



Daily Devotional Readings

Taken from the Works of
Robert Murray M'Cheyne

Booklet Five
September and October

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September First

Precious Bible

“He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young” Isaiah 40:11.

I shall never forget the story of a little girl in Belfast, in Ireland. She was at a Sabbath school, and gained a Bible as a prize for her good conduct. It became to her a treasure indeed. She was fed out of it. Her parents were wicked. She often read to them, but they became worse and worse. This broke Eliza's heart. She took to her bed and never rose again. She desired to see her teacher. When he came he said, “You are not without a companion, my dear child,” taking up her Bible. “No,” she replied —

“Precious Bible! what a treasure
Does the word of God afford!
All I want for life or pleasure,
Food and med'cine, shield and sword.
Let the world account me poor,
Having this, I ask no more.”

She had scarcely repeated the lines when she hung back her head and died. Beloved children, this is the way Jesus feeds His flock. He is a tender, constant, almighty Shepherd. If you become His flock, He will feed you all the way to glory.

September Second

Prize the Lord's Day

“This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it” Psalm 118:24.

Prize the Lord's Day. The more that others despise and trample

on it, love you it all the more. The louder the storm of blasphemy howls around you, sit the closer at the feet of Jesus. "He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet." Diligently improve all holy time. It should be the busiest day of the seven; but only in the business of eternity. Avoid sin on that holy day. God's children should avoid sin every day, but most of all on the Lord's Day. It is a day of double cursing as well as of double blessing. The world will have to answer dreadfully for sins committed in holy time. Spend the Lord's Day in the Lord's presence. Spend it as a day in heaven. Spend much of it in praise and in works of mercy, as Jesus did.

September Third

The believer crowned

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us" 2 Timothy 2:12.

The late Duke of Hamilton had two sons. The eldest fell into consumption, when a boy, which ended in his death. Two ministers went to see him at the family seat, near Glasgow, where he lay. After prayer, the youth took his Bible from under his pillow, and turned up 2 Timothy 4:7, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness;" and added, "This, sirs, is all my comfort!" When his death approached, he called his younger brother to his bed, and spoke to him with great affection. He ended with these remarkable words: "And now, Douglas, in a little time you will be a duke, but I shall be a king."

September Fourth

Pictures

"... because as he is, so are we in this world" 1 John 4:17.

If you love an absent person, you will love their picture. What is that the sailor's wife keeps so closely wrapped in a napkin, laid up in her best drawer among sweet-smelling flowers? She takes it out morning and evening, and gazes at it through her tears. It is the picture of her absent husband. She loves it because it is like him. It has many imperfections, but still it is like him. Believers are the

pictures of God in this world. The Spirit of Christ dwells in them. They walk as He walked. True, they are full of imperfections; still they are true copies. If you love Him, you will love them; you will make them your bosom friends.

September Fifth

He will feed you

“I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture” John 10:9.

If Jesus has saved you, He will feed you. He will feed your body. “I have been young, and now am old; yet never saw I the righteous forsaken, nor His seed begging bread.”

The birds without barn or storehouse are fed;
From them let us learn to trust for our bread:
His saints what is fitting shall ne'er be denied,
So long as 'tis written — The Lord will provide.

He will feed your soul. He that feeds the little flower in the cleft of the craggy precipice, where no hand of man can reach it, will feed your soul with silent drops of heavenly dew.

September Sixth

Peace perfect peace

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

God is to you the “very God of peace.” Once He was to you the God of vengeance, but now He is the very God of peace. You can look back on a time when you lived under the wrath of the great God that made you. God was angry with you every day. You were altogether born in sin. Your heart was altogether depraved. You heaped up wrath against the day of wrath. Oh! do you not wonder that you are not in hell!

But you have fled to the bleeding lamb, guilty and perishing. You have taken shelter in His wounds. You have this day openly

accepted Him. Oh! if this be true, the God is the very God of peace to you. If I could this day go up into heaven, and open the books, and look into the records of the world, I would find your sins all blotted out, as a thick cloud; I would look up in the face of God and see Him smiling over you, saying, Thy sins and thine iniquities will I remember no more.

Dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, rejoice evermore, for the God of vengeance is to you the very God of peace.

September Seventh

Enough in Christ

“Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus” 2 Timothy 2:1.

There is enough in Christ to supply the need of all His people. An old minister says, A child can carry little water from the sea in its two hands, and so it is little we get out of Christ. There are unsearchable riches in Him. Be strong in the grace that is in Him. Live out of yourself, and live upon Him; go and tell Him, that since He requires all this of thee, He must give thee grace according to your need. My God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. He hath showed you one that is good, even the fair Immanuel: now lean upon Him; get life from Him that shall never die; get living water from Him that shall never dry up. Let His hand hold you up amid the billows of this tempestuous sea. Let His shoulder carry you over the thorns of this wilderness. Look as much to Him for sanctification as for justification.

So will your walk be close with God,
Calm and serene your frame;
So purer light shall mark the road
That leads you to the Lamb.

September Eighth

Our truest joy

“And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in

righteousness and true holiness” Ephesians 4:24.

It is the chief glory and joy of a soul to be like God. You remember this was the glory of that condition in which Adam was created. “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” His understanding was without a cloud. He saw, in some measure, as God seeth. His will flowed in the same channel with God’s will. His affections fastened on the same objects which God also loved. When man fell, we lost all this, and became children of the devil, and not children of God. But when a lost soul is brought to Christ, and receives the Holy Ghost, he puts off the old man, and puts on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. It is our true joy in this world to be like God. Too many rest in the joy of being forgiven, but our truest joy is to be like Him. O rest not, beloved, till you are renewed after His image, till you partake of the Divine nature. Long for the day when Christ shall appear, and we shall be fully like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

September Ninth

A Gospel of holiness

“For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead” 2 Corinthians 5:14.

The life of holiness is not what the world falsely represents it — a life of preciseness and painfulness, in which a man crosses every affection of his nature. There is no such thing as self-denial, in the Popish sense of that word, in the religion of the Bible. The system of restrictions and self-crossings, is the very, system which Satan hath set up as a counterfeit of God’s way of sanctifying. It is thus that Satan frightens away thousands from Gospel Peace and Gospel holiness; as if to be a sanctified man were to be a man who crossed every desire of his being, who did everything that was disagreeable and uncomfortable to him. My friends, our text distinctly shows you that it is not so.

We are constrained to holiness by the love of Christ; the love of Him who loved us, is the only cord by which we are bound to the service of God. The scourge of our affections is the only scourge

that drives us to duty. Sweet bands, and gentle scourges! Who would not be under their power?

September Tenth

Moses and Hobab

“And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of Raguel the Midianite, Moses’ father in law, We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel”
Numbers 10:29.

So it was with Moses. Hobab had been his friend for forty years, in the land of Midian, where Moses married his sister, and lived in his father Raguel’s house. In that time. I doubt not, Moses had told him much of Israel’s God and Israel’s coming glory. Many a time, while they fed their flocks in this very wilderness, Moses had reasoned with him of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, till Hobab trembled.

Still it would seem Hobab was not quite convinced. He doubted — he lingered, He had been awed by the terrors of Sinai, but not won by the love of Calvary. He did not know whether to go or stay. But the hour of decision came. He must decide now. Now was the heart of Moses stirred in him: “Come thou with us. and we will do thee good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel.”

So it was with Paul, when he himself had tasted the joy and peace of believing; then says he: “My heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.”

So it was with Andrew: “Andrew first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Christ.”

So it was with the poor maniac whom Jesus healed: “Go home, tell thy friends how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and how He hath had compassion on thee.” So it was with the poor slave in Antigua, who used to pray that there might be a full heaven and an empty hell.

Question: Is it so with you? Have you asked your friends to come with you? Have you a father whom you love? A mother that carried you at her breast? Have you a brother or a sister? Are they lingering like Hobab? Oh I will you not put in a word for Christ, and say:

“Come thou with us, and we will do thee good.” Have you a friend whom you love much, who knows nothing of Christ and of God, who is willing to die in the wilderness? Oh! will you not win him to go with you to Israel’s God and Israel’s glory?

September Eleventh

Faith is the victory

“By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days” Hebrews 11:30.

There is many a Jericho in our own heart walled up to heaven, many a fortress of sin, many giant lusts which threaten our souls. “O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” “If the Lord delight in us, He will bring us into the good land.” By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were compassed about seven days. God made the walls of Jericho fall flat, by a mere breath of wind — a noise; so He is able still. Settle it in your hearts; there is no Jericho in your hearts.

September Twelfth

The believer’s joy

“Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore” Psalm 16:11.

The greatest joy of a believer in this world is to enjoy the presence of Christ — not seen, not felt, not heard, but still real — the real presence of the unseen Saviour. It is this makes secret prayer sweet, and sermons sweet, and sacraments sweet, when we meet with Jesus in them: “I have set the Lord always before me. Because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.”

Often Jesus hides His face, and we are troubled. We seek Him whom our soul loveth, but He is gone. We rise and seek, but find Him not. At the best, it is but half bliss to feel after an unseen Saviour. Suppose a husband and wife parted by many seas. It is sweet to have letters and love tokens, and to see a friend who left him well; but this will not make up for his presence. So we mourn an absent Lord.

But when He comes we shall be with Him. “In Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures forever more” (Psalm 16:11). Here we have drops and gleams of pleasure. Christ could not be happy without us. We are His body. If one child of God were wanting, He would not be complete. We are His fullness. Hence His prayer: “Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me” (John 17:24).

We could not be happy without Christ. Take us to the golden pavement, the pearly gates, the songs, the thrones, the palms, the angels, we would still say, Where is the God-man that died for me? Where is the Angel that redeemed me from all evil? Where is Jesus? Where is the side that was pierced? “We shall see His face.” The Lamb is the light thereof. We shall stand with the Lamb upon mount Zion. We shall never be parted more.

September Thirteenth

Read the Bible

“Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law” Psalm 119:18.

If ye be led by the Spirit, ye will love the Bible. You will say, Oh, “how love I Thy law, it is my meditation all the day.” Be determined to learn something new out of the Bible every day. “I have lost a world of time,” said one, when dying. “If I had another year to live, I would spend it in reading David’s Psalms and Paul’s Epistles.” Oh, be wiser in your Bibles than in the newspaper. What good will all that ever you read in the newspaper do when you are dying? Alas! for my beloved land, when the newspaper drives the Bible from its place by the cottage fire.

September Fourteenth

A Covenant God

“God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord” 1 Corinthians 1:9.

Look around you. The world lying in wickedness is against you. “I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves.” O, look down to

hell; there are crafty devils — mighty spirits of evil, all, against you. How, then, should we hope such things from you? Ah! God is faithful, who also will do it. I lean my back upon the Rock of Ages, and I feel there is enough in Him to enable me to stand against all the world. If you are joined to Christ, God is for you; God the Father is a shield all around you; God the Holy Ghost is within you. If you are joined to Christ, then God is a covenant God to you.

September Fifteenth

The third heaven of the believer's privileges

“For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself”
Romans 14:7.

Surely this privilege is more than all that went before. Peace with God is a blessed thing, but it does not imply that the heart is burning with intense joy and love in view of a reconciled God. Access to His favour is a blessed thing; but it only implies liberty of coming before Him with acceptance. Joy in hope of glory is a blessed thing; but is in the nature of it a happiness whose object is unenjoyed and afar off. Joy in tribulation, again, is a blessed thing; but it is a happiness which can only be enjoyed upon earth. It is a joy, too, in spite of misery — a perfecting, but surely not a perfect joy. But joy in God is the most blessed thing of all. This is the third heaven of the believer's privileges — a joy which all redeemed are sharing with angels — a joy begun in this world, made perfect in glory.

September Sixteenth

Because He lives

“I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen” Revelation 1:18.

Believers, this is your Saviour. Soon you shall see Him as He is. Till then, “Fear not.” Your Advocate is alive for evermore. He reigns for ever for His Church and people. All that divine wisdom is for us, His eyes are for us — His feet to tread down His and our enemies. “He walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, and holds the stars in His right hand.” There is no hiding of His

glory now — no hiding of His power. He lives for us — no evil can befall us — ”Fear not.”

September Seventeenth

Much more

“If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?” Matthew 7:11.

Men are apt to think that the only good of hiding in Christ is to save our souls, that when an awakened sinner hides in the Lord Jesus, he finds pardon of all sin and peace with God, but nothing more. But the whole Bible shows that there is much more in Christ; that when we hide in Him, we are saved from all our distresses; from our troubles about health, about money, about the world. In the thirty-fourth Psalm, it is mentioned four times over, that when we come to Christ we are saved, not out of one trouble, but out of all our troubles: “I sought the Lord; He heard, and delivered me from all my fears” (verse 4). “This poor man cried, and the LORD heard, and saved him out of all his troubles” (verse 6). “The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles” (verse 17). “Many are the afflictions of the righteous, yet the LORD delivereth them out of them all” (verse 19). And the reason is plain, when we hide in Jesus, the God of providence becomes our God and Father, and we know He will make all things work together for our good. The Lord is our shepherd, we shall not want. Whatever temporal good may be taken away, we know that our eternal good is secure: “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.”

September Eighteenth

Outlets of His glory

“But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed” Isaiah 53:5.

The wounds of Christ were the greatest outlets of His glory that

ever were. The divine glory shone more out of His wounds than out of all His life before. The veil was then rent in twain, and the full heart of God allowed to stream through. It was a human body that writhed, pale and racked, upon the accursed tree; they were human hands that were pierced so rudely by the nails; it was human flesh that bore that deadly gash upon the side; it was human blood that streamed from hands, and feet, and side; the eye that meekly turned to His Father was a human eye; the soul that yearned over His mother was a human soul. But oh, there was divine glory streaming through all; every wound was a mouth to speak of the grace and love of God!

September Nineteenth

A harp of praise

“How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land” Psalm 137:4.

Every believer has a harp. Every heart that has been made new is turned into a harp of praise. The mouth is filled with laughter, the tongue with divinest melody. Every true Christian loves praise; the holiest Christians love it most. But when the believer falls into sin and darkness, his harp is on the willows, and he cannot sing the Lord’s song, for he is in a strange land.

September Twentieth

Holiness

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

When a soul comes to close with Christ he is not made perfectly holy all at once: “The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” Just as you have seen the day struggling with the darkness, then with clouds, till the sun bursts forth in meridian splendour; so is it with the holiness of a Christian. Just as in the richest lands, after the deepest ploughing, weeds will still grow up among the corn; so, many roots of bitterness remain in the believer’s heart.

Paul thanked God for the grace that was given to the Corinthians, that they came behind in no gift; and yet he says they had strife, and envy, and divisions, so that he could not call them spiritual, but carnal. So is it with every Christian heart. Weeds grow up in the best cultivated gardens. There is enough in Christ to supply all our need. It is our own fault that we are not holy as God is holy. It is not in Christ, but in ourselves, that we are straitened. The shower of grace is plentiful enough, and more than enough; but we do not open our mouth wide.

But every soul in Christ hates sin — pants after holiness. Nothing, makes him pant more after God than corruption striving within. Paul never prayed more earnestly than when he had the thorn in his flesh. The thorn in the flesh makes us pant after God.

September Twenty-first

Distance makes no difference

“But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren” Luke 22:32.

Brethren, if you had been behind some of the trees on Tabor’s mount, and heard Him mention your name in prayer, saying, I do not pray for Peter only, or for James, or John, but for this soul. Father, sanctify this soul through Thy truth. Father, I will that this soul be with Me where I am, that it may behold My glory. Say, doubting sinner, if you had heard Christ mentioning thy name, would it not have given you peace? Does distance make any difference? Suppose you heard a friend praying for you in the next room, or suppose you were told that a friend residing in a foreign land prayed for you, would it make any difference? Now, supposing you are told Christ prays for you — for He prays for all His believing people — will you not take the comfort of it?

September Twenty-second

Fullness of joy

“Your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you” John 16:22.

For my own part, I never knew what joy was till I felt that Jesus

had died for me — that He lived for me and reigned for me. The world can give you a little joy; but here is fullness of joy.

September Twenty-third

Faith's view of Christ

“And when he had so said, he showed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord” John 20:20.

When the Lord of glory left His Father's bosom, and came into this world, we are sure it was for a purpose suited to His divine nature. Christ came to make men glad. It was said of Him, “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord hath appointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek.” Ah! sure, He must be a good Saviour that was to bind up broken hearts, and to make all men glad. Therefore, when He came, He said, “That your joy might be full.” And you see in the verse before our text, His first words to His disciples were, “Peace be unto you.”

But the devil wants you to believe that we want to take away your mirth and joy. He is a liar, and he was a liar from the beginning. Jesus came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them; so do we. We come to break your false joy, to awaken you from your dream, before you be dashed into the burning lake. Ah! we come to give you fullness of joy that cannot wither, joy that cannot die.

True, believers have sorrow; they have a poor, frail body, and they may have false friends. They may have ungodly children; they have temptations and persecutions. The world knows nothing of these sorrows. But they have a joy that the world cannot give or take away. They have a joy to balance all their sorrows; they have “joy unspeakable and full of glory.” It is a joy that will never die. It will be brighter and brighter throughout an endless eternity.

September Twenty-fourth

Take away the stone

“Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days” John 11:39.

Christ's ways are not as our ways, nor His thoughts like our thoughts. One would have thought that He would have commanded the stone to fly back by His own word.

When He rose from the dead Himself, "the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door and sat upon it;" but He did not do so now. He said to the men: "Take ye away the stone" for two reasons.

1. He wanted to bring out Martha's unbelief, that it might be made manifest. Unbelief in the heart is like evil humour in a wound — it festers; and therefore Jesus wanted to draw it out of Martha's heart.

2. To teach us to use the means. The men around the grave could not give life to dead Lazarus, but they could roll back the stone. Now Jesus was about to use His divine power in awaking the dead, but He would not take away the stone.

Have any of you an unconverted friend for whom you pray? You know it is only Christ that can give him life — it is only Christ that can call him forth; yet you can roll away the stone — you can use the means; you can bring your friend under the faithful preaching of the gospel. Speak to him — write to him. "Take ye away the stone."

September Twenty-fifth

The voice of the shepherd

"And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers" John 10:4, 5.

You know, brethren, this is the characteristic of the sheep of the east, they know the shepherd's voice. There was once a traveller in the east who denied that they knew the voice of the shepherd, and contended that it was the clothes they knew; and to prove it, they changed clothes. The person called the sheep, and they moved not; but when the shepherd called them, they instantly followed him. Now, this is just the way with Christ and His sheep. Christ may be disguised, but faith hears His voice.

The first time they hear His voice is the time of conversion. You remember Zacchaeus, he was up in the sycamore tree, and he might

think, “Christ’s word will not reach me;” but Christ said to him, “Come down, Zacchaeus, for today I must abide at thy house.” The voice of the shepherd reached him. This was the first day that Zacchaeus heard the shepherd’s voice. You remember Lydia, she sat among the Grecian matrons by the riverside, and heard Paul preach. Someone opened her heart, and said, “Come away;” it was the voice of the shepherd. “The Lord opened the heart of Lydia to attend unto the things that were spoken.” It was the outward voice of Paul, but it was the inward voice of Christ.

September Twenty-sixth

The wonder of it all

“Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are born by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb: And even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you” Isaiah 46:3, 4.

There are times in the life of a believer when he is like a traveller who has arrived at some high eminence; he can look back on the way he has gone and the way he has yet to go. So this is a passage where God tells us what He has done and what He will yet do. The history of a believer is wonderful, whether we look backward or forward. If we look back, there is election in a past eternity; and if we look forward, there is deliverance and final victory. As Christ’s name is “Wonderful,” so all the members of His body are wonderful, for they are “men wondered at.”

September Twenty-seventh

Look to the cross

“Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father” Galatians 1:4.

Some are saying, Oh that the world were crucified to me, and I to the world! Oh that my heart were as dead as a stone to the world, and alive to Jesus! Do you truly wish it? Look, then, to the cross.

Behold the amazing gift of love. Salvation is promised to a look. Sit down, like Mary, and gaze upon a crucified Jesus. So will the world become a dim and dying thing. When you gaze upon the sun, it makes everything else dark; when you taste honey, it makes everything else tasteless: so when your soul feeds on Jesus, it takes away the sweetness of all earthly things, — praise, pleasure, fleshly lusts, all lose their sweetness. Keep a continued gaze. Run, looking unto Jesus. Look, till the way of salvation by Jesus fills up the whole horizon, so glorious and peace-speaking. So will the world be crucified to you, and you unto the world.

September Twenty-eighth

Love for the Lord's Day

“Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come” 1 Corinthians 16:2.

All days of the year are Christ's, but He hath marked out one in seven as peculiarly His own. “He hath made it,” or marked it out. Just as He planted a garden in Eden, so He hath fenced about this day and made it His own.

This is the reason why we love it, and would keep it entire. We love everything that is Christ's. We love His word. It is better to us than thousands of gold and silver. “O how we love His law! it is our study all the day.” We love His house. It is our trysting-place with Christ, where He meets with us and communes with us from off the mercy-seat. We love His table. It is His banqueting-house, where His banner over us is love — where He looses our bonds, and anoints our eyes, and makes our hearts burn with holy joy. We love His people, because they are His, members of His body, washed in His blood, filled with His Spirit, our brothers and sisters for eternity. And we love the Lord's Day, because it is His. Every hour of it is dear to us — sweeter than honey, more precious than gold. It is the day He rose for our justification. It reminds us of His love, and His finished work, and His rest. And we may boldly say that man does not love the Lord Jesus Christ who does not love the entire Lord's Day.

September Twenty-ninth

A holy carefulness

“But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light” Ephesians 5:13.

Remember you must have a holy carefulness: “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.” Dear brethren, some of you will say, How is it possible? Do not I live in an ungodly family? Do I not live in Sodom? But, dear brethren, here is the secret. If you will not be like the world, be transformed to it. God is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. God is able to enlarge your heart so that you will run and not weary in God’s ways. Then be of good courage, for there is enough in Christ to satisfy you. Do you want to be holy? Then God wishes to make you holy. Then God’s will and yours are one. Say, then, “Make me holy, I want to be holy.” Holiness is the brightest attribute of Jehovah.

Ah! I fear we are not living up to what is in Christ, or we would not live as we do. How much useless talk and conversation is there? Oh! the time of our life is more than sufficient to have wrought the will of the flesh. Let us now live to Him. Let us give ourselves away to Christ — solemnly to Him; give your wills and affections to Him for time and for eternity. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with your spirit. Amen.

September Thirtieth

A vent for His love

“Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again” John 10:17.

“Therefore doth My Father love Me because I lay down My life.” I do not know any word in the Bible that is more sweet to meditate on than the love of the Father to the Son. There are many things that induce the Father to love the Son. He loved Him for His Godhead. But here is another reason why the Father loves the Son — He loves Him for His holy manhood. “He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and

separate from sinners.” God never saw anything so like Himself. When God made Adam, He said, “It is very good;” but oh! when He saw Jesus, He saw a loveliness in Him such as He never saw in any created thing.

But here is another reason why the Father loves Him: “Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life.” We are told that He grew in favour both with God and man. He was every day fulfilling a part of His holy obedience, until He came to the last, and then the Father saw obedience as He had never seen it before. Oh, brethren! it was love that was never seen before, that He should die for the lowest — for the vilest. And that appears to be another reason why Jesus died: it is, that the Father got a vent for His love to flow out to sinners: “Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life.”

October First

No thorn, no throne

“And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” Revelation 7:14.

Every one that gets to the throne must put their foot upon the thorn. The way to the crown is by the cross. We must taste the gall if we are to taste the glory. When justified by faith, God led them into tribulations also. When God brought Israel through the Red Sea, He led them into the wilderness; so, when God saves a soul, He tries it. He never gives faith without trying it. The way to Zion is through the Valley of Baca. You must go through the wilderness of Jordan if you are to come to the Land of Promise. Some believers are much surprised when they are called to suffer. They thought they would do some great thing for God; but all that God permits them to do is to suffer. Go round every one in glory, — every one has a different story, yet every one has a tale of suffering. One was persecuted in his family, — by his friends and companions; another was visited by sore pains and humbling disease, — neglected by the world; another was bereaved of children; another had all these afflictions meeting in one, — deep called unto deep. Mark, all are

brought out of them. It was a dark cloud, but it passed away; the water was deep, but they have reached the other side. Not one of them blames God for the road He led them: "Salvation" is their only cry. Is there any of you, dear children, murmuring at your lot? Do not sin against God. This is the way God leads all His redeemed ones. You must have a palm as well as a white robe. No pain, no palm; no cross, no crown; no thorn, no throne; no gall, no glory. Learn to glory in tribulations also. "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us."

October Second

Make haste my Beloved

"Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices" Song of Solomon 8:14.

It is the presence of Christ that makes a sweet time of refreshing in a Church. When He comes leaping on the mountains, skipping upon the hills, the flowers immediately appear on the earth. The Lord's people are quickened in all their graces; they begin to sing songs of deliverance; anxious souls spring up like the grass; and the whole garden of the Lord sends out spices. Ah! if the Lord Jesus were to come in here with power, I would preach and you would hear in another way than we do. I could not be so hardhearted, and you would be melted under His Word. Oh! will you not pray, "Make haste, my Beloved, and be Thou like to a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices." Is not such a time desirable?

October Third

A hymn of prayer

"And Jabez was more honourable than his brethren: and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow. And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested" 1 Chronicles 4:9, 10.

O God of Israel, hear my prayer!
Let me Thy richest blessings share;
Thy blessings shall my portion be;
Oh! let that blessing rest on me!

If shining suns my path attend,
And all their cheering influence lend;
Thy blessing still I'll most desire,
To that my highest hopes aspire.

Or, if affliction's storm shall low'r,
I'll trust Thee in the darkest hour;
On Thee I'll rest my anxious mind,
And in Thy blessing comfort find.

'Preserve me from the snares of sin,
And ever keep my conscience clean:
Till all the cares of life shall cease,
And, blessing Thee, I die in peace!'

Thus pious Jabez often prayed,
Reclining on Jehovah's aid;
And all who seek the Lord shall find
The God of Jabez still as kind.

O children! who assemble here,
With holy love and humble fear.
Like him present the fervent prayer,
And in God's richest blessing share.

October Fourth

Family government

“For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him” Genesis 18:19.

There are three things very remarkable in these words.

1. That Abraham used parental authority in governing his family: “I know him, that he will command his children and servants after him.” He did not think it enough to pray for them, or to teach them,

but he used the authority which God had given him — he commanded them.

2. That he cared for his servants as well as his children. In Genesis 14:14, we learn that Abraham had three hundred and eighteen servants born in his house. He lived after the manner of patriarchal times; as the Arabs of the wilderness do to this day. His family was very large, and yet he did not say, “They are none of mine.” He commanded his children and his household.

3. His success: “They shall keep the way of the Lord.” It is often said that the children of good men turn out ill. Well, here is a good man, and a good man doing his duty by his children — and here is the result. His son Isaac was probably a child of God from his earliest years. There is every mark of it in his life. And what a delightful specimen of a believing, prayerful servant was Eliezer! (Genesis 24).

It is the duty of all believers to rule their houses well.

October Fifth

Jesus bids us shine

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven”
Matthew 5:16.

Shine with Christ’s light. The moon rises and shines, but not with her own light, she gathers all from the sun; so do you. Shine in such a way that Christ shall have all the glory. They shine brightest who feel most their own darkness, and are most clothed in Christ’s brightness. Oh! wherever you go, make it manifest that your light and peace all come from Him; that it is by looking unto Jesus that you shine; that your holiness all comes from union to Him. “Let your light so shine before men.”

Shine in your closet in secret prayer. Ah! let your face shine in secret communion with God.

Shine in your family; that without the word you may gain their souls.

Shine in your town; that, when you mingle with the crowd, it may be as if an angel shook his wings.

Shine in the world; embrace every shore with the beams of living

love.

Oh! let your heart's desire and prayer be, that every soul may be saved. And whenever a soul sinks into the dark lake of eternal agony, may you be able to lift up your tearful eyes and say: Father, I have prayed to the last, and spoken to the last. "Even so. Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight."

October Sixth

Care of new converts

"He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep" John 21:17.

Do not forget to carry on the work in hearts brought to a Saviour. I feel this was one of my faults in the ministry. Nourish babes; comfort downcast believers; counsel those perplexed; perfect that which is lacking in their faith. Prepare them for sore trials. I fear most Christians are quite unready for days of darkness.

October Seventh

A new name

"To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out" John 10:3.

This, first of all, shows the complete knowledge He has of the sheep. You remember Zaccheus, when he was a stray sheep. Christ said to him when he was in the tree, "Come down; for today I must abide at thine house." You remember Nathaniel, when a stray sheep under the fig-tree, "He saw him." You remember, after His resurrection, He saw Mary, and said to her, "Mary;" and she turned herself, and said unto Him, "Rabboni: which is to say, Master." So it is still. Ministers do not know you; elders do not know you; but Christ knows you, and He calls His own sheep by name, and they follow Him.

And this implies, also, the love of Christ. You know when you love one, you love their name. Christ does not only know you, but He calls you by His name. John called Bethany, “the town of Mary and her sister Martha.” Christ loves the names of those for whom He died. Your names are graven on His heart, and on the palms of His hands; and this shows He changes their names. He said to Abraham, “Thy name shall no more be called Abram, but Abraham shall thy name be.” And you remember He said of Peter, “Thy name shall be called Peter,” which means a stone. So it implies that they get a new name, that is, a new nature. And, when we come to the temple above, He says: “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from My God; and I will write upon him My new name.” And you that are of the world, if you will come, you will get a new name.

October Eighth

Be found on the right side

“Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord’s side? let him come unto me” Exodus 32:26.

There are three things which Christ does as a king to every saved soul. The first is at conversion, see Acts 5:31: “Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.” You will notice that the office of Christ as King is to give repentance and forgiveness of sins. It is His work to say, “Live!” Ah! friends, has He done this to you? Observe, it is not the work of man: “He will not give His glory to another, neither His praise to graven images.” It is from His throne at the right hand of God that He sends the Spirit, and makes three thousand cry out, “Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?” It is a most affecting truth I have shown you, that you may be a member of His kingdom, and not a member of His grace.

Another kingly act of Christ over His Church is to forgive sins. “The Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins.” Ah! dear friends, it is a kingly act to give pardon.

The third work that Christ does as a King over His body is to sanctify them. It is written in Micah, “Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgressions of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He delighteth in mercy” (Micah 7:18). Those whom the king pardons He subdues. Ah! dear friends, enquire if Christ is your King, by His subduing you. How happy are those of you who can say, Christ is my King! Dear friends, enquire if you are under this third crown. The third is the sweetest of all. He wears all His other crowns for this one.

It is interesting to notice that in the first ages of the Church, Christians were martyred for the priestly office of Christ: at the Reformation they were martyred for His prophetic office: and it is reserved, it may be, for us to be martyred for His kingly office: it was this, you remember, the Covenanters were martyred for. How necessary then, to be found on the right side!

October Ninth

All to Jesus I surrender

“What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?” Isaiah 5:4.

He thought nothing too much to do and to suffer for us. While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Greater love than this hath no man. All His life, between the manger at Bethlehem and the Cross of Calvary, was spent in labours and infinite sufferings for us. All that we needed to suffer, He suffered; all that we need to obey, He obeyed. All His life in glory He spends for us. He ever liveth to make intercession for us. He is head over all things for us — makes everything in all worlds work together for our good. It is all but incredible that each person of the Godhead has made Himself over to us to be ours. The Father says, “I am thy God;” the Son, “fear not, for I have redeemed thee;” the Holy Ghost makes us a Temple: “I will dwell in them, and walk in them.” Is it much that we should do all we can for Him — that we should give ourselves up to Him who gave Himself for us?

October Tenth

It will be worth it all

“Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour” 1 Corinthians 3:8.

The labour that Christ blesseth is believing labour. It is not words of human wisdom, but words of faith, that God makes arrows. The word of a little maid was blessed in the house of Naaman the Syrian. “Follow Me” was made the arrow to pierce the heart of Matthew. It is all one to God to save, whether with many, or with them that have no might. If you would do all you can, the town would be filled with the fragrance. Christ will reward it. He defended Mary’s work of love, and said it should be spoken of over all the world, and it will yet be told in the judgment. A cup or cold water He will not pass over. “Well done, good and faithful Servant.”

October Eleventh

The blessed prayer of the bride

“He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus” Revelation 22:20.

Even the most enlightened believers are walking here in a darksome night, or twilight at most; and the visits of Jesus to the soul do but serve to make the surrounding darkness more visible. But the night is far spent, the day is at hand. The day of eternity is breaking in the east. The Sun of Righteousness is hasting to rise upon our world, and the shadows are preparing to flee away. Till then, the heart of every true believer, that knows the preciousness of close communion with the Saviour, breathes the earnest prayer, that Jesus would often come again, thus sweetly and suddenly, to lighten him in his darksome pilgrimage. Ah! yes, my friends, let every one who loves the Lord Jesus in sincerity, join now in the blessed prayer of the bride: “Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my Beloved, and be Thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether.”

October Twelfth

A glorious garment

“But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet” Luke 15:22.

As long as you live in your mortal body, you will be faulty in yourself. It is a soul ruining error to believe anything else. Oh, if ye would be wise, be often looking beneath the robe of the Redeemer’s righteousness to see your own deformity! It will make you keep faster hold of His robe, and keep you washing in the fountain. Now, when Christ brings you before the throne of God, He will clothe you with His own fine linen, and present you faultless. Oh, it is sweet to me to think how soon you shall be the righteousness of God in Him. What a glorious righteousness that can stand the light of God’s face! Sometimes a garment appears white in dim light: when you bring it into the sunshine you see the spots. Prize then, this divine righteousness, which is your covering.

October Thirteenth

Faultless

“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy” Jude 24.

My heart sometimes sickens when I think upon the defects of believers; when I think of one Christian being fond of company, another vain, another given to evil speaking. Oh, aim to be holy Christians — bright, shining Christians. The Heaven is more adorned by the large bright constellations than by many insignificant stars; so God may be more glorified by one bright Christian than by many indifferent ones. Aim at being that one.

Soon we shall be faultless. He that began will perform it. We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. When you lay down this body, you may say — farewell lust forever — farewell my hateful pride — farewell hateful selfishness — farewell strife and envying — farewell being ashamed of Christ. Oh, this makes

death sweet indeed! O long to depart and to be with Christ!

October Fourteenth

Hidden

“O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely” Song of Solomon 2:14.

As the timorous dove pursued by the vulture, and well nigh made a prey, with fluttering anxious wing, hides itself deeper than ever in the clefts of the rock, and in the secret places of the precipice, so the backslidden believer, whom Satan has desired to have, that he might sift him as wheat, when he is restored once more to the all-gracious presence of his Lord, clings to Him with fluttering, anxious faith, and hides himself deeper than ever in the wounds of his Saviour. Thus it was that the fallen Peter, when he had so grievously denied his Lord, yet, when brought again within sight of the Saviour, standing upon the shore, was the only one of the disciples who girt his fisher’s coat unto him, and cast himself into the sea to swim to Jesus; and just as that backslidden apostle, when again he had hidden himself in the clefts of the Rock of Ages, found that the love of Jesus was more tender towards him than ever, when he began that conversation, which, more than all others in the Bible, combines the kindest of reproofs with the kindest of encouragements, “Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these?” just so does every backslidden believer find, that when again he is hidden in the freshly opened wounds of his Lord, the fountain of his love begins to flow afresh, and the stream of kindness and affection is fuller and more overflowing than ever, for His word is, “O My dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.”

October Fifteenth

The broken heart

“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a

contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise” Psalm 51:17.

No psalm expresses more fully the experience of a penitent believing soul: — First, His humbling confession of sin (verses 3-5). Second, His intense desire for pardon through the blood of Christ (verse 7). Third, His longing after a clean heart (verse 10). Fourth, His desire to render something to God for all His benefits.

1. He says, I will teach transgressors Thy ways (verse 13).

2. My lips shall show forth Thy praise (verse 15).

3. He will give a broken heart (verses 16, 17). Just as, long ago, they used to offer slain lambs in token of thanksgiving, so he says he will offer up to God a slain and broken heart. Every one of you, who has found the same forgiveness, should come to the same resolution — offer up to God this day a broken heart.

October Sixteenth

Reflect His image

“He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” Micah 6:8.

God requires His redeemed ones to be holy. — If you are His brethren, He will have you righteous, holy men.

1. He requires you to do justly — to be just in your dealings between man and man. This is one of His own glorious features. He is a just God. “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” “He is my Rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.” Are you come to Him by Jesus? — He requires you to reflect His image. Are you His child? — you must be like Him. O brethren, be exact in your dealings. Be like your God. Take care of dishonesty; take care of trickery in business. Take care of crying up your goods when selling them, and crying them down when buying them. “It is nought, it is nought, sayeth the buyer, but when he is gone his way, he boasteth.” It shall not be so among you. God requires you to do justly.

2. He requires you to love mercy. — This is the brightest feature in the character of Christ. If you are in Christ, drink deep of His Spirit; God requires you to be merciful. The world is selfish, unmerciful. An unconverted mother has no mercy on the soul of her own child. She can see it dropping into hell without mercy. O the

hellish cruelty of unconverted men. It shall not be so with you. Be merciful, as your Father in heaven is merciful.

3. He requires you to walk humbly with thy God. — Christ says, “Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart.” If God has covered all your black sins — rebellions — backslidings — out-breakings; then never open your mouth except in humble praise. God requires this at your hand. Walk with God, and walk humbly.

October Seventeenth

True divine peace

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” Romans 5:1.

Justified by faith, we have peace with God — not peace with ourselves — not peace with the world, with sin, with Satan, but peace with God. True divine peace is to be found only in believing — only in keeping fast hold of Christ. If you let Him go, you let go your righteousness; for this is His name. You are then without righteousness — without a covering from the wrath of God — without a way to the Father. The law will again condemn you; God’s frown will again overshadow you; you will again have terrors of conscience. Hold Him then, and do not let Him go. Whatever you let go, let not Christ go; for He is our peace — not in knowledge — not in feeling — but trust in Him alone.

October Eighteenth

The blood of Jesus

“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin” 1 John 1:7.

You need the blood of Jesus as much as at the first. You never can stand before God in yourself. You must go again and again to be washed; even on your dying bed you must hide under Jehovah our Righteousness. You must also lean upon Jesus. He alone can overcome in you. Keep nearer and nearer every day.

October Nineteenth

The essence of Christianity

“To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory” Colossians 1:27.

Christ in you, means Christ embraced by faith as our righteousness and strength; and this is the sure ground upon which we hope for glory. In this sense it appears to be used, “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith” (Ephesians 3:17). When a sinner’s heart is opened by the Holy Spirit, when the beauty and excellence of the Saviour is shown to him, the heart inwardly embraces and cleaves to Christ. Every new discovery of Christ to the soul renews this act of inward cleaving to the Lord Jesus. Every reproach, every temptation, every fall into sin, every bereavement, makes the soul more really, firmly, and fully embrace the Lord Jesus; and so, by continual faith, Christ may be said to dwell in the heart, as in Ephesians 3:17, “That Christ may dwell in your heart by faith.” Christ thus embraced is the hope of glory. It is this constant abiding faith — this close embracing of Christ as all our righteousness — it is this which gives a calm, sweet, full, peaceful hope of glory. The soul that can say, Christ is mine, can also say, Glory is mine; for we need nothing but Christ to shelter us in the judgment day. Can you say that Christ is thus in you the hope of glory? If you have not got Christ, you have no good hope of glory.

October Twentieth

The sinner’s friend

“In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old” Isaiah 63:9.

Dear friend, do you feel that Jesus is your Surety and Elder Brother? Then remember that, by reason of His real divinity, He is now by your bedside, afflicted in all your afflictions, touched with a feeling of your infirmities, and able to save you to the uttermost. He is as really beside you as He was beside Mary when she sat at His

feet. Tell Him all your sorrows, all your doubts and anxieties. He has a willing ear. Oh, what a friend is Jesus, the sinner's friend! What an open ear He has for all the wants, doubts, difficulties of His people! He has an especial care for His sick, weakly, and dying disciples. You know how it is with a kind mother, even though a worldly person. In a time of danger she clasps her children to her breast. In a time of health she may often let them wander out of her sight, but in hours of sickness she will watch beside their bed. Much more will Jesus watch over you.

October Twenty-first

Arrange beforehand

“And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples” Luke 11:1.

Pray to be taught to pray. Do not be content with old forms that flow from the lips only. Most Christians have need to cast their formal prayers away, to be taught to cry, Abba. Arrange beforehand what you have to pray for. Do not forget confession of sin, nor thanksgiving. Pray to get your closed lips opened in intercession; embrace the whole world, and carry it within the veil.

October Twenty-second

He is precious

“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever” Hebrews 13:8.

How sweet, that Jesus ever liveth! He is the same yesterday, and today, and for ever. You will never find Jesus so precious as when the world is one vast howling wilderness. Then He is like a rose blooming in the midst of the desolation, — a rock rising above the storm. The Bible, too, is more full of meaning. Have you ever prayed over that verse: “He doth not afflict willingly?” O precious book, that conveys such a message to the mourner's dwelling! And does not trial bring more meaning out of that verse: “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose?” The Bible is like the

leaves of the lemon-tree; the more you bruise and wring them, the sweeter the fragrance they throw around. “Is any afflicted? let him pray.” Do you not find that prayer is sweeter now? The soul finds vent for its feelings toward God. “Call upon Me in the day of trouble — I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.”

October Twenty-third

Blessings out of buffetings

“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” John 16:33.

It is one of the laws of Christ’s kingdom, “We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.” We must not reckon upon a smooth road to glory, but it will be a short one. How glad I am that you have “received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost!” Cleave closely to Jesus, that you may not have to say in a little, “Oh that I had affliction back again to quicken me in prayer, and make me lie at His feet!”

Trials make the promise sweet,
Trials give new life to prayer;
Trials bring me to His feet,
Lay me low, and keep me there.

October Twenty-fourth

This is happiness

“Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee” Hebrews 13:5.

You may take these words, and apply them to God the Father. And here they come to be very much the words God gave to Abraham: He said, “Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward.” He had returned from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer and of the kings that were with him. The king of Sodom came out to meet him, and said unto him, “Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself.” But Abraham said, “I have lifted up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor

of heaven and of earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoe latchet, and that I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich.” And, immediately after, God appeared to him, and said: “Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward.” This is what Asaph felt. He says, in the seventy-third Psalm, “My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.” Ah, brethren, this is a sweet word to a poor soul who is mourning over the broken pots at his feet. This is a sweet word to those of you who are bereft — who have left houses and lands — “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” This may be a sweet word to those of you who are mourning over the dead. O brethren! is this your portion? Can you look up to a three-one God — Father, Son and Spirit, standing on these broken shreds at your feet, and say, “Thou wilt never leave me, nor forsake me?” This is happiness. Well, well did the Lord say, “Mary hath chosen that good part which shall never be taken away from her.” Ah, poor souls! that have chosen the portion that will be taken from you. Ah, brethren! be you wiser.

October Twenty-fifth

Deep rooted faith

“I held him, and would not let him go ...” Song of Solomon 3:4.

The only way to hold fast is to believe more and more. Get a larger acquaintance with Christ — with His person, work, and character. Every page of the gospel unfolds a new feature in His character, every line of the epistles discloses new depths of His work. Get more faith, and you will get a firmer hold. A plant that has a single root may be easily torn up by the hand, or crushed by the foot of the wild beast, or blown down by the wind; but a plant that has a thousand roots struck down into the ground can stand. Faith is like the root — many believe a little concerning Christ — one fact. Every new truth concerning Jesus is a new root struck downward. Believe more intensely. A root may be in a right direction, but, not striking deep, it is easily torn up. Pray for deep-rooted faith. Pray to be established, strengthened, settled. Take a long intense look at Jesus — often. If you wanted to know a man again, and he was going away, you would take an intense look at his

face. Look then at Jesus — deeply, intensely — till every feature is graven on your heart. Thomas Scott overcame the fear of death by looking intensely at his dead child, who had died in the Lord.

October Twenty-sixth

Love divine

“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” Romans 5:8.

He loved us! He came into the world “to save sinners, of whom I am the chief.” Had He loved one as glorious as Himself, we would not have wondered. Had he loved the holy angels, that reflected His pure, bright image, we would not have wondered. Had He loved the lovely among the sons of men — the amiable, the gentle, the kind, the rich, the great, the noble — it would not have been so great a wonder. But, ah! He loved sinners — the vilest sinners — the poorest, meanest, guiltiest wretches that crawl upon the ground. Manasseh, who murdered his own children, was one whom He loved; Zaccheus, the grey-haired swindler, was another; blaspheming Paul was a third; the wanton of Samaria was another; the dying thief was another; and the lascivious Corinthians were more. “And such were some of you.” We were black as hell when He looked on us — we were hell-worthy, under His Father’s wrath and curse — and yet He loved us, and said: I will die for them. “Thou hast loved me out of the pit of corruption,” each saved one can say. Oh, brethren! this is strange love: He that was so great, and lovely, and pure, chose us, who were mean and filthy with sin, that He might wash and purify, and present us to Himself. This love passeth knowledge!

October Twenty-seventh

Jesus Christ a Saviour of sinners

“... thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins” Matthew 1:21.

“If I knew I were one of God’s elect, I would come to Christ; but I fear I am not.” To you I answer: nobody ever came to Christ because he knew himself to be one of the elect. It is quite true that

God has of His mere good pleasure elected some to everlasting life, but they never knew it until they believed in Christ. Christ nowhere commands the elect to come to Him. He commands all men everywhere to repent and believe the gospel. The question for you is not, “Am I one of the elect?” but “Am I a sinner?” Christ came to save sinners.

October Twenty-eighth

A great privilege

“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life” Romans 5:10.

When we are brought to see the reconciled face of God in peace, that is a great privilege. But how can we look upon that face, reconciling and reconciled, and not love Him who hath so loved us? Love begets love. We can hardly keep from esteeming those on earth who really love us, however worthless they may be. But, ah! my friends, when we are convinced that God loves us, and convinced in such a way as by the giving up of His Son for us all, how can we but love Him in whom are all excellencies — everything to call forth love?

October Twenty-ninth

Why God waits

“Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven” Matthew 18:19.

Many Christians neglect this promise. In the Acts, we find that when the apostles and disciples were praying together, “the place was shaken where they were assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the Word of God with boldness.” Oh, how often and how long have we despised this way of obtaining the outpouring of the Spirit! Do not some persons speak slightingly of united prayer? Here is one reason why God commands the clouds that they rain no rain on us. He waits till we seek Him together, and then He will open the windows of heaven

and pour down a blessing.

October Thirtieth

The chief beauty in Christ

“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep” John 10:11.

This is the chief beauty in Christ. The wounds that marred His fair body make Him altogether lovely in a needy sinner’s eye. All that are now and ever shall be the sheep of Christ, were once condemned to die. The wrath of God abode upon them. They were ready to drop into the burning lake. Jesus had compassion upon them, left His Father’s bosom, emptied Himself, became a worm and no man, and died under the sins of many. “While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” This is the grace of the Lord Jesus. Every one in the flock can say, “He loved me, and gave Himself for me.”

October Thirty-first

Two heavens

“What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?” Luke 15:4.

Go, brother, leaving the ninety-nine, go after the one sheep that was lost. Leave your home, your comforts, your bed, your case, your all, to feed lost souls. The Lord of Glory left heaven for this; it is enough for the disciple to be as His Master. It is said of Alleine, that “he was infinitely and insatiably greedy of the conversion of souls.” Rutherford wrote to his dear people, “My Witness is above, that your heaven would be two heavens to me, and the salvation of you all as two salvations to me.” The Lord give you this heavenly compassion for this people. Do not be satisfied without conversion.

Fifth of six booklets.

