated, counted a success or counted a failure; we can walk on eternal granite and sleep softly on the downy pillow of God's promise.

After we are saved and sanctified we need to learn the depth of this truth in a life of prayer, and devout study of God's character, and the delicate personal government He exercises over us. There is nothing, apart from the vision of God Himself, more beautiful than the study of God's administration in each of our lives. And to watch His dealings with us and work in harmony with His will, as to time and place, is one of the special fruits of the Holy Spirit.

Our intense desire should be not merely to do something for God, but to do it in His spirit, with His motives, and in His time; in other words, it is God in the service that we are after, more than the outward shell of the service. The best part of all that we say or do for the Lord is that which others do not see or hear; it is the secret flavor of pure love which rises like fragrant incense to Him Whom we love and serve. The life of our blessed Jesus, in flesh and blood, is the ornament of all

human history, and yet everything that men have seen in that life was as nothing compared to what our Heavenly Father saw in it.

When we stand on the seashore and watch the far shining waters, and the swell of the waves in graceful measure, and listen to the multiplied voices of its breaking billows on the sand, all we can see and hear is only a tiny fraction of the unmeasured power and character of the sea hidden away beyond mortal vision. It is thus when we come up to the life of Jesus and kneel down on the white shore of that unmeasured ocean of life and love. Though we gaze up and down the shining history from Bethlehem to Calvary, and hold our breath to catch every whispered accent from His precious lips, all we see and hear is infinitely surpassed by that fathomless depth of life which moved on in secret, silent, adorable currents, known only to the three Persons in the Godhead. When we are truly sunk into that life, we gather the habits of the mind of Jesus, and are never anxious about “showing ourselves to the world.” To every impetuous voice we will calmly say, “my hour has not yet come.”

3. We learn from this incident that the hour did come, and Jesus did go to Jerusalem, but not as His brethren had planned. He did show Himself on the cross to all the world, but not as His friends had expected. God’s full time always comes for everything He wants done. “He also went up unto

the feast, not openly, but as it were, in secret. Then the Jews sought Him at the feast.” Every seed that God plants will ripen its fruit at the appointed hour.

The “naked thoughts” that young Milton said “roved about in his head,” at last found appropriate words in which to deck themselves, and have walked over the world without ever wearing their garments out.

The kingdom will come. The secret empire which the Holy Ghost has been building in millions of true believers will inevitably ripen into open, world-wide manifestations. That beautiful dominion which the apostles hoped Christ would set up will come to pass a thousand times more gloriously than they ever dreamed of. These secret heart-longings to see the meek and lowly Jesus return and manage this world are engendered by His own Spirit, and though “the hour is not yet,” still the full time will come. This is the hour for us to work in secret, like Jesus in Galilee, and if we fill our appointed service for this present hour, we shall be qualified to fill the right niche in that other hour, when the sons of God are manifested. Moving in God’s time is the only thing that secures everlasting fruit, which will not pass away. It is the easiest way to work, and the most satisfactory.

To move in God’s time keeps us in harmony with all His providences, and with all other souls who are really walking in the Holy Ghost. It secures us against sudden surprise, and keeps us prepared

for emergencies, and saves us from squandering our resources, and wasting our efforts.

To time ourselves with God's will is to enter, up to our measure, the true life of our Master.

Chapter 14 — How God Deals with Us

Nothing can be more useful or fruitful than the study of God. Let us begin seriously to watch the dealings of God with ourselves; let us pry into the different folds in the mantle of His personal providence over us, and trace out the delicate fitness of His rewards and punishment. Let us then watch the operations of His Spirit in our souls, the inward convictions, the timely and prophetic impressions He has sent us, the significant dreams which have come directly from Him or through the ministry of our guardian angels. When these two worlds of His outward and inward dealings are thoughtfully and prayerfully surveyed, we find a great variety of Divine knowledge breaking out like Spring flowers in valleys and hid away in mountain gorges. If we watched God's dealings with us more carefully we would come to confide in Him more restfully, and unlimitedly. Among the many things which mark the dealings of God with us we may mention the following.

1. He seems to plead more than to command. While He is the only one absolute God with boundless authority, yet the huge weight of His infinite majesty does not take on the form of tyranny, or issue commandments from His simple sovereignty, but all His commandments flow out

from His paternity. They are the commands of love which is only another way of saying, they are so given that any thinking person can see they are for our advantage, so that in reality His very commandments are persuasions for our highest good.

When a soul is in perfect harmony with God, all His commandments are like a glorious whirlpool, sucking the soul down with eager desire to be lost in the depths of Divine union. Just as every average-sized person carries a dozen tons of atmospheric pressure upon him without feeling in the least oppressed, so God's administration, and all His commandments, rest gently on everything and everybody, except those souls who are in league with sin and Satan.

2. He is both swift and slow in His timing of things. As we look back at God's dealings, there have been times when He seemed to be so slow in bringing things to pass it looked as if He had forgotten, or heartlessly ignored, or on purpose procrastinated. It appeared as if He would punish or severely try the soul. In some instances where the matter had worn itself out, and we had buried it in a forgotten grave, in some unexpected way God's train, seemingly long overdue, came rolling into the station.

And then we see other instances in which the Lord wrought with all speed, like a hawk darting on its

prey, and the prayer was answered before half uttered, and providences moved thick and fast as if instinct with lightning. Scripture and history, as well as our private lives, are full of this double phase of the slow and swift in God's dealings.

Notice in the lives of Joseph, Moses, Mordecai, and any number of prophets and kings, and in the crissal periods of nations, how the eternal One takes ample years in laying foundations. He is preparing instruments, weaving great networks of circumstances, tunneling through great hidden rocks of difficulty, delicately balancing persons and places. Then suddenly He touches the powder that springs a great mine. Revolutions are wrought; individual and seemingly incorrigible sinners are turned into saints; the humble are lifted; the proud are debased; the rich are penniless; the poor are wealthy; empires change hands; and one brief hour throbs with gigantic events, the culmination of slowly aggregated years or centuries. This principle can be noticed on a small scale in the smallest affairs of life.

3. He does not explain the reasons for His conduct in numberless instances but leaves us to a life of faith. His Word says, "He giveth no accounts of His ways." It seems to be a rule in creation that explanations are given to equals and to superiors, but seldom to inferiors.

There is a place in Divine fellowship where He condescends to intimate to His servants, as in the case of Abraham about the destruction of Sodom, what He is about to do, and His reasons for it. But the infinite God is under no obligations to reveal His motives to His creatures. It seems to be a necessity for us to live in the present age a life of faith in every direction, and if God should make known all the special reasons of His conduct, it would hinder that life of faith, which is the true foundation for the blessed unfoldings of clear knowledge in the coming age. Remember, the splendor and dimensions of open manifestation in the coming age are in beautiful proportion to the testings of faith in the present life.

Faith now, is the hidden seed which will flower forth in visible beauty and fruitage when Jesus comes. Hence our Heavenly Father allows myriads of sore trials, fiery temptations, strange and unexpected troubles to come to us in this life without a word of explanation. Even if we undertake to scrutinize the “whys and wherefores” of His administration, we are only plunged into still deeper mysteries. Finally, head-sore and heart-sick, and tantalized by our own questions, we crawl, like wounded soldiers on a battlefield, underneath the cool shade of God’s infinite love. Or we lie down to rest at His feet, with our questions unanswered, but our faith reposing on His eternal goodness and leaving everything there.

The Psalmist says, “I hate vain thoughts,” but the word “vain” is not in the original, and doubtless it

should be rendered, "I hate reasonings," for so often it hinders our faith. And then, when we have died to our own reasonings, and passed through the unexplained dispensations, the Holy Spirit will frequently turn on a heavenly light, and we will plainly see more than the answer to our inquiries.

4. He gives vision and then delays performance. One of God's dealings is to call people to some special work, and fill their minds with bright visions of it. He fires their hearts with a longing zeal to do the work, and then holds them back, and allows the intervention of great difficulties, and months or years of patient waiting to discipline them in various ways, before permitting them to do the work.

5. He blends punishments and rewards in the same things. How many times the Lord seems to chastise us with one hand until the heart cries out to Him; with the other hand He seems at the same time to fairly shower great blessings upon us! It is as if He is mightily strengthening us on the one side for the affliction He is giving on the other. It is also as if He is proving by His Fatherly caresses that it is Himself Who applies the rod, and that it is not the devil who has charge of our lives.

6. He, while hiding Himself, gives clues as if to entice us to seek for Him. The prophet saith, "Verily Thou art a God that hidest Thyself."

Artists can draw "puzzle pictures," with faces of persons so concealed as not to be readily seen. By a little more searching the hidden picture darts upon the eye. So God prints our lives full of "puzzle pictures," and then suggests that we find His hand, or foot, or face, and a little study yields great returns.

Jesus standing on the shore in the dim, misty morning, and asking the disciples if they had caught any fish, was one of these "puzzle pictures." Peter's quick mind soon detected the hidden One, saying, "It is the Lord." Gold mines are so placed as to give a hint on the surface to entice men to dig deep for the rich veins beneath, and God's works are made to resemble Himself.

7. It is a Divine trait to speak to us after we have had our say. When we have exhausted our knowledge, and reached the point of stillness, and the attitude of listening, He speaks. Paul on the prison stairs beckoned to the mob with his hand till there was a great silence, and then spake in their mother Hebrew tongue. Our whole nature is often in a mob, and God gives us no response except to beckon mutely till all our faculties are hushed into attention, and then He speaks to us in great simplicity in the native language of our

hearts. Moses was forty years in Horeb praying, and doubtless debating over his failure to emancipate his own people. He had reached the place of interior stillness before God, when he heard a voice calling him from the burning bush.

Instead of clamoring for God to speak to us, it is good to pray Him to still all our souls until we can hear Him speak. Another thing perhaps you have noticed is the quiet and unostentatious way God brings things to pass. This is in order that what at one time seemed impossible of accomplishment is brought about by gentle, circuitous methods as almost to be unnoticed. The universal Ruler walks around in shoes of velvet, and reaches a destination so quietly as to hardly arouse attention. Just look back for instance over five or ten years, and see what God has been doing both in you and around you, and far off in the lives of others. See how many things God has brought about, which if they had taken place within the space of one month or a year, it would have shocked the understanding with strangeness or incomprehensibility.

8. It is a fixed principle that God deals with individuals, and collective bodies of men, and nations and races, by the same pattern. The entire history of the Jews is condensed in the single life of many a man. God told the prophet that He would do certain things "whether it was with a nation or a man only." Each of our lives would

form a Bible if God should write it out from His standpoint. The greatest thing in our existence is to have dealings with the infinite, eternal, living God; the one God, with three Persons, as revealed in Scripture, illustrated in creation, exemplified in providence, and experienced in a life of true prayer. As the greatest thing with a bird is its contact with the air, and the greatest thing with the fish is its contact with the sea, so the greatest thing with a creature man is his contact with his God. And to watch the dealings of God is his highest occupation, to trust God is his highest security, and to love God with a pure, constant love is his sweetest joy.

Chapter 15 — The Blood of Sprinkling

The shed blood from the spotless body of the Lord Jesus is the touchstone by which to test every man's faith, and the orthodoxy of every religious teaching. Blood is life, and the life of Christ goes nowhere except through the touch of His blood. A crimson salvation is the only salvation. To reject Christ's blood for salvation is to reject His body, and to reject His body is to reject His spotless human soul, and His Divine personality that lived in His body. To reject His Person is to reject the eternal Father Who sent Him. Hence salvation or damnation turns on the pivot of our attitude toward the blood of Jesus.

There is a wonderful statement in Heb. 12, where the apostle speaks of "the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel," and in the next verse warns us "not to refuse this blood, and its voice from Christ." He is showing the startling contrast between Mount Sinai where the law was given, and the upper room on Mount Zion where the Holy Spirit was given—the two kinds of fire; the two kinds of shaking; the two kinds of words; the two kinds of blood; and the two kinds of mediator.

Let us single out the contrast between the two kinds of blood, that of Abel, and that of Jesus. The name of Abel is mentioned in connection with

Sinai because his blood cries for the execution of law and justice.

1. The blood of mediation. Abel shed his blood as a martyr—as a witness for the truth of being saved through the atonement; but his blood did not make atonement, and was not a sacrifice for the saving of others. He died as a witness to the future sacrifice of Jesus. The word “martyr” is Greek and means “a witness.” But Jesus shed His blood as a voluntary substitute for the guilty, as an oblation and atonement, the innocent for the guilty, for the sins of the world.

The word “mediator” means one who goes between two contending parties to reconcile, and if need be receive the blows from either side, even unto death. In this sense Scripture speaks of Moses as a mediator at Mount Sinai, when he stood between the anger of God, and the rebellion of Israel, and prayed for them, even though it might cost the blotting of his name from God’s book. The blessed Jesus went infinitely beyond this and in His human body stepped in between the holy wrath of God against sin on the one side, and the awful rebellion and impurity of the world on the other side. In His soul, He endured God’s wrath against sin, and in His body He endured the malice and murder of wicked men against a Holy God. In His soul He was smitten by the law of justice, and in His body He was smitten by the nails of the hatred of sinners. Thus on the God-side He poured out

His soul unto death, and on the man-side He poured out His precious blood unto death.

Deep and solemn wonders break out around us everywhere when we look into Christ's blood shed for us. Just to mention a few! The Person of God's eternal Son assumed, through a human mother, human flesh and blood for the purpose of rending that flesh, and spilling that blood to save lost sinners. Again, by the Divinity taking human blood, He united Himself by a living cordage to all creation that He might live in the creature, and make an atonement for the creature, and sanctify the creature and then show the creature how to live. Again, the worth of any blood is measured by the character and dignity of the creature who owns it. This law is recognized by all men, from the gradation of worth in a worm up to a monarch. Hence when a Divine Person assumes to Himself blood and flesh, He partakes at once of the infinite purity, majesty and sacred worth belonging to the Godhead. Hence the blood of Jesus ranks beyond the blood of a wicked sinner just as far as the Holy God outranks the sinner.

2. "The blood of sprinkling." This is the second contrast between the blood of Abel and that of Jesus. This opens up to us still greater wonders in Christ's atonement. In order to understand why it is called "the blood of sprinkling," we must look back to the Old Testament description of the Day of Atonement, which was an exact pattern of

things in the Heavens, and which Christ fulfilled in every little particular. The High Priest shed the blood of the victim at the altar outside of the veil and, catching the warm blood, took it in a basin into the Holy of Holies. With his hand he sprinkled it, before it coagulated or got cold, on the golden lid of the mercy seat, under the wings of the Cherubim. He then prayed to the God of Israel, Who shone forth in the Shekinah light, and then returned back through the second veil to bless the people. From the time that he offered the sacrifice until the time he put the blood on the mercy seat, no person was allowed to touch him.

Now see how all this was perfectly carried out by our Lord. He was the Priest, the Altar, and the sacrificial Victim, all in Himself. He shed His blood outside the gate, and His body lay dead for three days. Then He arose, and took His own blood which He had shed, and went into the third Heavens—the Holy of Holies—in the blazing presence of the eternal Father, and sprinkled His own shed blood on the mercy seat before the Father, on the very day of His resurrection. Then He returned and met His disciples that same evening, and told them to handle His body, and prove that He was alive.

But early in the morning, when Mary met Him near the tomb, she wanted to clasp His feet with her hands, and He said, “Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father, but go to my brethren, and tell them, I ascend unto my Father, and to your Father” (John 20:17). This was to

fulfill the law that no man should touch the high priest in his living person, until the sacrificial blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat.

Have you ever thought of what became of the blood that Jesus shed out of His body? The crown of thorns drew the blood from His head, and when they pulled out some of His beard, for Scripture says, “they plucked the hair from His cheek,” it likely drew blood from His face. When He was scourged with knotted cords, it drew the blood from His back, thus making three blood sheddings before He went to Calvary; and then the piercing of the two hands, two feet and side, made five more blood sheddings on the cross.

But what became of all that blood? The Romish church teaches that after He rose He assumed all of that blood back into His body, and that every time the Romish priest consecrates the mass, that blood is shed afresh in the mass. This is blasphemous contradiction to Scripture, which teaches that “He shed His blood once for all,” with “no more sacrifice for sins.” Thousands of Christians have never even thought of what became of it. We are told in Hebrews 9 how Christ entered into the Heavenly places, and the Holy of Holies by His own blood, as our High Priest. Hence Christ’s blood is still living as if freshly shed on the Heavenly altar for our salvation and sanctification.

The body of Christ was immortal, and would never have died, for death comes by sin. Christ having no taint of sin, would have lived forever, without

sickness, or old age, or death, had He not chosen to die. Scripture says, “death had no dominion over Him,” and Jesus affirms “that no man could take His life,” but “He laid it down of His own will.” And even when He was dead, His body did not in the least begin to mortify as other bodies do, for Scripture says, “His body saw no corruption.” Hence corruption, or putrefaction, could not touch one atom of His living organism, His flesh or blood. “In Him was life.” He was the fountain of life, and His blood has never decayed, but is sprinkled today, and remains on the mercy seat before the Father, as fresh as the morning He sprinkled it there, when He told Mary she must not touch Him till He had performed that High Priestly act. It was shed on the cross, but was sprinkled three days after on the mercy seat where it is yet.

How can that blood save us? In a twofold way. It satisfied all the claims of Divine justice, and secures our justification. And then the vitality, the living force in that precious blood, is imparted to our hearts, washing away the sinful tempers and depravity of the soul. The red drops of blood were physical, but in those drops was a hidden, powerful vitality, just as there is life in a grain of corn. That life in Christ’s blood, which was emphatically the life of His body, is imparted to us by the Holy Ghost. This is what Christ means that “except we eat His flesh, and drink His blood, we have no life abiding in us.” Through faith we eat the life-force of His immortal body, and drink the life-force of His living blood. This is why John says he saw Christ in Heaven “as a Lamb newly slain.”

There is no decay with God, but eternal freshness, and youth, and sweetness, and most intense vitality.

3. “The voice of the blood.” This is the third contrast between the blood of Abel and that of Jesus. How little people imagine the abyss of meaning in that old axiom that “blood will tell.” It is true, blood can speak, and has a voice, and articulation in the ear of God. There are millions of sounds below the hearing of our ears, which God and angels can hear. God can hear the very thoughts we think. Every time we think a thought, a little molecule of the brain is consumed, and has to be repaired while we sleep. The action of the mind on the brain, consuming the brain tissue, produces an infinitesimal explosion similar to that of striking a match in order to liberate the phosphorus and make a flame. These minute-thought explosions in the brain are heard as distinctly by the Almighty God as we hear a peal of thunder. God heard the blow of Cain’s club on the head of Abel. He heard the sound of the rushing blood from his wounds and the moans and prayers of the dying man. He heard the sound of the drops of blood on the ground and said, “the voice of Abel’s blood cried to me from the ground.” That cry was for justice, for perfect equity and righteousness—a cry that was perfectly lawful. But when Jesus shed His blood, it uttered a voice far beyond the blood of Abel.

The blood of Jesus has a voice. The eternal Father heard every drop of blood that gushed from the body of His dear Son, heard the sound as they fell on the earth. He heard the thoughts in the brain of Jesus as He hung on the tree; and more, He heard the beating of the heart that supplied the blood; and more, He heard the boundless love in that heart and brain, the fathomless compassion, the infinite merit that was in the blood by virtue of it belonging to His Divine Son.

Every drop of that precious blood cried with infinite pathos for mercy and compassion; "Father forgive them," "Father sanctify them." This was the voice beyond martyrdom; it was atonement; it was the sacrifice of love, and hence it speaks better things than the blood of Abel. We must not only be justified through that blood, but have our nature washed in it, and then feed on it, till our whole soul and life has its character, and we are turned into the same pure love that poured that blood out with such lavish prodigality. "These are they who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

Chapter 16 — How God Chastens Us

When we are divinely illuminated, every study about God grows on us with increasing delight. The more we love Him the more profoundly fascinating every line of thought becomes that opens up to us either His adorable nature or His method of dealing with His creatures. There is an awful, solemn beauty in the operations of His justice as truly as in the magnificence of His mercy. Have we ever taken the time to seriously think over the way God chastens us? Have we gone back over our past lives and noticed the different seasons and ways that the Lord has scourged us? Have we been humble enough to confess our sins and to trace the connection between our faults and God's penalties? Have we had the grace to lovingly thank Him for it all? Then have we had the wisdom to decipher from the dark cloud His fatherly love? In putting together some facts as to how God chastens us we may note the following:

1. God deals differently in the matter of punishment with His own people than He does with the impenitent sinners. This is a clear doctrine in Scripture. A great number of passages could be cited, such as those in Deut. 32 and Psalm 50, where there is a clear distinction drawn between the correcting chastisement which God sends upon His own children and the unreforming

wrath which is poured upon His enemies. I saw recently in an old book that some Hebrew scholar had compiled, that he affirmed that in every instance in the Old Testament where the word “curse” is used, by man or Satan, the word denoted wrath and hot vituperation. He also declared that, in every instance where God used the word “curse” with reference to punishing His people, it was in the original a different word from the other and signified to impoverish, to degrade, to reduce, and to render one poor and weak. It never conveyed the idea of personal wrath, but that of needful scourging.

2. We are now dealing with those scourgings which the Lord sends upon His own people, not as an eternal penalty for sin, but as a corrective penalty for disobedience. These are a part of the economy of grace which the Holy Ghost expressly tells us “bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness.”

The punishments of hell are not corrective, nor are they a part of grace, but the appropriate and endless rewards of unrepented sins. No one who is sincerely striving to serve God should ever be discouraged because of God’s chastisements. We are told once by King Solomon and again by the apostle, “that we should not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when we are rebuked of Him.” “For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.” When the Lord is correcting us, it

proves that He does not ignore us, that His eye is upon us. Though His hand may seem heavy, yet the very fact that such an infinite and eternal God condescends to lay His hand upon us at all should cause us to run into His arms.

The most terrible thing that could happen to us would be to have God ignore us and leave us to ourselves. This is the unspeakable woe that seems to have happened to thousands about us who roll on in prosperous sin. God does not chasten them! He does not deal with them on the penitentiary principle—that is, punishment with a view to penitence. Their punishment will be on an entirely different principle and unspeakably horrible. But the chastisements to God's disobedient children are all fashioned in grace. So, however dark the night or however heavy the blow, it reveals to us the fact that we have a place in the attentions of God—that poor and mean as we are, we occupy a place in His infinite regards. This radiant fact that God's eye is upon us, should be the fountain of a thousand encouragements.

3. The Lord's chastisements are never precipitate or rash or premature. Mercy is His delightful work, but He Himself speaks of punishment as His strange work. It is as if it were an art He had not thoroughly learned and had a disrelish for, and one that His loving heart would find excuses for postponing as long as He could. His ever blessed justice gets the consent of infinite love to sorely

whip us only when infinite wisdom sees that it would be unkind to put it off any longer.

What a vast portrait gallery the Old Testament is of the long-drawn patience of God in affecting His people! Like a loving mother, He makes many a threat, and rebukes and pleads with every device of persuasion, before letting His penalties overtake the disobedient over whom He seems to shed tears at every blow. True, there are some instances where punishment followed suddenly upon sin, like a peal of thunder after a vivid flash of lightning. In nearly all such cases the sin was committed against extraordinary light. The sinning ones did not have in them the principle of repentance and had fixed their destiny in evil, as in the cases of Achan, Abiram, Judas, Ananias and others. It is safe theology to believe that God postpones the infliction of punishment where there is sorrow for sin or a sincere desire to do better. And yet we should never wish the chastisements of God delayed, for the sooner we are corrected for our faults, the better for us.

4. God arranges a perfect fitness of relationship between the chastisement and the reason for which it is given. The whole universe, whether physical, mental or spiritual, is steeped in this rule of the corresponding fitness between cause and effect, between goodness and rewards, and between evil and its punishments. In millions of cases, God's people have not the sufficient

intelligence to see the connection between all their chastisements and the reason in themselves for such chastisements, but the reason is there, nonetheless. And if we would get very close to God in the light of prayer, and in perfect humility search ourselves as to our actions and motives, we could probably, even in this life, discover most of the relationships between something in ourselves and our various chastenings. Every kind of sin has a perfectly appropriate kind of punishment. Every wrong motive, every form of self-will, every variety of folly, every rash and unbridled word has a close-fitting form and measure of chastisement.

We find in the Book of Kings that national pride in great numbers was followed by pestilence, which cut down the bloated statistics, which was appropriate to the sin. We see in Daniel that imperial vanity was scourged with a spell of seven years' insanity, which was the appropriate penalty for the fault. How few Christians suspicion that ill-health may come from unkind or vain and foolish conversation. Yet over and over in Scripture, God has united the health of the body with the behavior of the tongue, as in the passage, "He that would love life and length of days, let him refrain his tongue from evil."

Oftentimes where no overt outward sin is committed, there are interior mental and moral states, in motives and intentions, or omission of duty. There may be procrastination, or spiritual indolence, or wrongly judging others, or some un-Christlike disposition. These may need a particular

form of scourging. There could be some unscriptural notion that we cling to, which needs beating out of us. We may rest assured that God makes no mistakes, and that His dealings with us extend down into the most infinitesimal details of our being and life.

If we will quietly look over our past lives, and recollect the most insignificant chastisements we have undergone, can we not trace out in our conduct, or in our words, or in our inward disposition, a perfect fitness of relation between our faults and our chastenings?

Notwithstanding their terribleness and painfulness, there is a sublime, attractive wisdom in the way God corrects His creatures, like the awful beauty of a magnificent city on fire at night. You may ask, does not God sometimes chasten His children when there is no special sin in them? Certainly, but even in such cases there is a latent something in them, some undeveloped tendency, some liability to sin, some form of ignorance which nothing but certain kinds of chastisements will correct. Paul's chastening thorn was to offset his liability to spiritual pride.

5. All chastisements, properly speaking, flow out from the fatherhood of God. Remember God sustains many relations to His creatures as Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, Legislator, Judge, Provider and other relationships; but all infliction

of pain for correction, for restoration or for the highest development in holiness, originates in the office of the fatherhood, and issues from the infinitely loving heart and drops from the most gentle hand of the Person of the eternal Father.

It will help us if we get our spiritual thinking on these lines in harmony with the Scripture. Jesus tells us emphatically that it is not the office of the Father to inflict the punishments of hell, for all that department of His administration is put in the hands of the Son of Man. But in dealing with His children on corrective principles, every single chastisement flows out from the uncreated love and tenderness of the Person of the Father. Hence we read that as a father He pitieth His children. The Apostle to the Hebrews exhorts believers that in the matter of chastening, God speaks to them as unto children, saying, "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord." And again he says, "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons." And again he says, "Our earthly fathers have corrected us, and shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits and live."

Hence in order to see our scourgings in the right light, let us remember they do not proceed from the office of the Redeemer, nor from the office of the Comforter, but pre-eminently from the office of the Divine Paternity; and while the whole Godhead act in unity, yet the office of infinite, loving Paternity is the highest and most tender, the earliest and the most ultimate office of our ever

blessed God. In the very nature of things, God loves those who have the greatest capacities for receiving Him, and He chastens those most whom He loves most.

6. The effect of chastisement, when it rightly exercises the soul, is expressly stated by the Holy Spirit to be that of “yielding the peaceable fruit of righteousness.” We have perhaps noticed these effects in the lives of others, and happy for us if we have been so wrought upon as to find these effects in ourselves. Do we not remember instances where God’s children, after having bowed their heads and passed under the rod, came forth into a calmness and peacefulness of spirit, where the wildness or excessiveness of the self-life had been burned away? Their taciturn and subdued natures were like sequestered lakes in whose pellucid depths God and the guarding angels could read the reflection of heavenly scenery. All affliction is blessed that brings us out into deep, sweet, unquestioning peacefulness of spirit.

Our loving Father often follows His work of chastening with many deep and marvelous gifts, both to the heart and the mind—gifts of love, and gifts of vast mental vision and spiritual discrimination. A mother, after punishing her child, will seem to love it with fresh measures of affection and tax her maternal genius to invent gifts and expressions of her love. In like manner our Heavenly Father, after scourging us for our

faults, seems to love us with a new and more tender kind of love, and to tax His wisdom for new gifts, both of His providence and His grace, as if to reward repentance and humility.

One of the peaceful fruits that should follow the exercise of chastening is that of arousing the soul to a closer walk with God. There are cases where chastisement has opened up a new career of spiritual devotion and burning zeal. As limited express trains, when overdue, often run above schedule speed to make up for lost time and shoot past all other trains, so it were well if God's corrective dealings should accelerate all the energies of our love far beyond our ordinary notions of spiritual living.

Chapter 17 — How God Blesses Us

It is characteristic of all God's operations in nature, providence and grace, that the more closely we look into them, the more they grow upon us in wonder, beauty and love. God's designs for every human soul are inexpressibly more glorious and loving than we can possibly imagine. One thing is certain, that His purpose toward every single soul is the result of infinite, eternal love. When we become personally acquainted with God through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, it is impossible for us to conceive that He should do anything out of hatred, or personal resentment, or in a rash or severe spirit. And so all His dealings are with absolute impartiality and with infinite forethought and tenderness.

It gives us a magnificent vision of the God of the Bible when we think that God is at this moment placing His complete attention upon every human being upon earth; that He has loved each one of all these millions, from all eternity; that He has formed in His unsearchable mind for each a definite design of mercy and grace and unspeakable future glory. He is weaving golden threads of individual, providential care around all these millions; He does not wish the death of any of them; but He longs to draw them all into a state of glory that they might each share the ineffable purity, sweetness and joy of Himself.

In every act that God does toward us, His eye not only takes in all the details of the present, but sweeps far onward upon all the results for thousands and millions of years.

When a mother is religiously teaching and correcting her child, she has her eye on the coming years when her little boy will be a man, moving amidst scenes of temptation or grave responsibility, and when she perhaps will be looking down upon him from Heaven. The little child, a mere bundle of restless playfulness, bent only on present gratification, and chafing under restraint, can have no conception of those great, loving, far-off designs, that fill his mother's heart. In like manner we are all restless infants in the hands of God, and it is only when grace has wrought miracles of renewing, cleansing, and illuminating power within us that we begin to see, in dim outline, our Father's enormous designs of blessings for us.

The Lord blesses us by not permitting us to be the architect of His blessings. Were we allowed to measure off the kind of blessings we should have, we would invariably have them of too low an order and we would have them come prematurely. The very blessings would surfeit and ruin us, and render us utterly incapable of the deepest and sweetest joys for which we were created.

We all live to see over and over again, that if many of even our religious wishes had been granted, it would have practically ruined us. It is a great

blessing for our Heavenly Father to discipline us, to raise our prayers and wishes up to the level of His Word. It is by a thousand denials of our impetuous and short-sighted prayers that our choices and desires climb the rugged mountain, till at last we get to an altitude where the most passionate longings of the heart and the sweetest choices of the will are exactly what our Father wants to do for us. Hence if He had lowered His desires, He would not only have contradicted His own wisdom but spoiled us for our highest good.

Another way in which God blesses us is by preparing us for the reception of special favors. He takes us under special personal discipline, and by using opposite agencies, and leading us through what seem to be perfectly contradictory experiences—outward providences, and inward dealings—He suddenly brings us to a sharp turn in the road, where the whole landscape of His strange operations lies stretched away in beauty and order at our feet, and a whole cluster of answered prayers seems to meet in a focus.

We then see that God had been preparing us to appreciate His gifts and mercies, and that the long, lonely way was essential to form in us a state of heart to appreciate thoroughly what God was doing for us. And after all, the blessings of God are really in ratio to our appreciation of them.

The more keenly and constantly we appreciate God's mercies, the greater they are to us, and hence one of the principal ways for God to bless us

is to give us the capacity to perceive them, and bring us around into an attitude of the most intense appreciation of His mercies. The sunshine that falls on a rock is the same as that which falls on my eye, but the rock knows nothing of it, but to my eye it is whole worlds of joy and comfort. The same is true of that soft, sweet light of eternal love that falls on stony hearts around us, unperceived and unreciprocated, and its glory and value to us is in proportion to the largeness and fineness of our vision. If God has led us through a painful operation of cutting the cataract from our eyes in order that we may get a glimpse of His beauty, He has made that very suffering an incalculable blessing.

To make us appreciate the sweetness of His personal companionship, He crucifies the society element in us, shuts us away from other friends and companions, and only by this crucifixion the depth of personal communion with Him is learned.

To make us prize His providing care in temporal blessings, He reduces us to great poverty in spite of our skillful financiering, and seems to tie our hands and feet with cords of penury to teach us a new type of faith and draw us to the primeval basis of faith of living, like the birds, from hand to mouth, only it is from His hand to our mouth. Those who are so circumstanced as to be compelled to live by faith for temporal supplies soon come to discover a Divine sweetness and beautiful appropriateness in little gifts and mercies

which even the holiest of wealthy saints have no opportunity to experience.

In matters of grace the Holy Spirit often leads us into a state of intense longing for some feature of the Christ-life. He could in a moment fill us to overflowing, but instead of that He keeps us pining and praying with many tears for a long time, for He is thereby deepening the channel of capacity in our spirit. He is sharpening our vision, and whetting our appreciation to a razor edge, and when at last the Heavenly fountains break upon us, our blessing is ten times larger than it otherwise would have been.

Have we not all of us, who read the account of the Syrophenician woman, often thanked our blessed Jesus for not answering her prayer at once? If He had, we should never have known the depths of her faith, or the utter humility and perseverance of her prayer. By His delay and seeming severity, He drew forth the capacity of the spirit and made her a preacher to praying ones all through the centuries. It is a great blessing to be enlarged in our capacity of appreciating blessings. God blesses us beyond our asking and thinking.

If we notice carefully the answers to our prayers we can always detect some item, or some feature of blessing, that we had not the forethought to mention in our prayers. God's fatherly and motherly thought anticipates needs and graces and comforts which escape our attention. They are so numerous and complex and minute that we

cannot comprehend them. As parents taking their little children on a long journey are ever and anon bringing forth from some basket or bundle some article of food or clothing or some toy which the children would never have thought to prepare, our Father is ever bringing forth from His loving forethought, multiplied mercies, which He planned for us. In the answer to every one of my prayers there is in some way connected with it the “exceeding abundant” which is spoken of by the Apostle.

Again, He not only blesses us beyond our thinking, but in many ways beyond His own promises. The promises are couched in human language, which represent human thoughts, but God puts a meaning into His promises beyond what the cold words express to us; and so He delights to go beyond His own promise, both in the operations of grace in this life and in the dazzling rewards of glory in the life to come.

Punishment is God’s strange work. He postpones it as long as He can and then makes it as light as He can, but mercy is His fond and eternal predilection. He loves to bless those who love Him; and He loves to choose for them the blessings which are the best in His sight. The Bible does not tell us that God punishes sinners up to the full merits of their sins, but it does teach us that He so delights in rewarding the righteousness of His saints that He gives “good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over.” He seems so bent on blessing His children that He promises an

eternal reward for the trifling act of giving a cup of cold water in His Name. Jesus Himself represents that in the last day the saints will be astonished at the largeness of their rewards.

Finally, all of God's blessings are arranged with infinite skill to conduce to our salvation and then to making us just as advanced in grace as possible. Just as He had made the world for man, but made man for Himself, so every blessing that flows from His hand is intended to lead us from the natural to the supernatural, from the fleshly to the spiritual, and from mere creature happiness to the spotless joys of God Himself.

God's whole aim has been to subdue us as fast as possible without crushing us, to illuminate us as fast as possible without blinding us with excessive light. How many times He has caught us on His wings, and seemingly let us drop to teach us to fly, but caught us before we sunk in the sea! Every step has been to bring us to Himself. He makes each one of our lives to seem the center of a vast system, and makes us see a significance in His dealings with us which no one else can see, so that reading our lives in the light of the Holy Ghost is like the biography of some of the patriarchs. Our individual history is so pervaded with the interferences of our Heavenly Father that it seems like adding another page to the Old Testament.

What a wonderful God is ours! He never for one moment lets up His design for us, but in a thousand ways works along both recognized and

unrecognized lines, to teach us the nothingness of ourselves and His all-sufficiency. The blessing of all blessings is quietly and sweetly to leave ourselves and go forth into Christ, to live His life, to think His thoughts, to work His works, to love His loves, to enjoy His joys, and to realize that He Himself is our exceeding and great reward.

Chapter 18 — Our Joy in God

A true Christian always finds his greatest joy in God, even before he enters into the fullness of sanctification. God is to the inner spirit a greater joy than he is seldom aware of. Even though he finds a measure of irksomeness in religious duties, and many conflicts in the foul propensities of his nature, yet in spite of all this, there is an interior happiness in his very desires after God, and in the bright hope that he will some day be like God. The very brightness of this hope, that he can be transformed into the image of God, is a secret fountain of inspiration.

But when he enters the state of heart purity and the fullness of the Spirit, his joy in the Lord widens out over all his being, and becomes a dominant force in his life. We have been struck with the strong words of the Psalmist, "I will go to God Who is my exceeding joy." There is a difference between joy and pleasure. Joy is deep; its fountains are hidden in the depths of the spirit; it pervades the interior nature like the law of gravity that silently abides in every atom of the earth.

Pleasure is on the surface. It deals with the senses and is the gratification of our outward nature. Joy is calm, like the placid river, or the quiet, unspeakable wealth of the gorgeous sunset, or the entrancing contentment of looking from a lofty mountain over a magnificent landscape. Its very

nature is to quiet and soothe the inward parts of the soul. On the other hand, pleasure is stormy; it agitates the faculties like the wind ruffling the sea, or as a splendid pageant that thrills the vision, and may be increased till it rises to rapture.

There is both a natural joy and a natural pleasure, and also a spiritual joy and a spiritual pleasure. Natural joy is a shadow of the spiritual, and so natural pleasure is a shadow of the spiritual. Joy is more than pleasure, and much more enjoined upon us in Scripture. In spite of the awfulness of sin, and all the woes and sorrows of this world, God has, in infinite mercy, so arranged creation that ever in a state of nature there shall be more joy than sorrow. It may not look so at times, but on a little examination we will discover that the benevolence of God has poured into the very structure of creation and life, thousands of joys so hidden and ramified as not to appear always on the surface. To prove this, how few persons on earth would be willing to exchange themselves for somebody else, in everything? This proves a secret joy in mere existence which few minds ever look into. How persons reproach themselves for not grieving more over the dead! In spite of themselves the Creator has put more joy in His own creation than there is of sorrow.

In all darkness there is a soft, subtle invasion of light. In the darkest night some starlight will sift through the clouds. In the darkest room some light will leak in, for nothing in all creation is so all-searching and penetrating as light. Light in the

physical world is the exact type of joy in the soul-world, and the Creator seems to force a natural joy into every part of creation—into the animals, the insects, the birds, the vegetable kingdom, the instincts of the mind, the nervous organization, the play of the will, the action of the intellect, the despotism of natural affection—so that even apart from grace, God will not let His creation be bereft of at least a semblance of the joy that is in God.

When we enter the kingdom of grace, we begin to touch those joys which are spiritual, which fill the beings in Heaven, which are pure and ever deepening. Natural joys are only temporal, and will come to an end; gracious joys in God are everlasting. Natural joys have a thousand disappointments in them; spiritual joys always turn out to be better than we expect. Natural joy is only a type and a prophecy; spiritual joy is fulfillment and fruition. There are two forms of joy in God. In order to understand this, let us be willing to tax our minds to a little close thinking, and though it may cost us some mental exercise to grasp the distinctions, it will greatly pay us in the end.

1. There is a joy which we may have in God, known as intrinsic, Divine joy—that is the joy which flows out through Jesus into us by virtue of our relation to God. This joy arises from certain gifts and graces which God bestows upon us. When God, through Jesus, forgives us our sins,

there springs up our first spiritual joy. He removes the load of guilt from the conscience, and gives us a sweet sense of reconciliation, assuring us that He loves us, and that His wrath against our sinful acts is past.

Then, after seasons of heart-searching and inward grief over the hidden evils of the heart, Jesus is revealed to us a complete Cleanser, and we are made conscious that the secret chambers of the heart are purified by His precious blood, and the Holy Spirit floods the soul with a sweet sense of inward purity. Then there springs up a heavenly joy far deeper and stronger than the sense of pardon. It may be more quiet and interior, but is stronger and more satisfactory.

Then as the Holy Spirit reveals to us God's love for us personally—His minute and immutable care over us in every detail of life—and brings us in touch with God's fidelity by showing us in so many ways how He has kept His covenant with us, then our joy in the Lord increases. As life goes on, and we see more clearly God's dominion over us, how He rewards His servants even in this world, how He punishes our disobedience, how He often extends His chastisement into the little details of life with such precision and appropriateness as to make us even admire and love the way He corrects us—all this only draws us more closely to Himself. There is a holy joy in the knowledge of His dominion over us. There is a joy in every grace which the Holy Spirit imparts to us in the

conscious possession of the graces and in the exercise of them.

All these forms of joy might be termed the joys of grace, including the joys of pardon, cleansing, filling, healing, correcting, guiding and preparing us for the heavenly world.

2. But there is a still higher and stronger form of joy in God, when we enter by faith into the joys of God Himself that is when we apprehend the inherent joys of the triune God. There is in God's very nature an infinite, boundless, eternal, inexhaustible, immutable ocean of blessedness of love, glory and satisfaction, forever abiding in His own self, which is over and beyond all the operations of saving grace toward us.

The very end of saving grace is to bring us up into union with God Himself, so that we will enjoy Him even over and above the joys of being saved from our sins. Salvation from all sin, and death, and hell, is a preliminary condition that we may enter into a fruition of the three Persons of the Godhead, and enjoy the attributes, the character, and the very love of God Himself. When our souls are united to God through the precious humanity of Jesus, and our spiritual understanding is illuminated by the Holy Spirit, it is an inexpressible joy to look on God and contemplate His perfections. It is a joy to look at the trinity of God and contemplate from everlasting to

everlasting, “Thou art God.” To get down before the Lord in secret prayer, and lovingly contemplate His perfections, each one of which, as we meditate on it, is like a separate universe of unspeakable glory, is an exercise which constitutes the blessing of angels.

When we stand on the seashore, and let our eyes quietly and restfully wander over the vast shining waters, there is a nameless joy that springs up in the mind, not only a joy in what the sea is to us as a benefactor, but a joy in what it is in itself. We are glad the sea is there, and glad it is what it is; glad of its shape, and size, and color, and motion, and sublimity; glad that it will remain there, and that nobody can destroy it. We positively enjoy the attributes of that vast ocean, without even thinking of the benefactions it may bring to us in the form of fish, or pearls, or commerce, or health in its medicinal breezes.

In like manner, to gaze on God and calmly rest our thoughts upon the eternity of His love—the gentleness of His nature, the brightness of His wisdom, the sweetness of His disposition, and the absoluteness of His authority over us, the infinitesimal minuteness of His guardianship over every atom, the inflexible impartiality of His justice, the exquisite beauty of His spiritual nature, the melting pathos of His parental sympathy—causes our souls to melt with joy in the simple fact that He is God.

There springs up a secret gladness that He is just the God He is, that there can never be any God except Him, that nobody, and no event in eternal ages, will ever cause Him to change from the blessed, loving God He is now. We are glad He has the very attributes and character which He has revealed. Every thought of Him is a joy, and this joy is over and above any thought of self-interest, or personal and private blessings He may confer upon us in the shape of rewards.

Both of these kinds of joy in God are Scripturally and manifestly for us. The joys arising from God's saving grace are peculiar to us as a race saved from sin, but the joys arising from satisfaction in God Himself are participated in by all, angels as well as saints. The one is a joy of grace, and the other a joy of glory. The latter joy is pre-eminently the one that the redeemed will enter upon at the Judgment Day, when Jesus will say to those on the right hand, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Chapter 19 — Increasing Trust in God

We should deal with God personally, intimately and habitually, with a perfect confidence that He is everything which a father or mother could be and infinitely more. There are certain epochs in our spiritual life when we get visions of faith, or great openings of light as to how to trust ourselves into the hands of the Lord. We reproach ourselves for lack of faith, and feel like saying, “What fools we have been, for having any uneasiness about the fulfillment of God’s promises, and for not reposing in Him to the uttermost.”

Beside these sudden little epochs in our experiences, there ought to be a constant increase of trust in God. Our confidence in our Heavenly Father is to grow in intensity and in minuteness in every detail of life, and a wideness extending over an ever-increasing area of creation. It is also to grow in velocity of action so that our trust acts speedily, without taking time to reason. We are to believe first and do our reasoning afterward. There are different ways to increase trust.

1. By putting God to a test. He often challenges us in His Word to prove Him. But in putting the Lord to a test, we must be sure to do it in the spirit of loving obedience. If we merely experiment with the Lord, and have a reserve in our hearts that if the

thing does not turn out just as we plan it, we are going to distrust Him, it shows to His loving eye that we are stubborn and petulant. But if we test His promises in humility and utter resignation, He will astonish us by His responses, confirm all our past faith and sweetly entice us to venture out on Him more and more. We can put God to a test.

(a). In times of trouble. When we are well-nigh overwhelmed with multiplied calamities, by turning our attention to the poor and the sick and doing what we can for their relief, shall we find that in relieving the sorrows of others, the Holy Spirit will lift us up into victorious prayer and deliverance. The Lord challenges us to put Him to a test in this manner: “Blessed is he that considereth the poor, the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble, and deliver him from his enemies, and make his bed in his sickness” (Psa. 41).

(b). In financial stress. Let us give God one-tenth of all we receive, and see if He will not rebuke those things that devour our temporal welfare, and abundantly bless us both physically and spiritually.

If anyone is disposed to distrust in these matters, God challenges him to bring his tithes and prove Him, (Mal. 3:10). I never found a case where people gave their tenth to the Lord, that He did not fulfill this Scripture.

(c). In times of sickness. Let us comply with James 5:14: “Is any sick among you, let him call for the

elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.”

These are a few instances in which we can put God to a test, just as truly in the supernatural world as by any scientific test in the physical world. In numberless ways, in the practical details of life, we can prove God until we grow into a bold, sweet, yet reverential familiarity with Him, which increases our trust into a sort of a living atmosphere and our very lives seem constantly bathed with the presence of God.

When Eliezer was seeking a wife for Isaac, he put certain tests to God which the Lord accepted and complied with. This confirmed and strengthened his trust, Gen. 24. Gideon also by his fleece put God to a test, which confirmed his faith beyond a doubt of his being called to deliver Israel. If we put God to a proof in the spirit of deep humility and loving obedience, in the little practical things of life, it will rapidly increase our trust, and this enlargement of trust will always kindle a fresh degree of love.

2. By enduring trials and temptations. Sore trials sift us, and weigh us, and measure the size of our faith.

Men who are sorely tried are men of boundless faith. Storms at sea not only find out who the good captains are, but also by a stern necessity call into exercise all the latent abilities and skill of the good captains; and in like manner the storms of life prove who the real Christians are and give opportunities for the display of the principle of faith in a way that nothing else could.

Our real trust in God is increased by getting rid of a lot of intellectual or sentimental, ecclesiastical or fleshly chaff, which looks like religion, but is only rubbish. We waste time by building on sand, and when a cyclone destroys the structure, we are compelled to dig down to bedrock. This is how severe trials purify our faith. A mere grain of pure faith, that can endure the furnace heat of any trial, is better than a large amount of something that looks like faith, but which is found in the end to be a depending on the creature.

Christ compared faith to a grain of mustard seed, because though small, it had in it the principle of an irresistible life. The living roots of plants and trees have been known to split rocks in sunder. Of course trials are hard to bear, or else they are not worth calling trials, but in the enduring of them, fictitious kinds of faith are swept away, and pure faith is enlarged and intensified.

3. By watching His providences. This includes His merciful and punishing providences. A clear

discernment of God's judgments, whether on individuals, or on certain lines of conduct, or on communities and nations, is enough to mature a boundless faith in God in any serious, thoughtful mind.

If God is perfectly true in His judgment, and displays a perfect accuracy and fitness in the way He punishes people as to the time and manner and amount of punishment He deals out, it proves His character, His minute personal knowledge, and His veracity. If He does these things in judgment, how much more will He manifest Himself in favor and blessing to those who love and obey Him. He, Himself, has declared that "judgment is His strange work," as if He had no taste for it, and was slow, unpracticed at the business. "Mercy is His delight"—a work of predilection, agreeable to His taste and in which He is fond of manifesting His knowledge, personality, minuteness, promptness and abundance of goodness.

All persons of great faith in God have invariably been constant readers of pages of special providence, a protest to the infidelity of their times. Strange to say that the rapid increase of the knowledge of nature, inventions, arts, and sciences in modern years has brought a flood of materialistic skepticism. Instead of "looking through nature up to nature's God," men look downward and see no God at all, and never think of reverting to God any more than if He did not exist.

And many professing Christians never think of recognizing God the way the Bible reveals Him, as being in the little details of life, and exercising His jurisdiction over every agent, great or small, from the affairs of an empire, to the steps of a little child or the fall of a little sparrow. No thoughtful person can watch God's providences without growing in faith. "He who notes a providence, will never lack a providence to note." The more we trust God, the more we put ourselves out of harmony with all those who do not trust Him, and the true believer is an everlasting protest against the majority of the people among whom he lives.

4. By having no creature-dependencies. In many ways we are compelled to trust in creatures, but such faith must always have allowances. It is not absolute, not solid, for it is never God's will that we should trust a creature in the same way we trust Him. Scientists claim that though atoms of matter are held together by the law of cohesion, yet in reality the ultimate particles of matter never touch each other. There is a little space between them, which accounts for the porousness of things and the other accountable phenomena of matter.

The same principle is true between creature and creature with regard to trust in each other. Our Creator has so constituted us, that we never can get as close to a fellow-creature as we can to our blessed God. Our Creator is always and forever our nearest relative. In trusting a creature we must

always leave room for disappointment, and if we do not make allowance, when the disappointment comes, it is a sore hurt. Satan will use it as a temptation to distrust God. This is why multitudes who have trusted creatures in the place of God have turned out skeptics.

The only right kind of faith to have in our fellow-creatures, is that which grows out of our faith in God, and then it will not be an idolatrous faith, but a charitable faith that makes allowances. People sometimes say they can trust God, but they cannot trust their fellows. When we really have perfect trust in God, His agency and omnipotent presence so fills our vision, that we can trust Him to manage and overrule all creatures, in such a way, that the conduct of our fellows never interferes with our life of trust.

And so it turns out that the man who knows most perfectly the weakness and untrustworthiness of his fellow-creatures is the one who practically has the most sensible and discriminate confidence in his fellows, because he is not banking on them. The bed-rock of his faith is in the living God, Who created and overrules all creatures. The holiest persons run enormous risks with bad characters, and confide in certain instances in the lowest and most treacherous people, because they have their eye on God, and not on the frail creature. Thus to deal directly with God alone, is the pathway to the mountain-top of a bold, boundless trust. As every grace of holiness is the offspring of trust, whatever

increases our faith must surely increase the life of holiness.

Chapter 20 — The Divine Crescendo

There are two words which musicians use to indicate the increase or diminution of a tone. The word “crescendo” describes the increase of a tone in strength and volume to the very close. The word “diminuendo” describes the weakening of a note or voice until it ends in a whisper.

These two words fittingly represent God and the creature, the One always rising to a climax, and the other always dwindling into weakness and failure of itself. One of the beautiful ways of studying the things of God is to select a single truth or attribute of God or His government, and trace it from its first revelation in Scripture or providence through all the Bible, and see how it expands and brightens with ever increasing beauty and strength to the close of revelation. Let us open our Bibles, and sit together at the feet of our dearest Lord, and let Him speak to us concerning this trait of His blessed nature by which He causes all things to reach an ever ascending climax.

We read in Exodus 19 that when the Lord gave the law “He descended in fire on Mt. Sinai, and His step made the mountain to quake, and the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder.” This was the way God saw fit to impress His own people at the revelation of His law.

In the days of King David, after the death of Saul, eleven tribes still followed the house of Saul, and David reigned for seven years over the tribe of Judah only. During those seven years there was constant war between the house of Saul and the house of David, but we are told “that David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker,” until there came a day when the entire kingdom was given to David. Saul began his reign in the Spirit, but ended in the flesh, which typifies the struggles of human nature to govern in its own strength. David not only began in the Spirit, but waxed stronger and stronger. This represents the sovereignty of Jesus over the soul, which with the persistent believer will grow stronger and stronger, until there comes a day when there is none of self and all of Christ (2 Sam. 3:1).

Another instance of God’s crescendo is found in the last chapter of Job. The only people who really understand the book of Job are those who have gone through similar experiences. It is pitiful to see how often Job is misrepresented by would-be Bible teachers who have hardly gone inch-deep into experiences similar to his. Those who represent that Job was a hypocrite, or a mere professor of sanctification previous to his great sufferings are those who know but little of the deep things of God, and take Satan’s side on the Job question. God affirms “Job was a perfect man” before his deep sorrow, but in going through his unutterable woes, he died a deeper death to his own theology, character, loving hopes, and fondest

affections, and came through into a fellowship with God which very few religious people know anything about.

We learn that all the while God was leading Job to a Divine climax, both as to inward character and outward blessing. "And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends, also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before." "So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than the beginning." God is no respecter of persons, and He really loves to do great things for those who persistently plead His promises. There are doubtless many souls who anchor their faith to those radiant words in the last chapter of Job, that God would fulfill them again just as literally as for His ancient servant. Does not God really want to make our last days the very best, but can He, consistent with His wisdom, do it, unless we definitely and earnestly, and persistently plead with Him to do it for us?

One of the most beautiful climaxes in the Bible is found in the third chapter of Proverbs, concerning the spiritual merchant, who opens up a heavenly business with God. "For the merchandise of wisdom is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies, and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her."

These are extraordinary words, whether considered poetically, philosophically, or spiritually. Silver is beautiful and valuable, but a

little lump of pure gold is more beautiful and valuable than a large amount of silver; yet a handful of fine gold is poor in comparison with a genuine ruby; and yet tons of rubies are insignificant to the deep, multiplied, far-reaching and immortal desires of the human heart. Yet only think, that to be filled with the pure, peaceful, radiant wisdom of God is such a treasure that it throws into everlasting shade this marvelous climax of silver, and fine gold, and rubies, and most passionate human desires.

This is God's crescendo of blessing; a soul filled with Christ eclipses every treasure, or creation, art or human love. A kindred verse is found in the fourth chapter of Proverbs, "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." To be "just," in the sense of this word, means far more than to be justified from guilt. And yet this upright soul has a path of light opened up to it, which increases in brightness till lost in the brightness of God.

We have another sample of Divine crescendo in Isaiah 9, where the prophet speaks of the coming empire of Jesus. "Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it with judgment and justice from henceforth, even for ever." These words stretch away, not only into the coming millennial age, but into the shining golden ages beyond the general judgment. Notice, it is emphatically "the throne of David," which was the theocratic throne,

established over men in this world. As Hosea tells us, this throne is now in eclipse, but the man Christ Jesus will return to this earth, and restore the theocracy of David, and extend it over the whole earth. He will reign with His glorified saints over the nations for a thousand years, in which His government and peace will be steadily increased. And then beyond the general judgment, Jesus will extend His empire to all the created worlds that float in space, populating them with intelligent beings, and using His blood-washed and Spirit-anointed members of the human race, “as kings and priests,” to rule over the millions and millions of other worlds, thereby extending His government, and deepening and widening the river of His peace, through ages on ages.

The first faint note of this universal crescendo has hardly yet been sounded. The prophet Ezekiel gives us a beautiful form of this same thought. He is describing his vision of the building of the city of Jerusalem, when the Lord reigns on earth, and says, “There was an enlarging and winding about still upward to the side chambers, for the winding about of the house went still upward round about the house, therefore the breadth of the house was still upward, and so increased from the lowest chamber to the highest by the midst” (Ezek. 41:17). Men build their houses broad on the earth, narrowing toward the sky. But here is a structure ever widening as it ascends.

Truly God’s thoughts are not as men’s thoughts. When we turn to the New Testament this

characteristic of the Divine mind shines out on nearly every page. Have we not often been struck with those words at the wedding in Cana, “Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine, and when men have well drunk then that which is worse, but thou has kept the good wine until now” (John 2:10)? Not a few men, not even most men, but note the words, “every man at the beginning” does his best and invariably ends in that which is worse. Such is human nature through and through. But God is just the opposite; He begins with small things, in weak, unobtrusive ways, by giving the pains of repentance, and the suffering cross, but the wine He pours out grows sweeter and sweeter, until it terminates in an ocean of intoxicating joy.

The great saint, whose magnitude we fail to measure because of his proximity to the dazzling Sun of Righteousness—John the Baptist—understood both poles of this Heavenly sphere of truth, and not only apprehended the crescendo of God, but the diminuendo of self as well when he said, “Christ must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30). Oh, the blessedness of that decrease, and the glory of that increase!

What is it but the crescendo of the work of Christ, which He reveals when He said, “He that believeth on Me shall do the works that I do, and greater works than these shall he do, because I go to my Father” (John 14:12).

The Apostle Paul expresses over and over again the Divine climax in such passages as, "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day"; and the prayer, "That our love may abound yet more and more"; and that peerless petition in Ephesians which begins at a post-sanctification standpoint and climbs up through Alpine altitudes of blessing, until it leaps all boundaries, out into the "exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think."

There is a profound meaning in one line in Col. 2:12, where Paul speaks of each believer "being joined to Christ his head, by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered to him, and being knit together, increaseth with the increase of God." What can that word mean, "The increase of God"? It cannot mean that the eternal and infinite God can grow in Himself, because then He would not be the infinite God. The true meaning is evidently that God is everlastingly at work through ages on ages on an ascending scale, and that all His plans in the kingdom of nature, the Kingdom of grace, and the Kingdom of Glory, whether He works in an individual soul, or a race of beings, or a stellar system, is according to a fixed plan of everlasting increase.

Hence these key words of the Holy Ghost, "grace for grace," "from faith to faith," "from glory to glory," "shining more and more," until individual souls, and numberless races of beings, and orders of subjects, are being brought through various processes of grace or glory, into ineffable union

with the three Persons of the Godhead, that all creatures may be the vehicles of God, and thus God be all in all.

The biographer of John Fletcher makes a remarkable statement concerning that saintly man. He says that most all good men, even holy men, have a decadence of Divine fire and zeal in their riper years and after doing a good work for God most of them seem to tone down, and grow conservative in Divine things. They seem to be laid as it were on the shelf, and seem to recline upon what they have been or done.

But John Fletcher was among the few great men of earth, the light of whose fire never waned. His devotion to God, his zeal for Jesus, his hunger and thirst for the fullness of God, his seraphic love, his Heavenly meditation, his humility and charity for others, constantly increased till the day of his death. He believed in the baptism with the Holy Ghost and most positively had it. He trampled on the notion that the soul gets all possible blessing with entire sanctification. He literally practiced and continuously sought for what others professed to teach, that there is no limit in this life to the infilling of the Divine Trinity into a purified soul. And the result was, he reached an experience in God that perhaps not one in thousands of the sanctified people ever reach in this life, because they do not practically understand God's crescendo of grace.

Of the millions in the visible Church, it may be a small majority have actually been born of the Spirit. Of those who have been converted, only a few yield utterly to God for sanctification; and of those who are sanctified only a few go with Job, and Moses, and Paul, and Lopez, and Fletcher, out into that current of seraphic fire, and whose last days are in reality the very best. But such is the will of God Who is forever sounding from the deep tone of His own Word an everlasting crescendo in the ears of His listening people.

Chapter 21 — Going Slow with God

God is never slow from His standpoint, but He is from ours, because rashness, impetuosity and doing things prematurely is a universal human weakness. It may not only be the result of our fallen condition, but one of the infirmities in our very nature as creatures, to be in a hurry. When we begin to learn the ways of God we have so many things to unlearn that there are some lessons which God does not begin teaching us till after we have passed the early stages of grace. One of these deeper lessons is that of moving very slowly with our Creator. It is not laziness, nor indifference, nor lagging behind; it is just the opposite of a dull, indolent and slovenly spirit. It is a disposition entirely wide-awake and prompt, and energetic to keep in the order of God's will.

1. God lives and moves in eternity, and every little detail in His working must be like Himself. It must have in it the majesty, the slow and measured movement, as well as the accuracy and promptness of infinite wisdom. When we deal with God we are not dealing with fussy, impetuous, short-sighted creatures.

It is a great thing to really come to the knowledge as to Who God is, and how we are to behave toward Him. There is no hurry in a Being Who sees

and knows everything from all eternity. True, God often acts instantaneously, but it is the instantaneousness of mature and boundless wisdom, and not the quickness of a creature's hurry. It is also true that we are to "run the race set before us," and "run in the way of God's commandments," but we are to run with all our faculties calmly collected, with thoughtful deliberation. Running with God is a slow walk with the creature. We are to let God do the swiftness and we do the slowness. The Holy Spirit tells us to "be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath." That is, swift to take in from God, but slow to give out the opinions, the dictates, the emotions of the creature.

We can never walk with God until we learn to go slow, to take time to pray, to think twice before we speak once, to watch the pace of His guidance and measure our steps accordingly.

Rebecca and Jacob were in a hurry to get God's foreordained blessing from the lips of Isaac and paid the penalty of twenty years' separation and sorrow. Peter lagged behind Christ at the trial before Pilate, but his very tardiness was the effect of his previous impetuosity in boasting of his fidelity. Had he gone slow in his avowals of heroism, and taken time to weigh his words, he would have gone faster and closer to the cross. The very recollection as to Who God is would spread over us as a thoughtful, slow, quiet movement in all our dealings with Him.

2. We miss a great many things from God by not going slow enough with Him. It must be a secret joy in God to give Himself forth to those who love and appreciate Him, but God must always act like Himself. If we fail to move in harmony with His attributes and to get the things He wants to communicate in His own way, He cannot change His perfections to accommodate our whims. Even if He should undertake to impart Himself to us without regard to time and fitness, it would do us no good, for the very blessings of God, if not conferred in God's way, would prove curses—like eating raw meat or green fruit.

There are glimpses into God's perfections, insight into wonderful truths, quiet unfoldings of daily opportunities, gentle checks of the Holy Spirit upon our decisions or words, sweet and secret inspirations to do certain things, the quiet solving of hard problems and mental articulations of special words of strength. These we often missed because we took our ear from God's telephone a little too quick, or ran past the angle of vision, or wasted time by asking a question, or got in a feverish state of anxiety, or attempted to take God's work in our own hands.

There is no telling how much we have lost spiritually, mentally, financially and physically—and everlastingly lost—by not going slow with God. There is a time for everything in the universe to get ripe. All thoughts, words, prayers, actions,

providences, opportunities, blessings, spiritual experiences, Divine revelations, all avocations, all dispensations, whether in nature, grace, or glory, have a time in which they get ripe. To go slow with God is the Heavenly pace that gathers up all things at the time they are ripe. What can be greater than to see God, or to hear Him speak, and we miss both by not going slow?

3. Going slow with God is our greatest safety. It is dangerous to live with a thousand live wires around us, against which we may jostle at any time by not keeping calm and thoughtful in our movements. In factories of multiplied and complicated machinery, a man must needs move cautiously, especially when wheels, and bands, and electric motors, and sharp cutting instruments are running with lightning speed. A wrong step, or a foolish move of the hand, or a frightened, jerky movement may cause instant and horrible death.

In many respects, we are moving amid just such unseen and complicated machinery, and walking quietly and slowly with God is the only safe way to escape the swift flying bands and pulleys of mighty laws, as well as demoniac snares.

There are more religious delusions at the present day than since the fall of man, and every one of them could be traced to a rash, impetuous taking up with thoughts and things without taking time

to wait on God in perfect humility and teachableness of spirit. Doctrines are formulated from one text of Scripture not half understood, while a dozen plain texts to the contrary receive no attention. New, wild, and extravagant teachers are rushed after like a Klondike goldfield. All sorts of pious fads, religious delusions, dreams, and visionary theories are hastily swallowed down without taking time for mental chewing, because people do not keep humble enough to watch God and trace His slow and peaceful footsteps.

It is not merely going slow that is our safety, but it is loving to go slow; it is to lovingly prefer the deep, quiet, peaceful river of God's life to the rushing, noisy, exciting and wild things which always characterize either man's foolishness or the devil's fire-works. The soul who has the Satanic itch of impatience in it will sooner or later champ the bit, break the traces or run over a precipice. The very center of the soul must be calm and peaceful, so that it can prefer God's way of doing things, and God's time of doing them. Did we ever have to repent for taking time to wait on God, and did we ever fail to repent for not taking time to work in His order?

4. We must needs go slow with God in order to keep in a reverent and worshipful spirit. This is the way the saints have always turned their lives into a beautiful, continual worship of God by going slow enough to mix God in with everything and to

tie all the events of life fast to His throne. We must refer all things to Him, and with the eye of thought looking up to His blessed face to dictate our services and our steps.

Some people pray too fast to get any answer from God, like nervous children that rattle away at their parents so rapidly that their words are not intelligible. They must quiet down and talk slow enough to be understood before their wants or fears can be relieved.

One of the curses put on Adam was that of "sweat," which expresses the hurried, overheated or excited state of the body; and the Lord told Ezekiel that his priests must not enter the holy sanctuary with "woolen garments on them, or anything that would cause them to sweat," because the God of eternal and unruffled peace wants us to worship Him with a calm, collected, reverent spirit, and not with the sweat of creature-hurry in our minds.

How can we speak to God in a reverent way or look to Him with adoring love when we have run ourselves into a feverish perspiration and precipitation of thought? Whatever we do accurately must take time and collectedness of mind. There is no accuracy in all the world like keeping company with God, and yet nothing so free from bondage or tediousness. By going slow with the Lord we accomplish more than by going with a rush, because what we do is done so much better, and does not have to be undone. It is done

in a better spirit, with deeper motives, and bears fruit far out in the future, when all mushroom performances have been dissipated for ever.

Chapter 22 — Our Dependence on God

The simplest and most commonplace truths concerning our relations with God are the very ones that have in them an infinite depth. As we advance in the upper ranges of the spiritual life, these old-fashioned, simple truths grow on us more than any others. They open up in undreamed-of vastness of beauty and strength and heart-nourishment.

Our dependence on God is a truth that we think we understand at the beginning of the Christian life. But after we have been converted and sanctified and have passed through many ordeals of trials, and entered into the deeper death of the creature-life, it is then that this commonplace truth of our absolute weakness, and our momentary dependence on God opens itself to us.

One great difficulty in stating a spiritual truth is that we have to use the same words with regard to it, both in its beginning and its perfection. But the same words we use at one time of life do not contain a thousandth part of the idea which the same words have to us in later years. The whole question of salvation and of our progress in the Divine life lies wrapped up in the measure to which we realize our own utter helplessness, our nothingness and demerit, and in the measure which we realize the companion truth of the all-

sustaining, all-sufficient love and grace of God poured out to us through His Son Jesus.

Sin inverts and reverses the action of all the faculties in their relation to God. The life-work of fallen nature is forever putting self in place of God. It puts self-strength in the place of God's power. It contends for the rights of self, when in reality we have no rights in the universe, except such as our loving Creator lends to us out of His own proprietorship of us.

When we are Divinely illuminated, we see innumerable instances, almost every day, where the creature puts himself in the place of God—in thought and reason, in the conduct of business, in expressing opinions, in judging of others, in petty self-justification, in driving at selfish ends, in measuring by creature standards. In countless forms and ways we see the lack of that deep consciousness of our littleness and dependence which should abide with us, and so saturate us with a gentle, quiet self-abnegation, as perfectly befits such tiny things as we, who are floating in a sea of creative Omnipotence.

It takes a long time for the operations of grace to get us soaked through and through with the truth of our createdness. Persons, in seeking pardon or holiness, often cry out in their distress, "Oh, I am so weak; I have no strength. What shall I do?" Such souls have not learned that their very salvation and perfection in grace is hinged upon that sense of utter strengthlessness. The

helplessness they see at that time is nothing to the extent they will see it as they get farther away from the self-life, and sink into deeper union with God.

Our sweetest union with the blessed Holy Spirit depends on the ever-increasing sense of our dependence on Him. In reality our dependence on our Heavenly Father is always extending and intensifying. For just look at it. He raised us up out of nothing, and created us by His own love and power, but it takes the same Omnipotent love in exercise every moment to preserve us in existence. And if we owe God an infinite debt of gratitude and worship for having brought us into existence, then certainly the longer He keeps us in existence the more that debt is increasing, so that for every breath we draw we are owing to our God a perpetual, growing obligation of love and obedience.

In one sense the Lord is forever creating us, for our momentary sustenance is only a prolongation of that act of creation. In addition to this, the more we grow in size, intelligence, and responsibility, the more we need of God, the more we draw upon His sympathy and compassion and wise providence.

A whale is more dependent on the ocean than a minnow. It has greater needs, occupies more space, and draws more largely upon the resources of the sea. In like manner a mature saint or angel fills a larger space in the moral universe, draws deeper draughts from God, and calls into exercise

greater degrees of creative skill and love and Divine communion, so that he is more extensively and intelligently dependent upon his God than an infant or a darkened soul living in sin.

God has so fashioned us by a sweet necessity of love, that our very growth in grace, and obedience and moral magnitude makes us realize our dependence the more. This produces a paradox that the larger we grow the smaller we feel, and the more we drink ourselves full of the Christlife, the more thoroughly dependent are we upon that life. God has so created man in his relation to all things, as to force upon him this truth of utter dependence. He will not allow the wisest and strongest of men to accomplish anything in agriculture, art, science, invention or religious experience without revealing to him his insufficiency to accomplish his end without the intervention of a higher power. In everything a creature undertakes, he can only go so far, and then he must sit down and wait for his infinite Creator to step in and finish the process.

Man's arm is never quite long enough to reach the end he seeks, without the intervention of God. There is always a chasm between what the creature can do, and the end to be achieved, which God alone can bridge. Man is forever on the point of failing, and God is always coming to his rescue. Man is always reaching the end of his resources, and God is always supplementing them by His opportune, thoughtful, loving and wise operations, either in the form of natural law or in the blessed

operations of the Holy Spirit. Between the labor and reward, God always leaves a space where He alone can intervene, and build Himself a monument of merciful helpfulness.

This truth is pungently expressed in those words of the Holy Spirit, "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor riches to men of understanding." In every possible way that men can act, God is forever compelling them to fall back on Him for the accomplishment of their ends. Poor blind men can call this fortune, or chance, or law, or fate, because they are not illuminated, and do not see the all-pervading presence of a boundless, loving will, moving in every atom and in every moment.

When the sinner has repented and forsaken all his sins, and done everything he can do, he finds he must cease from his own works and let the will of God finish out the process and save his soul. When a child of God is thirsting after holiness, and has yielded every atom and possibility of his being forever up to Jesus, he finds he can do no more, but to quietly and helplessly sink into the fathomless waters of God's loving will, and let God cleanse and fill up to the measure of the promise.

And this same lesson must be learned over and over again in so many directions. It must be learned in Divine healing, in matters of temporal support, in the manifold providences of God, until every part of our lives is woven through and through with the golden thread of our utter, and

momentary, and minute, and intelligent, and endless, and affectionate dependence upon our Heavenly Father. When we are perfectly possessed of this feeling, it becomes the deepest joy of our existence. Not the thought merely, but the all-pervading consciousness of helplessly reclining upon God, brings us into fellowship with the three Persons of the Godhead and gives us a continual vision of His presence in every part of nature and providence. Out of this profound feeling we learn the Heavenly art of recollection and momentary cooperation with the Holy Spirit.

There is no joy like that of feeling our nothingness, and at the same time reposing sweetly, like an infant, upon God.

Chapter 23 — Counterpart Providences

“God never makes half a providence any more than man makes half a pair of scissors.” This golden sentence was coined by the late Dr. Gordon, and a thousand passages of Scripture, and ten thousand incidents in our lives confirm its truthfulness. We see how perfectly God works in creation, and how nicely He dovetails part with part, wedding strength to beauty, mountain with valley, zones with climates, and products with seasons. He so beautifully fits the fin to the sea, the wing to the air, the eye to light, the ear to pulsations of the atmosphere and each joint to its socket, that the whole creation becomes a glass transparency, revealing the matchless wisdom of God. It shows Omnipresence in every atom, and discloses the momentary operation of His infinite will in every successive instant through thousands and millions of years, without a pause, without a blunder or a single trace of His forgetting anything, from the insect in a quivering leaf to the giant orbit of suns and stellar systems.

It is all simply inconceivable, and could we see it in its total reality, it would crush our intellects with an overwhelming weight of sublimity. And then think that all this infinite perfection of balancing part with part is repeated over and over again in the inspired Scriptures. These are like another created universe, in which there is an infallible compilation and record of history, biography,

precept, parable, promise, poem, punishment, names of persons, places and things. There are verbs descriptive of every moral act that transpires in Heaven, earth or hell. All are so arranged as to contain not a single error, or foolish or useless statement. They tower as far above all human books as the noon day sun rises above a tallow candle, and reveals such vast worlds of intellectual and spiritual truth, linked in such golden chains of beauty from Genesis to Revelation, as to form an intellectual universe, surpassing in brilliancy the material creation.

And then in addition to these two creations of nature and Scripture, there is a third universe of God's providences, which is crowned with infallible arrangements of God's forethought. Every moment in the life of every human being, of all the millions on earth, is filled in with the most minute, and wise, and delicate, and loving, and just superintendence of that same God Who floods every atom of nature and every word of Scripture with His personal presence. Verily we are walking through a limitless ocean of Divine love and supervision.

The special providence of God is a third Bible, which He is incessantly writing out in the lives of His creatures. On the silver pages of each swiftly passing day He is writing out His dealings with each of us in such accuracy and compassionate love, and patient, impartial wisdom. He balances need with supply, dovetails prayer to answer, interblends sorrow with joy, and fear with hope,

and sweetly joins faith and fruition, and the supernatural with the natural, and the motive of the heart with the reward of the act. If we could see it all as an angel can discern it, the very sight would dazzle us into ecstasy.

At the very moment that Isaiah's yearning heart was mourning over the defects of his spiritual life, saying, "Woe is me," the seraphim—types of glorified prophets—were crying, "Heaven and earth are full of God's glory," for they saw the presence of God moving through every atom of nature and providence.

If we take time to think quietly over the daily dealings of God with us, and lovingly watch for every little symptom of God's presence in us and around us, we will soon be astonished at the degree we will discover of His presence, and at the perfection with which He weaves things together for our good. He never makes half a providence.

The very night that young Solomon was praying for wisdom to judge rightly the people, a poor, heart-broken mother, in the lowly walks of life, was crying for her babe that another woman had stolen from her. The same infinite ear that drank in the sweet prayer of the beautiful young prince, at the same moment drank in the sad wail of a poor outcast mother in the slums of Jerusalem. He gave the young prince the superhuman wisdom to know how to judge between the women, and to settle the dispute as to who was the mother of the living child.

The same God who saw the lonely Jacob wending his sad way over the desert of Syria, looking for a home, arranged to have the beautiful Rachel go forth with her father's sheep, and have them meet at the well. They were each but the two hemispheres of one thought in the mind of God. Are not our lives crowded with just such providential supplementings?

I know of a Christian worker who at one time was hedged about with what, to all human opinion, were absolutely insurmountable difficulties. But he shut himself in with God, with much fasting and prayer that God would open a certain field of work to him. In his prayer he read the Scripture where Ahasuerus was kept awake all night in answer to Mordecai's prayer, and he begged the Lord to keep somebody awake all night in his behalf. Twelve hundred miles away a Christian gentleman, whom he had never met, was kept awake all night in prayer and study about that man. God spoke to that gentleman in a distinct voice, "Send that man a check for a certain amount of money, and have him come here and work with you in a mission." Before the check had time to reach that worker, a neighbor of his called upon him and said, "I have had a dream, in which I saw a large, portly man and yourself at work in a certain city." He went on to describe what he saw in his dream of persons and places, which in a few weeks came to pass with the most absolute precision.

How slow we are to trust God in all the details of life, just as really and unbrokenly as we trust our souls to the merit of Christ's precious blood! Yet the handwriting of God on the wall of every passing hour is just as infallible as His handwriting in Scripture. Can God be divided? Can God be any less infinite in His providences than He is in His Word? "Oh, fools, and slow of heart, not to believe all." If the Holy Ghost has called you to a certain line of work, He never takes back His own call. God does not fool with His creatures to mock at their deepest convictions and yearnings of heart. As truly as He has spoken in your heart a call to any sphere of work, so truly has He prepared that sphere for you somewhere in the world, and at the right point of time He will bring the two hemispheres of His providence together.

God never makes a wing to mock a poor bird, but He fills an azure sky with air upon which the wing can fly. There is plenty of room in the air for every wing there is formed. God does not allow the great eagle to monopolize the whole atmosphere, but each little sparrow shall have the boundless domain open to it. When we are absolutely sunk into God's will, and seek only to please God, no creature, nor any multiplied millions of creatures, either good or bad, can get in our way, or hinder us, or do us any harm. God delights to reveal Himself to the real humble heart, in little ways and startling providences, which lofty-minded persons never have eyes to see, nor faith to accredit.

I was once on my way from South Carolina to Texas to work in meetings for the Lord. I had only a limited time to reach my destination before the Sabbath, and a very limited amount of money to pay my expenses. When I boarded the train in Atlanta, the conductor said, "The South-bound mail from New York is over two hours late, and we shall have to wait for it." This would throw us over two hours behind in Birmingham, Alabama, where I was to connect with the train for New Orleans. On enquiring if the through train to New Orleans would wait for us at Birmingham, he said, "No, for that train is always on time, and does not wait for late trains. Your only way is to lie over at Birmingham for the night."

I at once sat down and leaned my head against the window, and closing my eyes told my Heavenly Father all about it—that I was working for His precious Son, that I belonged entirely to His Son, that the interest of His only begotten Son was infinitely greater than all the railroads, and that He saw my scanty means and my limited time before the Sabbath. Would He please make that fast-bound train to New Orleans in some way get delayed just as long as we should be? A sweet restfulness settled on my spirit, and I felt like smiling.

When we reached Birmingham, sure enough there stood the long train waiting for us. It had been detained in an unusual way by something they could hardly account for, and when I asked the conductor how he happened to be so late, he said,

“We don’t know, unless it was to get passengers from Atlanta.” I then told him of my prayer, and said, “I wish you railroad men would put your trust in the living God.”

You may rest assured that you are always enveloped in the presence of the Holy Ghost. He watches every movement of your inner being, and has His hand this very moment on everything in creation. He is incessantly adjusting causes to effects, and the inner spirit to the outer circumstance, and things near to things hundreds and thousands of miles away. Nothing can be too small for His loving notice and superintendence. Let us watch for God in His daily dealings with us. The more thoughtfully we watch, the more we will see of Him. And the more we see, the more we will love Him.

Chapter 24 — How We Belong to Jesus

A very good way to find out the mind of the Holy Spirit on any one thing, is to trace out, in the Scriptures, what He has said on the subject. There is such a marvelous placement of truth in God's Word, that we find in numberless instances an accumulating, or piling up, in some one chapter or book, of one certain expression, or idea, in the form of a pyramid or climax. Take, for example, the case of the successive "Beatitudes," or the measurements of Ezekiel's river, or the seven "Overcomeths" in Revelation, and many other portions of the Word. One of these striking climaxes of truth is found in the prayer of our Lord, in the 17th chapter of John, concerning how the true believer has been given to Him by the Father. The more clearly we apprehend that we are the special property of Jesus, and the more brightly we see the ties that bind us to Him, the more tenderly and ardently we love Him. In this wonderful prayer, Christ says, seven times, that the Father has given us to Him.

1. "Thou hast given thy Son power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." Here we see that the Father gave us to His Son, that He might impart His eternal life to us. All the life of the Godhead is focalized in the Lord Jesus, and through Him eternal life is poured

into the penitent believer. All life given to angels, men and the things of creation is a life imparted through Jesus.

The impartation of Divine life to our souls is the fundamental blessing of the Kingdom of God. There are countless gifts and graces, which follow this, but the Christ-life imparted to us is the foundation gift of all others. In the twelve blessings pronounced by Moses on the tribes of Israel, the gift of life comes first. In the seven “Overcomeths,” in Revelation, to eat of the “tree of life” is the first one. Thus always the gift of Divine life forms our starting point in the Heavenly kingdom. Now if Jesus, through His crucifixion and by the Spirit, puts into our nature that pure, sweet, eternal vitality, which flowed like an ocean through His being, see how that precious gift makes us His special property. Our Heavenly Father gave us to His Son for the special purpose of sharing His Son’s life.

2. “I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world.” The term “world” here includes the impenitent millions of earth who always have rejected God, and will do so till the close of this age; this is the “world” that lies in the hand of the devil.

Out from this ungodly world the Father gave to His Son those whom He foresaw would be willing and obedient to Christ. And He gave us to Christ that

the name of the Father might be manifested unto us.

A “name” in the Bible represents character, the inward predilection, the dominant disposition of a person. The word “manifest” means to make plain, to reveal clearly. Hence, for Jesus to manifest the name of the Father unto us is to reveal clearly to our minds and to our affections the radiant character of the Father and His eternal, fathomless and tender love. When the Father’s character, as a Being of unsearchable love, is manifested to us, how it causes us to cleave to Jesus! And the more the Father is revealed to us in Christ, the more thoroughly do we feel ourselves to be Christ’s chosen possession. We can never know anything of the Father except as manifested in Jesus. Jesus is like a beautiful avenue, through which our spirits pass up into the glorious manifestations of the Godhead.

3. “Thou gavest them me and they have kept thy word.” Here, the giving of us to Jesus is put in connection with our keeping of the Father’s Word. The Father’s Word comes out from His character, and when that character has been manifested within us, we then have a Divine capacity for the keeping of that Word, which is the expression of the Father’s will.

See how each of these thoughts rises in a climax, one above another. We cannot really keep the

Father's Word until His Name or character has been manifested unto us, and we cannot have that loving manifestation to us till after we are made alive with His eternal life. To keep God's Word means far more than a literal preservation or a verbal memory of it. It implies an inward condition of heart and mind, in which God's truth is rooted into us, as trees into the ground—an inward harmony of nature with that Word, so that as soon as His truth is made known to us, there is a cordial response on all lines, and a loving reception of it. This is not according to the narrow interpretation of man, but up to the measure of the fullness of its meaning which God puts into it. All of the Father's Word is in His Son, so that in the highest sense, for us to keep the Father's Word is to have His Son practically and continuously enthroned in our hearts and lives.

4. "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me." When Christ hung on the cross, He prayed for the sinners and ungodly church-rulers who were crucifying Him, but in this prayer He prays exclusively for His servants. Inasmuch as the Father has given us to Him, we are identified with His life, and experience, and destiny, and we thereby live in His thoughts and prayers. Every prayer which Jesus offered for Himself was virtually a prayer for those who were given to Him, for it was for their sakes that He took on Him our flesh and the conditions which made His prayer possible. He prays for us constantly,

individually, in minute detail, and effectually, because the Father has given us to Him, to be His chosen spouse. Could we apprehend how that daily we are enveloped with the incense of Christ's prayers, how the sense of His ownership of us would thrill through our entire spirits!

5. "Holy Father, keep, through thine own name, those whom thou has given me, that they may be one as we are." Here is a still higher stretch of thought, and the statement of a bolder truth than in the previous four. Because we are given to Jesus, the Father is to keep us, as He keeps His own Son. How long it takes us to begin to appreciate the depth and sweetness of these words! The Father identifies us with His only Begotten, loves us, guards us, works out His providences for us, as He sees us related to His Son.

In addition to all this there is the counterpart truth that, by virtue of our having been given to Jesus, we believers are to be one, as Christ and the Father are one. What fathomless, boundless, brotherly love is opened up in these words! It takes a heart of great purity and charity even to believe in such a possibility. Only think of all the ways and degrees in which Christ is one with the Father: one in nature, one in every purpose, motive and intention; one in character, one in love, taste and affinity; one in majesty, glory and government, and one in life and fruition. And yet

His infallible prayer is that we, poor, short-sighted, misjudging children of His, are to be so melted into Divine love, so beautifully illuminated with cloudless light, so lifted above all our narrowness and uncharitableness, and so baptized into the essence of Christ's heart, that we flow like glittering drops of liquid silver into that shining sea of eternal unity. There, there will never be a discord, nor a harsh judgment, nor a cold suspicion, but as being one with Christ we become one with each other.

6. "Those that thou gavest me I have kept." In number five we had the keeping of the Father. But here is a double keeping. Jesus keeps us by virtue of being our Shepherd and Savior. And the Father keeps us as we are bound up in His Son. How these words harmonize with those of Paul about the double hiding where he says, "Our life is hid with Christ, and Christ is hid in God." To look thoughtfully into these words will have a tremendous effect on our faith.

7. "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." Here we are given to Jesus for the purpose of abiding with Him forever and gazing with unspeakable joy on that uncreated glory which Christ had with the Father before the world was. This is the end of our being donated from the

Father to the Son. The highest of all the joys of Heaven is the beatific vision, to look with our spiritual eyes on all the radiant Divine attributes of Christ, to perceive distinctly every perfection in His inner character. This will be infinitely more enrapturing than for our earthly eyes to wander delightfully over the most beautiful scenes of earth.

These are the seven reasons why the Father has awakened us with the sharp pains of repentance, and drawn us to His Son, and given us to be the special property of that Son, that we may share in all things, in the life, character, and coming Kingdom of Jesus. These are the seven golden chains which God twines about us to bind us in the closest and sweetest union with Himself.

Chapter 25 —God's Quiet Conquests

God's quiet operations are like Himself. They are deep, and quiet, and seem to be slow, and circuitous, and have to be searched into, in order to be appreciated.

When we stand on the margin of a swift river, it often happens that there are whirling eddies near the shore, where the water runs back up the stream, which looks as if the river were going the wrong way, but when we look out in the channel, we find the current speeding on toward the ocean. This is a picture of the way God works. In many things in the church, and society, as well as in religious experience, it looks as if God were being defeated, and that the movements of His grace and providence were failures, and that all His purposes were going the wrong way. It is only when we lift our eyes, and look further away from the shore of the present moment, and take into consideration the entire stream of God's government among men, that we see that He is constantly getting the victory, as it were by strategy, and in quiet, circuitous ways.

1. He works in a hidden way. He works as if with gloved hands, under what we call second causes, and by forces that are spiritual and not mechanical. In the material world He works

through the atmosphere, the unseen currents of electricity, the unseen forces of heat, motion, the imperceptible changes in the seasons and the conjunction of planets.

In like manner His great operations in grace, in subduing the soul, are accomplished by the invisible and almost unrecognized power of serious thoughts, of gentle heart yearnings, of heavenly attractions in prayer, of secret apprehensions of great danger, or by sudden openings in the mind of hope, and bright possibilities, or by the alternations of a sense of utter helplessness on the one hand, and then of great courage and determination on the other.

Have you noticed that great rough, old sinners, are usually captured and conquered in the most unexpected ways, and by some little pathetic circumstances, full of quiet gentleness, exactly the opposite of what we would think essential to produce such results? Infidels are not converted by big sermons but more frequently by the quiet trust of some poor old saint, or the whispered prayer of a little child. Great revolutions in society and among nations are wrought out by unseen forces of heart and mind which great statesmen fail to apprehend, and which the eloquent historian never takes into account.

Whatever is done by Satan or the flesh is with great show, and noise, and demonstration. You would think they were upsetting the universe at every turn. Carnal churches work on the same line

as the world. When they plan for a revival, there must be a great combination of churches, crowds of people, a gigantic choir, a blast of trumpets and drums, and an army of eloquent preachers. There is a great spread-eagle splurge, and when the fuss and rattle are over, it is well-nigh impossible to find one soul truly converted to God.

At the same time some humble saint from a back alley is out in the cornfield, silently weeping and praying for the salvation of some child, who will turn out to be a great prophet, or a reformer. Such praying in the power of the Holy Ghost is worth ten thousand times more in far-reaching results than the ecclesiastical thunder of the huge man-managed revival. God is a spirit, and works through the spirit, and can only be discerned by those who have the light of the Spirit.

2. God works through persons, through individual souls instead of committees, and federated bands or great organizations. The strongest force on earth is the individual soul. God conquers some one heart, and through that heart He pours His purpose like a mighty river. The closer we get to God, the more we prize the individual soul.

When men drift away from the Lord, the individual man counts but little, and confidence is placed in big majorities and heavy armies. The tower of Babel was built by a national committee, who said, "Let us build us a city, and tower."

But God singled out one man, Abraham, and called him to be a pilgrim, and the founder of a race of those who had faith. Napoleon said, “God is on the side of the heaviest battalions,” but something happened to prevent his words proving true, and that something will in the end be found to be a Divine touch on someone’s soul. The history of the world is found in the lives of a succession of individuals, such as Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Daniel, Paul, Luther, Wesley and others—individuals in whose hearts God imparted His thoughts and plans.

The King of Syria marshaled an army to capture the prophet Elisha, but that lone prophet prayed and the army went blind, and he led them into Samaria. This is a sample of universal history.

3. The Lord makes His conquests by keeping His saints in a helpless condition. This He accomplishes in various ways, so as to make them live by faith, and depend on God alone. If the Lord should give His people what men call success, such as plenty of money and personal prosperity, it would prove a total failure from God’s standpoint. God succeeds by making men to fail.

To read the Bible, and then look at human life, it does seem that God is being defeated. What seems to be a failure in our eyes is a success with the Lord. The Almighty is not working according to

human plans, nor men's judgments. The people whom the world calls successful are in reality perfect failures. Those who are looked upon as worthless, or helpless, or undone, are oftentimes in God's way made successful.

Men of great faith are never allowed to get beyond having their faith tried in many ways. George Muller, at the close of his life, said his faith for supplies to take care of two thousand orphans was still tried as in the years previous. God's plan is that there shall be none of self and all of Christ. The very people who are doing the most for God in saving souls, in mission work or in the care of orphans, are those who are working on short supplies of strength, of money, of talents, of advantages. Such are kept in a position of living by faith and taking from God, day by day, both physical and spiritual supplies. This is the way God succeeds and gains conquests over His own people, and over the unbelief of those who look on His providences.

4. God carries His point by letting His enemies tell on themselves, and execute their own doom. King Saul and Judas both apostatized in their hearts, and while holding high offices in His kingdom, secretly worked against God, and both of them committed suicide.

Haman was hanged on his own gallows, and Marshal Ney, at the battle of Waterloo, went insane

with rage against the English, and wildly plunged his battalions into death. False prophets arise, and deceive thousands by preaching what outwardly seems right, but their true character comes out at last, for Scripture teaches that beyond a certain pitch of bombastic self-conceit, “they shall proceed no farther, and their folly shall be made manifest to everybody.”

5. Our true conquest is to form a secret alliance with God, and take His side against our natural selves. We succeed by agreeing to be what other people would call a miserable failure. We obtain treasures by letting them drop out of sight into the hand of God. We conquer our enemies by loving them, by quietly letting the Lord manage them, and receiving their treatment as a part of God’s will for us.

God always comes out ahead and on the top. He seems to give Satan and sinners and old self all the advantage. Then He handicaps Himself, and like Jacob, walks with a lame leg, and goes afoot while all the world, like Esau, rides on horses, and makes a great show. In the end, like lame Jacob, God conquers and carries His point in such a quiet way that He seems to be doing nothing, yet all the while, like the majesty of chemistry, He is working miracles out of sight and far under ground.

Chapter 26 — Loving Thoughts of God

In the sight of God all thoughts are actions. In the sight of man an action is generally spoken of as something that is overt, and that comes out in the visible or audible life. But God sees all the interior fountains and movements of the Spirit and mind within us, and every voluntary and deliberate thought of our minds are in His sight distinct actions. This opens up a whole world of possibility in the matter of prayer and growth of grace.

Every time we intelligently and deliberately choose to give up our will and way to God, every time we choose the Divine will for our own, every time we intelligently prefer Christ's character to that of self, every time we think of God with thoughts of self-renunciation, or adoration, or faith, or worship, or love, He accepts it as a distinct act of the soul.

What a fertile field our mind can become for the growth of grace! Every single grace of the Christian life can be formulated as a clear, distinct conception in our mind; every single duty of the Christian religion, and every privilege held forth in the promises, can be definitely apprehended in the thought of a true believer. This is doubtless what the Psalmist referred to when he said, "Let the meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord."

It is perhaps impossible to think of God without thinking of Him either lovingly or coldly. People often think of God as unkind, or severe, and often judge Him and His ways and His dealings out of the coldness and unbelief of their own hearts. But how blessed is that state where the soul never thinks of God except with thoughts of love, and submission, and longing to be just like Him! When we have once learned that God is love, we should never think of Him in any way contrary to that fact.

If every thought is an act, and every time I think of God, I think a tender and loving thought of Him, only think how many such actions I can perform in a day! Regardless of the appearance of things, and of the shape of God's providences, though we may have severe trials, sore sorrows and grief, though there may come great disappointments from a thousand sources, and though we may suffer much pain in our bodies or mind, yet if we are in such union with God's will that we never lift our thoughts toward Him except in love, and never view Him or His conduct to us in any light except that of love, this is truly a sacrifice and service well-pleasing in His sight.

However dark the clouds may seem, however difficult it may be to understand the things in this life, yet it is our privilege, like the soaring eagle, to pierce through the clouds and get on the sunny side of faith. We can always contemplate God from the sunny side of things and not from the earth side. If God can hear every thought of our minds

as distinctly as we hear the breakers along the ocean shore, how it would inspire us to fix our minds on Him!

When we sit down on the ocean shore and listen to the beat of the surf, what a multitude of distinct sounds we hear! The beautiful music of the waters is sliced up into hundreds of various sounds. Their notes are interblended, and sounds glide into each other, from that of the heavy thunder when the roller first breaks to the fine faint treble of the little wavelet that runs up on the sand.

What a whole orchestra of music is rolled out from one great breaker! And yet all these sounds which palpitated so charmingly upon our ears were started away off on yonder blue sea. It may be that some howling storm or cyclone hundreds of miles out set those waves in motion. The storm passed on and died away, but its motion was imparted to the sea, and we sit calmly in the soft twilight, and listen with enchanted ear to the multitudinous melody which comes to us from those waves. Who could guess that that storm, far out at sea, should make such sweet entertainment and music to us on the shore?

Thus it is oftentimes in the lives of God's children. Great storms of sorrow, terrific cyclones of grief and upheavals of heart-anguish on the stormy sea of life, set in motion on human souls great waves of prayer, intense yearnings after God and a home in Heaven, and great waves of meditation on Divine things. These break on the peaceful shore

near His throne, and every one of these pathetic thoughts of the heart, these yearning mental prayers, sound distinctly in the ear of God, and make music to Him far more beautiful than the dash of the melodious waves on the beach.

The great sorrow, the awful storm, has swept on its way and dies in silence along the horizon of life, but it has aroused an immortal mind; it has stirred to the deepest depths a great, yearning heart; it has set in motion successive waves of thinking which will sweep on evermore. Every loving thought that we have towards our Heavenly Father is music in His ears. Let us never think of God hardly or as dealing with severity. Every wrong thought that we have towards God grieves His loving spirit, weakens our faith, chills our affections, impairs our ardor and pleases Satan.

Let us settle it forever and forever, that God is love, that everything He does or permits, He does in love. It is a blessed habit to go to sleep every night, thinking of God with thoughts of affection and adoration and yearnings after Him, and to wake up every morning with loving thoughts of that Infinite One, in Whose arms we have passed the unconscious night.

When anything sad or painful comes to us, or a temptation assaults, it is blessed to turn our thoughts instantly towards God. We seek to find His presence in it, and to get a loving view of Him first of all, so that we can see in the very beginning of everything painful or sorrowful that our

Heavenly Father is in this thing; His presence envelopes it and He is love. When the outcome of it is made visible, I shall see that it was for my good and His glory.

In every rainstorm there is a rainbow which will be brought to light as soon as the light can touch it, so in every pain and sorrow of life God has planted a rainbow which will be seen in due time when He can reveal to us the light of His love falling through it.

Chapter 27 — Degrees of Divine Union

When we think carefully and closely how God can be in union with His own creatures, we must never make the blunder of confounding God with His own good works, which is the old heathen notion of pantheism. God is an eternal, self-existent, universal, spiritual substance and all the things He has created exist external to Himself. Creation is not external to God, considered in connection with space, but external to Him in the sense of being apart from His own substance and personality and character.

God pervades every atom of His creation, and by the continual act of His will sustains all things in creation, or else they would drop back into non-existence. So that, in considering the union of God with His creatures, we must view it in two ways: first, as a natural one; and, secondly, as a gracious union.

The natural union of God with His creatures is that which He has with all material, sentient, mental and moral being. God pervades every sinner and every fallen spirit, and incessantly imparts to them the strength that they have to exist or to act. So that the very energy that demons and wicked men have in performing sinful acts, and in rebelling against God, is supplied to them each moment by the benevolent power of the Creator, Whom they ignore and despise. Thus God

is in one sense in union with them, but it is as a Creator and a merciful God, Who gives to them gratuitously the powers of their being. If that bond of natural union between the Creator and the creature were suspended, they would instantly sink into annihilation.

But there is another union which God establishes with His creatures, which is a gracious union; that is, a union originating in grace, and based on a moral similarity between Creator and man. It is in this sense that "God is nigh to all those who call upon Him," that is, He is not only nigh them in a natural way as Creator, and all-pervading Preserver, but He is nigh them in a spiritual sense. He is nigh them in hearing their prayers, relieving their distresses, forgiving their sins, purifying their natures, and imparting His own holy character to their moral being. It is also in this sense that we are told, "The Lord knoweth the way of the upright," that is, He not only knows the ways of the upright from an intellectual standpoint, because in that sense He knows the way of every sinner, but He knows the way of the upright from an inward spiritual conscience of the similarity and unity of the way of the upright with His own way. So that in this higher sense, God has a moral and gracious union with His saved and holy creatures that He does not have with those who are disobedient, and who will have only a natural union with Him.

Now, in this gracious union that a creature may have with God, there are various degrees. First,

what we may call moral union, that is the union that a person may have with God on the plane of morality. There is a difference between a moral and a holy act. A moral act may be defined as one which is performed from a rigid sense of duty, and where the person feels in honor or in duty bound to perform the act, while the deep affections of the heart may not be in it. A holy act must involve the affectional nature, for there can be no such thing as holiness apart from love, and if moral acts are performed which do not flow readily, promptly and sweetly from the affections of the heart, they are not, in a true sense, holy acts.

The Bible recognizes that an act may be performed by the will power, from the coercive sense of conscience, from the effect of religious education and from the taste of a well-educated mind and yet not be filled with a deliberate choice and full affection of the heart. Such acts are performed by a determination of the will more than by the spontaneous promptings of a loving heart. Hence we read that "Amaziah did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but not with a perfect heart." And so there are multitudes today who are doing acts of morality and righteousness, and such actions are certainly according to God's Word and will. In so far as the bare act is right in itself, such persons are in accord with the letter of God's will and are in partial union with His will and character. But such union is only partial. It is a legal union more than a spiritual union.

The next stage of union with God is where a person determines to submit himself entirely to God's will on all points, whether agreeable or disagreeable, though it may involve pain and loss and sore trial. There can be this degree of union where the thought in the man is merely that of surrender or submission without the added thought of appropriating the fullness of God. There are multitudes in the church who intend to accept of what is popularly termed the "doctrine of a higher Christian life," but who regard it from a crucifixion standpoint as merely a life of submission to God's will. Hence we see in modern religious literature that surrender to God and perfect submission on all lines as set forth is the highest form of religious experience.

But such persons do not grasp the full Christian life as set forth in the New Testament, which stretches away leagues and leagues beyond the bare fact of enforced and constant submission of the will. The submission of the will to God on all points is the gateway to the fullness of the Spirit and the life of Jesus, but if the soul simply gets its idea, or simply gets its vision on nothing beyond this utter surrender of the will, it does not perceive the fullness of union with Jesus.

This is a state of Christian experience where the soul has determined it will not murmur, it will not rebel, where it has settled it that though the tears may flow, and the heart may be rent, and storms of trouble may come, and the pain may be long protracted, yet it will not resist the providence of

God, nor lift its hands against the Divine will. This is a great step in Christian life, and one that multitudes have not yet reached, but it is still a condition of experience where the soul has to put itself under great vigilance, and mount extra heavy guard to keep down the insurgent elements of the heart. To say the least, this experience does not bring the soul into full victory, nor does it keep the soul in a state of sweet restfulness in God. Such a person certainly has a large degree of union with the Divine will, and so far as the attitude of the determination is concerned, the will may be considered in perfect union with God. But there are other elements and faculties in the soul beside the will, or the power of determination, and in order to have perfect union with God there must be something more than the action of the will.

A still further step of union with God is that state where the soul not only performs the outward act that is right, and not only determines to be perfectly yielding to God on all points, but where the love of God is so received into the heart that the other affections become like God. Here the submission to God flows out from the affectional nature in such a way that the soul loves to submit to God and finds a supreme delight in sinking into His will at all times, in all places, and under all circumstances. In this condition, the affectional nature, with all its intuitive instincts and promptings and desires, becomes one with God, as well as the choices and determinations of the will.

This is the blessed state spoken of by David and by Jesus, when they said, "Lo, I come, I delight to do thy will, O God, and thy will is in my heart." The words, "Lo, I come," involve the deep determination of the will, which certainly brings it into union with God. But the added words, "I delight to do Thy will," involve the whole of the affectional nature flowing out towards the Divine purposes and the Divine character, in glad, happy, sweet abandonment. This is the state that is set forth in the Psalms and the New Testament, and the other Scriptures, as being the condition of true union with God. In this condition the soul does not have to set a continual sentry upon itself to keep down some suspected rebellion, but it is a state where all the desires, and sympathies, and affections are in such accord with God that they rest in Him and enjoy Him. Even in times of great trial and suffering, such a soul finds in God its highest and truest joy; in one sense we may say it finds in Him its only joy, for all other joys and blessings of every sort are received from God's will, and when they are taken away God's will and God's nature are just as blessed and precious as before.

Chapter 28 — Sensitive to God

There is in the human spirit a faculty which may properly be designated the God-sense. It is that interior organ on which God operates by the agency of the Holy Spirit; it is that part of our being which comes into immediate contact with Divine truth. There is a mysterious, indefinable link, connecting the soul with the body, where the brain and the mind are mysteriously connected; so there is a mysterious link in our spiritual being, where the Divine spirit and the human spirit join each other. And in like manner, as it is essential for the soul to be united to the body in order that the organs of the body shall live and perform their functions, so it is essential that the Divine spirit and the human spirit be united in order that the spiritual faculties be alive and perform their proper functions.

All men have a latent Divine sense, just as dead men have the nerve and brain tissues; but these latent organs of man's spirit must be made alive by the Divine spirit in regeneration and then purged, illuminated and intensified by the Divine spirit in sanctification. Hence we read in the Scriptures of being "alive from the dead," of being "dead to sin and alive to God" and of being swift or "quick to hear," having a "quick understanding." When we speak of being alive to God, a great many fail to apprehend its true meaning. It signifies that our sense of Divine things is wide awake, active, acute;

that we are intensely interested in God; that our soul is on the alert for Divine things; that our inward sensibilities are susceptible to the movements of God's Spirit; that we feel keenly the penetration of Divine truth and that the five senses of the inner soul are as really awake to the facts of the spiritual world as our physical senses are to the ever-shifting panorama of the physical world.

It was prophesied of Jesus that He should "be of quick understanding." The original has it "keen-scented." The illustration is from that of a quick-scented animal which is endowed with such acuteness of smell that it can detect the trail of a bird, or beast, or man, of which dull-scented creatures would be ignorant. All the spiritual faculties of Jesus were so pure and intense that He could detect the will of God; He could strike the trail of every truth and He could catch the vibration of far-off celestial voices of which other men around Him would be all unconscious.

We have illustrations in every department of life of extraordinary acuteness of certain senses and perceptions in various directions. A mother can be so intensely alive to the voice of her babe, that she will hear its faint cry when other ears equally as good as hers would not hear it. It is said that one of the queens of Europe, amidst the gaiety and merriment of a royal feast, heard the cry of her child in a distant apartment of the palace, and unceremoniously bounded away to it, when no one else had heard the sound.

Instances and illustrations could be multiplied along every pathway of life to prove the wonderful results of being keenly alive to certain things. To have the spiritual senses thus keenly alive to the person, the character, the Word and the work of God in Christ, is the greatest necessity in the moral universe. How few there are who look upon religion as a soul-sensitiveness to Divine things! The great bulk of religionists look upon religion as a sort of a humdrum of set forms and duties, and so many seem utterly incapable of grasping the true idea that the real Christian religion is a soul-life, a heart-sense, a heavenly sensibility by which we feel the sweep of Divine things.

To instance a few items: it is a sensitiveness to the Divine Person by which Christ is a reality and a personality not only as an intellectual conception but as One inwardly apprehended as such and felt to be such. When the heart is really sensitive to the God-head in Christ, it will very readily be sensitive to other Divine things and relations. The Word of God will then be really alive and apprehended as a living, spiritual force. When the soul is truly alive to God, the very reading of God's Word will attract our attention; we will perceive its spiritual accuracy; we will feel its penetration in the heart, and be inwardly sensitive to its every expression.

It is in such a state that the "Word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword." This sensitiveness to God will be manifested by the readiness with which we feel the

convictions or monitions of the Spirit. Persons truly sensitive to God will frequently receive something resembling telegraphic dispatches through the Holy Spirit, respecting opportunities, privileges, daily duties, instantaneous promptings in times of emergency, quick and gentle flashes of what ought to be said or done in certain cases, or intimations which none could understand unless there were a union of the spiritual nerve with the Holy Ghost. Perhaps in no department of Christian life will this sensitiveness to Divine things be brought into more constant play and requisition than in the realm of that manifold and delicate network of providence which God has established over His children.

While the great mass of professed Christians recognize a special providence, and in its more signal forms can detect the presence of God, yet it requires a thoroughly purified nature and quickness of spiritual discernment to perceive distinctly the presence of God in these minor forms of providence which surround us at every footstep of our journey.

When the storms are abroad and the winds are very high, the trees or the rigging of a ship will make wild music which even dull ears will hear; but an Aeolian harp set in a window will respond to the softest motions of the air and make delightful music out of those gentler movements of the atmosphere which coarser substances could never do. In like manner when God's providential tempests sweep across society, the great multitude

will distinctly recognize the voice of God, but those whose hearts are finely strung in unison with the Spirit will feel the daily breathings of those gentler movements of God in providence. They will send forth sounds of praise or prayer and respond to the quiet movements of God where many others would perceive only a dead calm of daily routine.

Chapter 29 — Necessity of Trusting God

Faith has two parts to it, belief and trust. The first is the apprehension of a promise or person, and the second, a confidence or dependence on the promise or person. Faith is always first a vision, and then a repose. Our Creator has so constructed everything in us and around us as to render faith a necessity. St. Paul speaks of our being “shut up to the faith,” and the verb signifies being entrapped or hemmed in, as to have no way out of despair and the awful problems of life, except by trusting our way out. And this is true whether applied to our moral or physical life.

We wake up and find ourselves here, and we know that some eternal power must have been behind us. We find ourselves constantly going forward to some endless future and we know instinctively there must be some power awaiting us in that future. To trust that power or being is one of the essential conditions of our having any peace.

To trust the Origin of our existence is the fundamental grace of life. Every virtue, every grace possible to the soul, must be the outcome of that fundamental trust. One of the infallible proofs that Scripture is the Word of God, is that its revelation of a life of faith agrees exactly with the constitution of things in relationship to our make-up and our environment. The very men that deny the supernatural in religion, and a life of faith in

matters of salvation, are themselves living a life of faith in matters of material, social and financial things.

Every animal, fish, bird and human being in this world is constantly living by faith, and is taking steps, or moving forward, giving credence either instinctively or rationally to something that lies beyond the five senses, and is reposing on a broad bed of boundless providence, of which each knows neither the beginnings, endings, or the million-fold intricacies.

The fidelity of God is that adorable perfection in His nature upon which everything in the universe lies down to rest. Our blessed Creator refers to His faithfulness more frequently in His Word than to any other of His attributes because it is His faithfulness that His creatures have to deal with more constantly, and more universally, than any other one attribute of His nature. Look at men in business life, and what is the one virtue that is more constantly and universally brought into play than that of fidelity, being true to their word, their engagements, their promises, their correspondence, their payments. This is the one virtue that stands out forever more conspicuously than friendship, or love, or knowledge, or wisdom, or any other human virtue. God's fidelity is in Him just what trust is in us.

Salvation is the marriage of human trust and Divine fidelity. Applying all these principles to a religious life, we find that a boundless confidence

in God, as He is revealed in Jesus, is a necessity for the following reasons:

1. Trusting a Divine Savior is a necessity in view of our sins. Every human being, civilized or savage, has the consciousness of sin, whether confessed or unconfessed, and every soul has an intuitive dread of some awful future calamity in consequence of sin. For thousands of years, men have been inventing numberless methods of dealing with sin, and how to get the monster separated from the soul. But no device has ever brought any sweet assurance of forgiveness and cleansing, except that which is revealed in Scripture, of confessing our sins to God, and leaving them at His disposal.

Thousands on thousands have tried every possible device—bodily torture, denying the appetites, culture, reason, poetry, meditation, good works, pilgrimages, solitude, heroism, sleeping in coffins, cutting and disfiguring the body, weeping, grieving, in fact everything that the human mind can invent. Nothing in six thousand years has ever brought a satisfactory dealing with sin, except looking in childlike submission to our incarnate, crucified, and risen God, and quietly letting Him take absolute charge of all our sins, and our inward corruption of nature, and dispose of them according to His own plan. We never get honey out of the rock till we leave our sins of every sort and degree for the blood to cover.

There is no outlet from a life of sin except by quietly confiding ourselves into the hands of Jesus, just as when we go to sleep we confide our breathing for the night to His infinite providence.

Real, saving faith is to let God manage our sins just as we let Him manage the shining of the light or the flow of the ocean, and repose on God's spiritual arrangements just as peacefully as our physical life reposes on His arrangement of natural law.

I rest my soul on the precious blood of Jesus just the same as I rest my eye on the light, or my lungs on the atmosphere, or my feet on the crust of the earth. The moment I break up that boundless trust, I am in a sea of distress; hence the only thing sensible for my soul's peace, is to trust the atonement of Jesus just as boundlessly as I trust the water I drink, or the air I breathe.

2. Trusting God is a necessity because of our ignorance and feebleness. We know so little of the past and the future, of the secrets of creation, and so little about ourselves, that of necessity we must lean upon a wisdom we do not see, a love we do not measure, a knowledge we do not comprehend. We must lean upon a secret, incessant, all-pervading government which we do not see, or touch, or taste, or hear, or smell.

What little knowledge we have of everything in us and about us serves mainly to disclose our littleness and weakness. We find ourselves in contact with great, giant forces that could at any moment destroy our life; wind could blow us down, the water drown us, the fire burn us, the cold freeze us, the gases strangle us, gravitation crush us, the darkness blind us. We can no more manage these elements on a world-wide scale than we could create a world, and yet we walk serenely amid these huge giants like Daniel resting in a den of hungry lions, because we instinctively trust an unseen and omnipotent God to regulate these elements and to take care of our littleness and ignorance.

Scripture reveals a spirit-world of mighty angels both good and bad, a terrible monster of sin in Satan, and numberless demons who plan and plot our ruin at every turn. But for the protection of God, our lives would be a torment from these wicked spirits, yet see how peacefully we glide along day after day through a thousand potential disasters, because of our instinctive trust in some infinite power that we so often fail to appreciate intelligently and to love tenderly.

3. It is a necessity that we trust God to take charge of and rule all our infirmities, short comings, and failures of every sort whatsoever. The most thorough salvation does not take from us a humiliating sense of our utter unworthiness. On

the other hand, the closer we get to God, the more keenly we see and feel our demerit and unworthiness.

There are some religious teachers who have an unscriptural and false way of putting this truth, by saying that the more God saves us the more we discover the depths of our sin. Such a statement is false, for both Scripture and experience prove that God can so purify and fill the human soul, that it is conscious of being freed from sin, and possessed with the living presence and holiness of Christ, as a piece of iron in the fire is pervaded with the fire. But the sweetest consciousness of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit does not destroy, at least in this life, that sweetly, sad, pathetic sense of unworthiness, weakness and infirmity before the ever blessed God.

Now what are we to do with these manifold thoughts, feelings, depressions and weaknesses that in so many are mingled with our everyday lives? Many good people have adopted all sorts of false theories and foolish practices with regard to these manifold imperfections, which are not in themselves sin. There are two extremes in dealing with our imperfections.

Some are very thoughtless and pay no attention to their daily imperfections, but give them a careless go-by. Others pay them too much attention, and keep themselves in a fever of self-recrimination, denouncing themselves, calling themselves all sorts of abusive terms and wearing long faces as if

self-vilification was the path to lofty and beautiful sainthood. No verily, it is only a trick of fine-spun self-righteousness.

The only true method is in humility to acknowledge every defect, to tell it to Jesus in utter self-surrender, and then to sweetly, lovingly, peacefully and constantly leave every one of them in the hands of our Savior God, just as we leave the exhalation of our breath in the ocean of air that envelops us. If you adopt any other method than trusting them with Jesus, you engender in your soul either religious recklessness or works of self-righteousness. Of course this implies that we are to watchfully avoid every defect and imperfection, without over-straining ourselves or putting ourselves in bondage.

Some saints over-strain themselves to avoid a supposed imperfection and the over-straining is a great deal more injurious than the very imperfection they are trying to conquer. As truly as you live, there is no way out of this tangled mass of unworthiness, but to trust yourself out in the arms of God.

4. Trusting ourselves unlimitedly to God is a necessity in view of the known and unending future. We cannot see a single hour ahead of us, and yet we know that we shall go on moving forward, either in this life or in another state of being, for hours, and days, and years, more

countless than the drops of water in the sea. As we look out in thought over the endless ages that stretch away before us, and think of what is to become of us in those countless centuries, it is almost enough to take our breath, and make us quiver with questions of possibilities that are to come. The only solution is that of trust. Everything in creation and revelation teaches us to commit ourselves for all future duration to the Omnipotent hand in which we quietly nestle today.

Chapter 30 — Thou Art My God

There is a fathomless depth to all the words of Scripture which grows upon us in broad bright ranges of significance as our inner spirit becomes more and more united to God Himself. Many times in the Bible do we come across the expression, "Thou art my God." What a revelation it is to us of the possibilities of union between the infinite Creator and His little creature! God gives Himself to us in the same proportion that we intelligently and believingly give ourselves up to Him, and in proportion to the room we make in our affections and thoughts for His occupancy. The secret of salvation and of all of the steps in spiritual life is in Divine appreciation, the receiving of Christ into ourselves, and through Christ receiving the three Persons of the blessed Godhead. We may arrange some thoughts on Divine appropriation in the following order:

1. What we amount to on all lines of salvation and Christian character depends on what we take in from the blessed Lord Jesus. It is true there is work for us to do, a repentance and a consecration, a renunciation of all sin, an emptying of ourselves of our own life and disposition. But all this would avail us nothing if we did not trustingly and lovingly embrace the personal Jesus as a Savior, and in Him receive, by

appropriating faith, His life, His graces and His holy character into our spirits. So then we are saved by what we take in from Jesus. We take His infinite merit to destroy our sins and sinfulness. We take His love to purify the cravings of our hearts. We take His authority as the rule of our lives. We take the interests of His Kingdom into our hearts, and make them our own personal interests, and thereby inflame our zeal in His service.

There are many religious zealots in the world who are working arduously only to build up sectarian establishments, or are pouring themselves out in various religious ambitions, or are working some selfish enterprise of their own, the echoes of whose toils will never be heard in eternity, because it is all of the creature. The only true religious work that is recognized in Heaven is where the soul yields up its own plans and life to God, takes into itself God's plan and the welfare of His kingdom and works directly for God Himself.

Our usefulness depends on how clearly we apprehend the interests of God's Kingdom. It depends on how closely we put ourselves in sympathy with God's personal feelings, and how lovingly and perseveringly we seek to do His work, for His own sake and in the very way we apprehend He would do it were He in our stead. Hence in our conversion, in our sanctification and in our good works, everything depends on taking Christ in personal relationship with us, and appropriating His merit as our own, His life as our

life, His interests and Kingdom as ours, so that through it all we can say, "Thou art my God."

2. In order to Divine appropriation, there must be a constant and clear perception of the personality of God, and also of the three Persons in the blessed unity of the Godhead. While the great mass of Christians believe that God is infinitely personal, yet to but very few is there a constant looking upon God as a real personality, with Whom they have to deal in every detail of life, and in every moment of duration.

With the great mass of mankind God is only a neuter noun of power. In nearly all departments of modern literature there is hardly a recognition of God as an infinite personality; His operations are referred to under the word, "nature," and the leading writers of the age speak of nature doing this or that, proving that the great bulk of so-called, civilized minds are living in the darkness of heathenism. This universal twilight respecting the close, intimate, personal relationship that God sustains to all men, extends its blighting influence to multitudes who deem themselves sincere Christians. It is only in the radiant shining of the indwelling Holy Ghost that the mind is delivered from this impersonal fog, and by which it comes to see that we are related to God by personal ties, more delicate and enduring than with all other beings in the universe put together.

To say “Thou art my God,” and to mean it in the Scriptural sense, implies a cloudless apprehension of His adorable person.

In the realm of astronomy, men seek to solve the silvery mist of the Milky Way, and reduce it to distinct orbs, and well-defined systems of worlds. In the study of chemistry, men search into the analysis of matter and seek to find the separate elements that compose the different forms of matter. Thus science travels from the vague to the well-defined, from confused star-dust to specific orbs. In like manner a soul that truly loves God and sets out seriously to be thoroughly acquainted with Him, is learning a supernatural science and with the keen vision of telescopic faith resolves what, to other minds, is only the glitter of impersonal attributes into a well-defined, ever-blessed individual God.

Such a soul will not rest short of a personal rest in the love and communion of a personal God; and such a soul will always discern a Divine person under every form of law, or every word of Scripture, or every event of providence or every form of matter. When we thus appropriate God as our own, our love is not in a system of religion, and we are not under the coercive lash of a set of laws, but we are governed by a Divine Person. The whole of our worship is not to carry out certain rules of life, but to be conformed to that very Person Who is luminously and lovingly revealed to the eye of faith as the Man, Christ Jesus.

3. As we take other advance steps in Divine appropriation, we see the utter weakness and insufficiency of all other persons but Himself. The bottom seems to drop out from all created fountains, and we readily see the end of all creature helps and consolations. In fact, these two truths are companions—the separate hemispheres of one truth, namely, as we are cut loose from all creatures, we more easily and deeply appropriate God; and vice versa, the more thoroughly we enter into oneness with the personal life of God, the more quietly and quickly we relinquish our hold upon all creatures.

God allows some of His children to undergo heart-rending experiences, or by mysterious chains of providence to suffer the desolation of all things, including temporal ease, earthly comforts, friends, worldly or churchly honors; and oftentimes to the utter disruption of everything in the outward life, there are added wild storms of inward troubles and sorrows, which resemble a terrific cyclone. Yet in multitudes of such cases God has made all these things the beautiful opportunities of coming into an unspeakable sweet union of personal relation and fellowship.

St. John, banished to the Isle of Patmos, cut off from human society, surrounded by wild beasts, and the melancholy roar of the sea surf on the shore, was the occasion for the most glorious revelation of the Lord Jesus, the opening of the

Heavenly world and the crowning revelations of Scripture truth. That experience of the apostle was a typical one, and has been repeated in varying degrees to thousands of souls.

Sometimes God's saints are islanded in a mysterious ocean of His dealings where no ships are allowed to stop, on purpose that He may draw them more deeply into Himself, and give them unfoldings so deep and still and powerful that the least intrusion of another would spoil them. Many times it is by the bitterness and injustice of others that the soul is led out into the inexpressible sweetness of the Divine nature. And so a real life of faith is full of paradoxes. The increase of all earthly loneliness increases and intensifies the society of God. The greater the depths of poverty, the more there is discovered the dazzling riches of the inner life of Jesus. The more daggers our fellowmen thrust at us, the more softly and tenderly do we feel the healing balm of the very heart of Christ.

4. This personal appropriation of God leads us to find Him everywhere. Every form in creation from a wild flower to a towering mountain becomes a thin veil under which we detect the presence of that personal infinite Will, which we love more than life. The value of everything in life or creation depends on its facility of leading us to God by the shortest and swiftest route.

The failure to see God everywhere, and to claim Him as our own at all times, is the reason why so many mismanage the sorrows and calamities of life. If we fail to receive God in every trouble and sorrow that comes to us, we don't get out of it what God intended. The One Who loves us so infinitely is perpetually coming to our door in disguise, and because He does not wear the beautiful clothing in which we think God should dress, we miss our blessings. Nothing but faith, pure faith, can look through the variegated drapery of circumstances in which God clothes Himself. The more ardently we love anyone, the more swiftly can we detect his presence. And when we are aflame with love for God, we can hear His footfall, detect the stillness of His inward voice and descry the movement of His hand, when other persons think it is nothing but a whim, or the rustling of dry leaves by the wind.

5. The highest form of Divine appropriation is that by which we receive Him so deeply into our thoughts and choices and desires, that we spontaneously imitate Him. We unconsciously repeat the movements of any thing or person at which we steadily gaze. When the soul truly makes God its own, it enters into a secret life with God. It gets an intuitive insight into God's behavior and the movement of His mind and purposes. It continually gathers upon itself those traits of Christ's character which are the very opposite of those of the men of this world, such as calmness,

restfulness, insight into men and things, extreme simplicity of life and manners, impartiality, and limitless charity and a spontaneous humility that utterly ignores what the world calls great and fine. The soul seems to see God at work, and imitates Him more than it is aware of.

Blessed are they who can open every part of their being without reserve to God, and appropriate Him through the channel of Christ's humanity, in all His character and ever-blessed Person and say continually, "O God, Thou art my God."