



Daily Devotional Readings

Taken from the Works of
Robert Murray M'Cheyne

Booklet Four
July and August

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July First

Follow Jesus

“And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him” Matthew 9:9.

Matthew was sitting at the receipt of custom when Jesus passed by. He was lying in his blood, when Jesus said, “Live.” How wonderful is the grace of the Lord Jesus. Some of you may be living in an evil calling, or in your sins. Look up, the Lord Jesus this night may turn His eye upon you.

A simple word is blessed — “Follow Me.” No argument. It is probable he had heard of Christ, heard Him preach, seen the preceding miracle; still he was at his old trade, till Jesus said, “Follow Me.” A little word reached his heart. We often make great mistakes — often make use of long arguments to bring people to Christ.

Often we make use of long high-sounding words, and expect them to be blessed; whereas it is the simple exhibition of Christ that is carried home by the Spirit.

July Second

We believe

“And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God” John 6:69.

“We believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.” Ah! it is this that rivets the believing soul to Christ — the certain conviction that Christ is a divine Saviour. If Christ were only a man like ourselves, then how could He be a surety for us? He might suffer in the stead of one man, but how could He suffer in the stead of thousands? Ah! but I believe and am sure that He is the Son

of the living God, and therefore I know He is a sufficient surety for me. To whom else can I go for pardon? If Christ were only a man like ourselves, then how could He dwell in us, or give the Spirit to abide with us for ever? But we believe and are sure that He is that Christ, the Son of the living God, and therefore we know He is able to dwell in us, and put the Spirit in us for ever. To whom, then, can I go for a new heart but unto Christ? O dear brethren! have you been thus taught? Then blessed are ye; “for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto you, but My Father which is in heaven.” Hold fast by this sure faith — you cannot be too sure, and then you will never, never go away from Christ.

July Third

Christ’s intercession

“Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us” Romans 8:34.

If I could hear Christ praying for me in the next room, I would not fear a million enemies. Yet the distance makes no difference: He is praying for me.

July Fourth

The Holy Scriptures

“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me” John 5:39.

One gem from that ocean is worth all the pebbles of earthly streams.

Laden with guilt and full of fears,
I fly to Thee, my Lord,
And not a glimpse of hope appears,
But in the written word

The volume of my Father’s grace
Does all my griefs assuage;
Here I behold my Saviour’s face
Almost in every page?

This is the field where hidden lies
The pearl of price unknown:
The merchant is divinely wise
Who makes the pearl his own.

Here consecrated water flows,
To quench my thirst of sin;
Here the fair tree of knowledge grows,
Nor danger dwells therein.

This is the judge that ends the strife,
Where wit and reason fail:
My guide to everlasting life,
Through all this gloomy vale.

O may Thy counsels, mighty God,
My roving feet command;
Nor I forsake the happy road
That leads to Thy right hand.

July Fifth

Humility

“Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up” James 4:10.

Oh for true, unfeigned humility! I know I have cause to be humble; and yet I do not know one half of the cause. I know I am proud; and yet I do not know the half of that pride.

July Sixth

Nothing to spare

“But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves” Matthew 25:9.

It pleases God to use the godly as instruments, but He has not given them to be fountains of grace: “I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase” (1 Corinthians 3:6). Rachel

said to Jacob: “Give me children, or else I die. And Jacob’s anger was kindled against Rachel: and he said, Am I in God’s stead?” (Genesis 30:1, 2). So grace is not in the hand of man. Those who receive Christ “are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:13). It is in vain, then, that you look to the means to give saving grace to your soul. The axe cannot hew without the hand of the forester. The pitcher that carries water is not the well. It will be in vain that you apply to God’s children in that awful day. Go to Jesus now. They have none to spare. The righteous scarcely are saved. Every child of God gets just so much grace as will carry him to heaven, and no more. Even now every child of God feels that he has nothing to spare. He has not too much of the Holy Spirit, helping him to pray, to mourn over sin, to love Christ. In time of temptation a believer feels as if he had nothing of the Holy Spirit. He has more need to receive, than ability to give away.

When Christ shall come in that solemn hour, he will feel that he has none to spare.

July Seventh

Different ways

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with an infidel?” 2 Corinthians 6:14.

Can two walk together except they be agreed? It is impossible that two souls can be happy together if they love opposite things. It is like two bullocks in the yoke drawing different ways. Hence the deep wisdom of the command which forbids God’s children to intermarry with the world. What fellowship hath light with darkness? In the same way with Christ’s bride, she must be of one mind with Him, if she would enter in with Him to the marriage.

Suppose one of you who has an old heart were to be admitted with Christ to the marriage. Your heart is enmity to God, you hate God’s people, the Sabbath is a weariness, you serve divers lusts and pleasures. The Lamb that is in the midst of the throne would lead you, and God would wipe away tears from your eyes. But you hate

God and the Lamb. How could you be happy there? None but God's children or companions (psalm-singing hypocrites, as you used to call them) — could you be happy with them? An eternal Sabbath! My highest notion of heaven is an eternal Sabbath with Christ. Could you be happy? Could you enjoy it? Ah, my friends, there shall in no wise enter in any that defileth, any that maketh or loveth a lie. If you are still unborn again, you are not ready.

July Eighth

When weakness is strength

“Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then I am strong” 2 Corinthians 12:10.

When the believer is weakest, then is he strongest. The child that knows most its utter feebleness, entrusts itself most completely into the mother's arms. The young eagle that knows, by many a fall, its own inability to fly, yields itself to be carried on the mother's mighty wing. When it is weak, then it is strong; and just so the believer, when he has found out, by repeated falls, his own utter feebleness, clings with simplest faith, to the arm of the Saviour — leans on his Beloved, coming up out of the wilderness, and hears with joy the word: “My grace is sufficient for thee; My strength is made perfect in weakness.”

July Ninth

The Father's gift

“I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles” Isaiah 42:6.

“God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish.” “Herein is love; not that we loved God.” God not only provided the Saviour, and upheld Him, but He gave Him, gave Him away, to be a covenant Saviour of the people, and a light to lighten the Gentiles. When Abraham bound his son Isaac upon the altar, and lifted up the

knife to strike, this was giving away his son at the command of God. This is just what God did. He took His son out of His bosom, and gave Him away to be bound, to be a covenant Saviour of the people. There are not more wonderful words in the whole Bible than these; “I will give Thee.” “God spared not His own Son, but freely delivered Him up to the death for us all.” The Son was infinitely dear to the Father. God cannot but love that which is perfectly holy and beautiful. Now, such was Christ. From all eternity there had been the outgoings of love and infinite admiration from the bosom of the Father towards His well-beloved Son. Canst Thou part with Me? Canst Thou give Me up to the garden and the cross? “I will give Thee.” Sinners were infinitely vile in the sight of the Father. God cannot but hate that which is enmity and rebellion to Himself. “He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.” How loathsome and hateful this world must have been in His eyes, where every heart was enmity against Him! Canst Thou give Me up for such sinners, for the sake of such vile worms! “Yes, I will give Thee.”

July Tenth

Taught by the Spirit

“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding” Proverbs 3:5.

Well may every soul that is untaught by the Spirit of God exclaim: “This is a hard saying, who can hear it?” and, indeed, there is perhaps no truth that calls forth more of the indignant opposition of the world than this blessed one, that they who trust in the Lord with all their heart, do not lean to their own understanding. The understanding, here, plainly includes all the observing, knowing, and judging faculties of the mind, by which men ordinarily guide themselves in the world; and, accordingly, it is with no slight appearance of reasonableness that the world should brand with the name of fanatics a peculiar set of men, who dare to say that they are not to lean upon these faculties, to guide them in their every-day walk and conversation.

But surely it might do something to moderate, at least, the

opposition of the world (if they would but listen to us), to tell them that we never refuse to be guided by the understanding, although we altogether refuse to lean upon it. Every enlightened believer however implicitly he depends upon the breathing of the Holy Ghost, without whose almighty breathing he knows that his understanding would be but a vain and useless machine, leading him into darkness, and not into light, yet follows the guidance of the understanding as scrupulously and as religiously as any unconverted man is able to do; and, therefore, it ought never to be said by any man who has a regard for truth, that the believer in Jesus casts aside the use of his understanding, and looks for miraculous guidance from on high. The truth is this, that he trusts in a divine power, enlightening the understanding, and he therefore follows the dictates of the understanding more religiously than any other man.

July Eleventh

Love for eternity

“So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite’s hope shall perish” Job 8:13.

A hypocrite lives for time. This was all Judas lived for if he could pass off for a while as a true disciple, if he could keep up appearances for a time, if he could indulge his lusts, and yet be esteemed a believer, and a true apostle. He tried to keep up appearances to the last. So Demas wanted to deceive Paul for this life — to be thought a brother. Alas, how many of you are thus foolish! Living so as to keep up an appearance of being a Christian for a little time, though you know that you are living in positive sin, and that you will be discovered before the world in a short time. You only are truly wise who live for eternity, who live as you shall wish you had done when you come to die.

July Twelfth

Such is your declaration

“For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come” 1 Corinthians 11:26.

The bride in the Song of Solomon says: “As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my Beloved among the sons. I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste.” So do you say in coming to the Lord’s table: I have found rest in the shade of Christ. His fruit is sweet to me; His way of pardon, His Spirit, His commands — all are sweet to my taste.

When the maniac had the devils cast out, he sat at the feet of Jesus clothed, and in his right mind. Once he bade Jesus depart: “What have I to do with Thee?” Now Christ is all. Such is your declaration at the Lord’s table.

When Paul was an unconverted man, he was a blasphemer — he breathed out threatenings; but when he got a taste of Jesus, he said: “I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.” Such is your declaration in taking that bread and wine.

Can you truly say that you have found the treasure, that you have sold all for it, that you have sat down under the shade of that apple tree, and that you delight in His holy fruit; that you were once far from Christ, but now sitting at His feet; that you now preach the faith which once you destroyed — that, like Paul, you glory only in the cross of Christ? Can you say, in the sight of God, that Christ is your manna, your sweet food, your peace, your all? Then you are welcome to the Lord’s table. Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.

July Thirteenth

He will come

“For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry” Hebrews 10:37.

Christ is at this moment gathering a people from among the Gentiles. He is building up the great temple of the Lord, adding stone to stone. He cannot come till this is done. When all this is done, then He will come, and put on the top-stone, with shoutings of “Grace, grace unto it.” He told Paul to remain and preach at Corinth: “For I have much people in this city.” For the same reason He makes His ministers remain and preach on; for He has much

people still. When He comes, those that are ready will enter in with Him to the marriage, and the door will be shut. There are, no doubt, many elect ones, many that were given Him by the Father before the foundation of the world, still in the sleep of nature. He waits till these are gathered. When the last of His elect are gathered, then He will come.

July Fourteenth

The question why

“When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby” John 11:4.

Some might ask, Why, then, was Lazarus sick? Answer: “For the glory of God.” Christ was thereby in an eminent manner made known.

1. His amazing love to His own was seen, when He wept at the grave.

2. His power to raise the dead. He was shown to be the resurrection and the life when He cried, “Lazarus, come forth.”

Christ was far more glorified than if Lazarus had not been sick and died. So in all the sufferings of God’s people. Sometimes a child of God says: Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do? I will teach, preach, do great things for Thee. Sometimes the answer is: Thou shalt suffer for my sake.

It shows the power of Christ’s blood, when it gives peace in an hour of trouble, when it can make happy in sickness, poverty, persecution, and death. Do not be surprised if you suffer, but glorify God.

It brings out graces that cannot be seen in a time of health. It is the treading of the grapes that brings out the sweet juices of the vine; so it is affliction that draws forth submission, weanedness from the world, and complete rest in God. Use afflictions while you have them.

July Fifteenth

The stream of grace

“He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water” John 7:38.

The Holy Spirit is an imperishable stream. It is not like those rivers of which you have heard which flow through barren sands till they sink into the earth and disappear. Not so the stream of grace. When it flows from Jesus Christ, it flows into many a barren heart; but it is never lost there. It appears again — it flows forth from that heart in rivers of living water. When a soul is brought to believe on Jesus, and to drink in the Spirit, it often appears as if the Spirit were lost in that soul. The stream flows into such a barren heart, that it is long before it makes its appearance; but it is never lost. The Scripture must be fulfilled: “He that believeth on Me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.”

July Sixteenth

Study Holiness

“But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation” 1 Peter 1:15.

Seek daily likeness to Jesus. We are not justified by our sanctification; and yet without sanctification we cannot have abiding peace or communion. We are justified entirely by the doing and dying of the Lord Jesus; and yet, when justified, He will change us into His image; so that the longer we are justified we should be the more sanctified. Study holiness, if you would have peace now, and be found of Christ in peace. The holiest believers are evermore the happiest.

July Seventeenth

The Lord our Shepherd

“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall no want” Psalm 23:1.

It is exceedingly interesting to know the many names by which Christ calls Himself in the Bible. There are above a hundred, I think a hundred and seven. He calls Himself a rose: “I am the rose of Sharon,” and a lily: “I am the lily of the valley” The reason why He has so many names is that one name would not describe Him; He

has so many offices that one name would not explain them; nay, all of them put together do not, for Paul said, “Unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given, that I might preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.” Of all the names given, that of a shepherd is the sweetest.

July Eighteenth

Hallelujah! What a Saviour

“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” 1 Corinthians 5:21.

You know, brethren, that the pardon and justification of sinners is spoken of in different ways in the Bible. In Romans 3:24, it is said: “Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” Again, in Romans 5:19: “For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.”

But observe that these words express it more fully. I think it means that those of you who have come to the Lord Jesus, His righteousness shall cover you, that you will appear one mass of righteousness. And, brethren, observe what a provision is here for sinners — for the chief of sinners; for it matters not how great or how small a sinner you are; if you come to Christ, His righteousness will cover you so that none of your sin will be seen. O my friends, is not this a gospel worth preaching? May you now say as Luther used to do, “Thou art made my sin, and I am made Thy righteousness.”

July Nineteenth

Lost opportunity

“And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye hath done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” Matthew 25:40.

Many Christians are content to be Christians for themselves — to

hug the gospel to themselves, to sit in their own room, and feast upon it alone. This did not Christ. It is true He loved much to be alone. He once said to His disciples: “Come into a desert place, and rest a while.” He often spent the whole night in prayer on the lone mountain-side; but it is as true that He went about continually. He went and saw, and then He had compassion. He did not hide Himself from His own flesh.

You should be Christ-like. Your word should be: “Go and see.” You should go and see the poor; and then you will feel for them. Remember what Jesus said to all His people: “I was sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me.” Be not deceived, my dear friends; it is easy to give a cold pittance of charity at the church door, and to think that that is the religion of Jesus. But, “Pure religion and undefiled, before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep yourself unspotted from the world.”

July Twentieth

Christ’s garden

“My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies” Song of Solomon 6:2.

When God made man at the first, He planted a garden eastward in Eden; and out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food — the tree of life also in the midst of the garden. And the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress and to keep it. That garden was a sweet type of the delight of Adam’s soul; and there, day by day, he heard the voice of God walking in the garden, in the cool of the day. When Adam fell, God drove him out of the garden into this bleak world, covered with thorns and thistles, to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. Man no more walked with God in a garden of delights.

But when a sinner is brought to Christ, he is brought into Christ’s garden: “We who believe, do enter into rest.” He says: “I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste.” He becomes one that dwells in the gardens. True, he is one

coming up from the wilderness. This world is a wilderness to the believer — full of pain, sickness, sighing, death — a world that crucified His Lord, and persecutes Him — a cold, unbelieving, ungodly world. Still, the soul dwells in the gardens: “His soul shall dwell at ease.” True, a believer has his times of desertion, and clouds, and doubts, and deep waters. At such times, his cry is: “O wretched man!” Still, when his eye rests on Jesus, his soul dwells in a garden of delights.

July Twenty-first

In time of death

“The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” 1 Corinthians 15:26.

Few ever think of dying till dying comes. The last enemy that shall be overcome is Death; and an awful enemy he is. We go alone. No earthly friend goes with us. We never went the way before. It is all strange and new. The results are eternal. If we have not rightly believed, it is too late to mend. These are some of the solemn thoughts that overshadow the soul. What can give peace? None but Jesus; the sight of Jesus as a Redeemer; the same yesterday, today, and for ever; the same sight we got when first we knew the Lord; when first He chose us, and we chose Him; when first He said. Seek ye My face, and we said to Him, Thy face, Lord, shall we seek? To see Him as a God of truth; the Lord that changes not; the unchanging One; the same Jesus; thus to see Him and to cry, “Into Thy hands I commit my spirit;” this is peace.

July Twenty-second

Saints known

“I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep” John 10:14, 15.

The Father knew the Son from all eternity: “Then I was by Him as one brought up with Him: and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him” (Proverbs 8:30). He was in the bosom of the

Father. So did this good shepherd know His sheep from all eternity: “Chosen before the foundation of the world.”

The Father knew the Son with a knowledge of most perfect delight and love: “I was daily His delight.” At his baptism, a voice from heaven was heard saying: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:17). So does Christ know His sheep: “Thou art all fair, My love; there is no spot in thee;” “The King is held in the galleries;” “How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!” “Turn away Thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me.”

The Father knew the Son through all His sufferings. So Christ knows His sheep: “I know their sorrows;” “In all their afflictions, He was afflicted.” He knows their decays: “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot.”

The Father will know the Son to all eternity; and so the Son will know His sheep for ever and ever. They shall soon “hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat” (Revelation 7:16).

July Twenty-third

Good news

“For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich” 2 Corinthians 8:9.

Corinth was one of the most wicked cities that ever was on the face of the world. It lay between two seas; so that luxury came flowing in from the east and from the west. These Corinthians had been saved from the deepest abominations, as you learn from 1 Corinthians 6:11: “Such were some of you;” and yet it was for the sake of such that the Lord of glory became poor — “for your sakes.” In like manner, Paul, writing to the Romans, says: “When we were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly” (Romans 5:6). Ah! see what names are here given to those for whom Christ died: “Without strength” unable to believe, or to think a right thought; “ungodly” living as if there were no God; “sinners,” breaking God’s holy law; “enemies,” hating and

opposing a holy God of love.

Oh, brethren! this is good news for the most wicked of men. Are there some of you who feel that you are like a beast before God, or all over sin, like a devil? Some of you have lived in the abominations of Corinth. Some of you are like the Romans — without strength, ungodly, sinners, enemies; yet for your sakes Christ became poor. He left glory for souls as vile as you. He left the songs of angels, the love of His Father, and the glories of heaven, for just such wretches as you and me. He died for the ungodly. Do not be afraid, sinners, to lay hold upon Him. It was for your sakes He came. He will not, He cannot cast you out.

July Twenty-fourth

Heaven began on earth

“Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen”
Revelation 1:5, 6.

Some have thought this to be one of the songs of heaven. They have thought that, even before John’s eye penetrated into the wonders of the upper world, its song of joy and ecstasy burst upon his ear — “Unto Him that loved us.” This is evidently a mistake. It is the song of John — banished — poor — in trial and tribulation — an exiled man upon a lonely rock of the sea — a man who had his heaven begun on earth: “Unto Him that loved us.” It has got the fragrance and melody of heaven about it. Believers, do not fear a suffering lot. Do not fear though you be taken to a lone sick-bed, or a lone rock dashed by the eternal waves of ocean. If you really know Jesus, and have tasted and seen the grace that is in Christ, you may begin the song now, “Unto Him that loved us.”

July Twenty-fifth

“Abba, Father”

“And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” Galatians 4:6.

No natural man cries, “Abba.” It is not the cry of nature. Children cry “Father” to their earthly parents. It is one of the first things they learn. They do not thus call upon God; but when one comes to Christ, and feels the Father’s smile, the Father’s arms, the Father’s love, he cries “Abba.”

Often it is little more than a cry. Many of God’s children are not fluent in prayer. They have not many words.

Often they can only look up, and cry, “Father.” A soul in Christ can cry, “Father!” This runs through all he says to God, “Abba.” “In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin,” but this one word is the believer’s prayer, “Abba.”

July Twenty-sixth

Complete assurance

“Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus” Hebrews 3:1.

Oh, brethren, could you and I pass this day through these heavens, and see what is now going on in the sanctuary above — could you see what the child of God now sees who died last night — could you see the Lamb with the scars of His five deep wounds in the very midst of the throne, surrounded by all the redeemed, every one having harps and golden vials full of odours — could you see the many angels round about the throne, whose number is ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, all singing, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain” — and were one of these angels to tell you, “This is He that undertook the cause of lost sinners; He undertook to bear their curse and to do their obedience; He undertook to be the second Adam — the man in their stead; and lo! there He is upon the throne of heaven; — consider Him — look long and earnestly upon His wounds — upon His glory — and tell me, do you think it would be safe to trust Him? do you think His sufferings and obedience will have been enough?” — Yes, yes, every soul exclaims, Lord, it is enough! Lord, stay Thy hand! Show me no more, for I can bear no more. Oh, rather let me ever stand and gaze upon the almighty, all-worthy, all-divine Saviour, till my soul drink in complete assurance that His work undertaken for

sinner is a finished work! Yes, though the sins of all the world were on my one wicked head, still I could not doubt that His work is complete, and that I am quite safe when I believe in Him.

July Twenty-seventh

Turn your eyes upon Jesus

“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God” Hebrews 12:2.

Keep looking to Jesus dear soul, and you will have the peace that passeth all understanding. Whenever Satan accuses you, send him to the stripes of Jesus.

July Twenty-eighth

A spiritual mind

“But we have the mind of Christ” 1 Corinthians 2:16.

Now, every believer has the mind of Christ formed in him. He thinks as Christ does: “This is the spirit of a sound mind,” 2 Timothy 1:7. This is being of the same mind in the Lord. I do not mean that a believer has the same all-seeing mind, the same infallible judgment concerning everything as Christ has; but up to his light he sees things as Christ does.

He sees sin as Christ does. Christ sees sin to be evil and bitter. He sees it to be filthy and abominable, its pleasures all a delusion. He sees it to be awfully dangerous. He sees the inseparable connection between sin and suffering. So does a believer.

He sees the gospel as Christ does. Christ sees amazing glory in the gospel, the way of salvation which He Himself has wrought out. It appears a most complete salvation to Him, most free, most glorifying to God and happy for man. So does the believer.

He sees the world as Christ does. Christ knows what is in man. He looked on this world as vanity compared with the smile of His Father. Its riches, its honours, its pleasures, appeared not worth a sigh. He saw it passing away. So does the believer.

He sees time as Christ did. “I must work the work of Him that sent Me while it is day; the night cometh” — “I come quickly.” So does a believer look at time.

He sees eternity as Christ does. Christ looked at everything in the light of eternity. “In My Father’s house are many mansions.” Everything is valuable in Christ’s eyes, only as it bears on eternity. So with believers.

July Twenty-ninth

God is stronger than Satan

“Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world” 1 John 4:4.

Satan is nothing in His hand. It is easier for God to crush Satan under our feet, than for you to crush a fly. God is infinitely stronger than Satan. Satan can no more hinder God from carrying us to glory than a little fly can, which you crush with your foot. “He shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.” Submit yourselves to God, resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

July Thirtieth

The heavenly Witnesses

“There are three that bear record in heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one” 1 John 5:7.

We see that the only way of overcoming the world is by believing that Jesus is the Son of God. “Be often at Gethsemane, be often at Golgotha;” and so the weakest child of God may trample the world, the devil, and the flesh below his feet. But some may ask, Upon what evidence am I to believe that Jesus is a divine, full, and free Saviour? Here is the evidence, “There are three that bear record in heaven.”

July Thirty-first

The Saviour’s desire

“Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with

me where I am” John 17:24.

He does not mean that we should be presently taken out of this world. Some of you that have come to Christ may, this day, be favoured with so much of His presence, and of the love of the Father, so much of the joy of heaven, and such a dread of going back to betray Christ in the world, that you may be wishing that this house were indeed the gate of heaven; you may desire that you might be translated from the table below at once to the table above. “I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and be with Christ.” Still Christ does not wish that. “I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil.” “Whither I go, thou canst not follow Me now” (Like that woman in *Brainerd’s Journal* — “O blessed Lord, do come! Oh, do take me away; do let me die and go to Jesus Christ. I am afraid, if I live, I shall sin again.”) He means, that when our journey is done, we should come to be with Him. Every one that comes to Christ has a journey to perform in this world. Some have a long, and some a short one. It is through a wilderness. Still Christ prays that at the end, you may be with Him. Every one that comes to Christ hath his twelve hours to fill up for Christ. “I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day.” But when that is done, Christ prays that you may be with Him. He means that you shall come to His Father’s house with Him. “In My Father’s house are many mansions.” You shall dwell in the same house with Christ. You are never very intimate with a person till you see them in their own house, till you know them at home. This is what Christ wants with us — that we shall come to be with Him, at His own home. He wants us to come to the same Father’s bosom with Him. “I ascend to My Father and your Father.” He wants us to be in the same smile with Him, to sit on the same throne with Him, to swim in the same ocean of love with Him.

August First

The wonderful grace of Christ

“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us” Titus 3:5.

When the Holy Spirit leads a man to the cross, his heart there breaks from seeking salvation by his own righteousness. All his burden of performance and contrivances drops.

First, the work of Christ appears so perfect, — the wisdom of God and the power of God, — divine righteousness. “I wonder that I should ever think of any other way of salvation. If I could have been saved by my own duties, my whole soul would now have refused it. I wonder that all the world did not see and comply with this way of salvation by the righteousness of Christ” — (Brainerd, page 319).

Second, the grace of Christ appears so wonderful. That all this righteousness should be free to such a sinner! That I so long neglected, despised, hated it, put mountains between, and yet that He has come over the mountains! “That thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done” (Ezekiel 16:63). Have you this broken heart — broken within sight of the cross? It is not a look into your own heart, or the heart of hell, but into the heart of Christ, that breaks the heart. Oh, pray for this broken heart! Boasting is excluded. To Him be glory: Worthy is the Lamb! All the struggles of a self-righteous soul are to put the crown on your own head instead of at the feet of Jesus.

August Second

Forsake the foolish

“Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding” Proverbs 9:6.

If ever you are to be saved, you must forsake the foolish. Solomon tells you plainly, “A companion of fools shall be destroyed” (Proverbs 13:20). Hear what David said: “Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for God hath heard the voice of my weeping” (Psalm 6:8). Even though they should be those of your own household, yet God’s command is clear: “Forget also thine own people, and thy father’s house” (Psalm 45:10). “He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me.” Ah! how many poor souls have been carried away captive, and led down to

hell, all through foolish companions! Forsake the foolish, and live. You say you cannot. Why? Are they more precious than salvation? If you will be the friend of the world, you must be the enemy of God.

August Third

Cry for the wind

“Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out” Song of Solomon 4:16.

These spices do not naturally grow in gardens. Even in the East there never was such a display as this. So the fragrant graces of the Spirit are not natural to the heart. They are brought from a far country. They must be carefully watched. They need the stream, and the gentle zephyr. Oh, I fear most of you should hang your heads when Christ begins to speak of fragrant spices in your heart! Where are they? Are there not talkative, forward Christians? Are there not self-seeking, praise-seeking, man-pleasing Christians? Are there not proud-praying Christians? Are there not ill-tempered Christians? Are there not rash, inconsiderate ones? Are there not idle, lazy, bad-working Christians? Lord, where are the spices? Verily, Christ is a bundle of myrrh. Oh to be like Him! Oh that every flower and fruit would grow! They must come from above. Many there are of whom one is forced to say, “Well, they may be Christians; but I would not like to be next to them in heaven!” Cry for the wind!

August Fourth

Fore-warned is Fore-armed

“Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God” Acts 14:22.

We naturally shrink from pain. Many would like to go round; no, we must go through. Many would be willing to have a little; but no, we must through much tribulation enter the kingdom.

There are three streams of trouble peculiar to believers.

Persecution — Let us go without the camp bearing His reproach — take up our cross daily. This is what Moses had to bear, and Lot, and all God’s children, — trials of cruel mockings and scourgings.

Temptations — There is a “need be” for this also. Satan is a fearful enemy. Before conversion, we know little of him. Those who are determined to win glory, will feel his fiery darts. There is a design on Satan’s part. He will not suffer us to go quietly into the kingdom. And on God’s part, too, He wants us to know what we are saved from.

Concern for unconverted souls — This is one of the deep afflictions of a child of God. He is afflicted for unconverted kindred. It may be father, mother, sister, brother, friend; the wife of his bosom, or the children of his love; unconverted neighbours, an unbelieving world. This is a sorrow he must carry with him to the grave.

O dear friends, make up your minds to carry the cross daily. Forewarned is to be fore-armed. All God’s children go through these tribulations.

August Fifth

God’s delight

“Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth” Luke 15:10.

When a hell-deserving sinner is enlightened in the knowledge of Christ, when he believes the record that God hath given concerning His Son, and joyfully consents that the Lord Jesus be his surety, then the blood of Christ is, as it were, sprinkled over that soul. When Aaron and his sons were set apart for the priesthood, the blood of the ram was put upon the tip of their right ear, and the thumb of their right hand, and the great toe of their right foot, to signify that they were dipped in blood from head to foot; so when God looks upon a soul in Christ, He sees it dipped in the blood of the Saviour. He looks upon that soul as having suffered all that Christ suffered; therefore He delights in that soul.

His sense of justice is pleased. God has an infinite sense of justice. His eyes behold the things that are equal; now when He sees

the blood of His Son sprinkled upon any soul, He sees that justice has had its full satisfaction in that soul, that that man's sins have been more fully punished than if he had borne them himself eternally.

His sense of mercy is pleased. He delighteth in mercy. Even when justice was crying out, "Thou shalt surely slay the wicked," His mercy was yearning over sinners, and He provided a ransom. And now when the sinner has laid hold on the ransom, mercy is poured down in forgiveness. God delighteth in mercy; He delights to forgive the soul. It is sweet to notice how Jesus loves to forgive sins. In the woman that washed His feet, how He seems to dwell on it! "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven." And again He said unto her: "Thy sins are forgiven thee;" and again, a third time: "Go in peace." And so God loves to forgive: "There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth."

August Sixth

Confidence in God

"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" Romans 8:37.

The world often comes against us like armed men; but if God be for us, who can be against us? "The people shall be like bread." It is as easy to overcome all opposition when God is with us, as for a hungry man to eat bread. It was God that girded Cyrus, though he did not know Him. So He does still: worldly men are a rod in God's hand. God puts it this way or that way, to fulfil all His pleasure; and when He has done with it He will break it in pieces, and cast it into the fire. "So fear not them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do." Oh! Christian, if you would live by faith, you might live a happy life!

August Seventh

Patient submission

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" James 4:7.

Resignation is a very sweet grace: it can only be cultivated here. The believer has two kinds of graces — he has purity and resignation; God has purity, but God can have no resignation, for He has all sovereignty, He is Almighty. Yet resignation to God's will is a very sweet grace; it is a flower that grows on the earth — it will not bloom yonder. It is much easier to go about a whole lifetime preaching, to preach night and day, than to be patient under sickness. There are many saints who suffered much upon earth, now shining the brightest in glory; just because they glorified God more than others by their patient submission.

August Eighth

The pilgrim's staff

“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.

There is no time when you may be more inclined to think God has forsaken you, than when sin and Satan are raging. There is a difference from sin raging and sin reigning, though the soul may not see it. In such a time, remember these words — “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” In a time of temptation, the believer should remember this promise. Jacob rested on it; Solomon rested on it: yea, it is a staff which has been leaned on by many believers, and you may lean on it too.

August Ninth

Prize the Word

“Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you” John 15:3.

I believe He could sanctify without the Word, as He created angels and Adam holy, and as He sanctifies infants whose ear was never opened; but I believe in grown men He never will, but through the Word. When Jesus makes holy, it is by writing the Word in the heart: “Sanctify them through Thy truth.” When a mother nurses her child, she not only bears it in her arms, but holds

it to her breast, and feeds it with the milk of her own breast; so does the Lord. He not only holds the soul, but feeds it with the milk of the Word. The words of the Bible are just the breathings of God's heart. He fills the heart with these, to make us like God. When you go much with a companion, and hear his words, you are gradually changed by them into his likeness; so when you go with Christ, and hear His words, you are sanctified. Oh, there are some whom I could tell to be Christ's by their breathing the same sweet breath! Those of you that do not read your Bible cannot turn like God — you cannot be saved. You are unsaveable; you may turn like the devil, but you never will turn like God. Oh, believers, prize the Word!

August Tenth

The divine Saviour

“He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not” John 1:10.

He was the Creator of all worlds: “Without Him was not anything made that was made.” He was the Preserver of all worlds: “By Him all things consist,” and hang together. All worlds, therefore, were His domain; He was Lord of all. He could say: “Every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are Mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is Mine, and the fullness thereof” (Psalm 50:10-12). All lands sang aloud to Him: the sea roared His praise, the cedars bowed before Him in lowly adoration. Nay, He could say: “All things that the Father hath are Mine” (John 16:15); and He could speak to His Father of the glory which He had with Him before the world was. Whatever of power, glory, riches, blessedness, the Father had, dwelt with equal fullness in the Son; for He was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God. This was the riches of the Lord Jesus.

Oh, brethren! can you trust your salvation to such an one? You hear it was He that undertook to be the surety of sinners, and died for them! Can you trust your soul in the hands of such an one? Ah! surely if so rich and glorious a being undertake for us, He will not

fail nor be discouraged, “till he have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for His law.”

August Eleventh

The sanctification of the saint

“But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption” 1 Corinthians 1:30.

Everyone whom Christ reconciles He makes holy, and confesses before His Father: “Whom He justified, them He glorified.” If Christ has truly begun a good work in you, He will perform it to the day of Christ Jesus. Christ says: “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending.” Whenever He begins, He will make an end. Whenever He builds a stone as the foundation, He will preserve it unshaken to the end. Only make sure that you are upon the foundation, that you are reconciled, that you have true peace with God, and then you may look across the mountains and rivers that are between you and that day, and say: “He is able to keep me from falling.” You have but two shallow brooks to pass through — sickness and death; and He has promised to meet you, to go with you, foot for foot. A few more tears — a few more temptations — a few more agonizing prayers — a few more sacraments, and you will stand with the Lamb upon Mount Zion!

August Twelfth

The unbelieving believer

“And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord, and my God” John 20:26-28.

When Thomas came to the meeting of disciples that evening, I doubt not his heart was very desolate. Unbelief and unhappiness

always go together. An unbelieving believer is of all men most miserable. His brethren around him were full of joy, for they had seen the Lord. Mary still remembered the blessed tone of His voice when He said: “Mary! and she answered, Rabboni?” Peter was wondering over His amazing love when He said: “Go tell the disciples, and Peter.” And the bosom of John was filled with a silent feeling of unutterable love. All were glad but one. That one was Thomas. But now, when Christ came in; when He revealed Himself a crucified but risen Redeemer; when He showed His special kindness to Thomas, the heart of Thomas could stand out no longer, and he cried out, in words of appropriating faith, before all: “My Lord, and my God.”

August Thirteenth

See the end

“Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter” John 13:7.

Perhaps you will say they are an afflicted people. Some in poverty, some bereaved, some groaning on sick-beds. True, God dealeth with them as with sons. Often they cry, These things are against me. All for them. If we could see the end as God does, we would see that every event is for the believer. When we get to the heaven, we will see that every wind was wafting us to glory.

August Fourteenth

A new creature

“He that have my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him” John 14:21.

You are greatly mistaken if you think that to be a Christian is merely to have certain views, and convictions, and spiritual delights. This is all well; but if it leads not to a devoted life, I fear it is all a delusion. “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.”

August Fifteenth

Here is love

“But the Lord said unto Samuel, look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart” 1 Samuel 16:7.

He was the only one that knew the wickedness of the beings for whom He died. He that searches the hearts of sinners died for them. His eye alone had searched their hearts; ay, was searching at the time He came. He knew what was in men; yet He did not abhor them on that account — he died for them. It was not for any goodness in man that He died for man. He saw none. It was not that He saw little sin in the heart of man. He is the only being in the universe that saw all the sin that is in the unfathomable heart of man. He saw to the bottom of the volcano — and yet He came and died for man. Here in is love! When publicans and sinners came to Him on earth, He knew what was in their hearts. His eye had rested on their bosoms all their life. He had seen all the lusts and passions that had ever rankled there; yet in no wise did He cast them out. So with you. His eye hath seen all your sin — the vilest, darkest, blackest hours you have lived, His pure eye was resting on you; yet He died for such, and invites you to come to Him; and will in no wise cast you out.

August Sixteenth

Temporal judgements

“For the time is come that judgement must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?” 1 Peter 4:17.

There are some sins which God visits with temporal judgments, as weakness of body, sickness, and death. When Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Ghost, they fell down dead at the apostle’s feet. When Herod gave not God the glory, he was eaten up of worms, and died upon his throne. So it is especially in profaning the Lord’s table. This is God’s word, who knows best: “For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.”

August Seventeenth

My beloved is mine

***“My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies”
Song of Solomon 2:16.***

And if any man ask, How darest thou, sinful worm, to call that Divine Saviour thine? the answer is here, For I am His: He chose me from all eternity, else I never would have chosen Him. He shed His blood for me, else I never would have shed a tear for Him. He cried after me, else I never would have breathed after Him. He sought after me, else I never would have sought after Him. He hath loved me, therefore I love Him. He hath chosen me, therefore I evermore choose Him. “My beloved is mine, and I am His.”

August Eighteenth

O worship the King

“Praise ye the Lord. Praise the Lord, O my soul” Psalm 146:1.

Believers should praise God for what He is in Himself. Those that have never seen the Lord cannot praise Him. Those that have not come to Christ, have never seen the King in His beauty. An unconverted man sees no loveliness in God. He sees a beauty in the blue sky, in the glorious sun, in the green earth, in the spangling stars, in the lily of the field; but he sees no beauty in God. He hath not seen Him, neither known Him; therefore there is no melody of praise in that heart.

When a sinner is brought to Christ, he is brought to the Father. Jesus gave Himself for us, “that He might bring us to God.” O! what a sight breaks in upon the soul — the infinite, eternal, unchangeable God! I know that some of you have been brought to see this sight.

August Nineteenth

Love beyond compare

“Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine” Song of Solomon 1:2.

There is no love in this world like a mother’s love. It is a free, unbought, unselfish love. However much pain she has suffered on her child’s account, however many troubles she has to bear for it, by night and by day, while it hangs upon her breast, still it is more

precious than gold. There is a something in her heart that clings to her weak, sickly, nay, even to her idiot boy. God's love to a soul in Christ is stronger than this love. The Psalmist compares it to a father's: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." And Malachi 3:17: "I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Again, Isaiah 66:13: "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you."

August Twentieth

Inseparable Christ

"But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her" Luke 10:42.

"Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her" Every thing else can be taken away from you, your money, your friends, etc., but if you have once embraced the Lamb of God, you have that good part which shall never be taken away from you. You are chosen to "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away" (1 Peter 1:4). Then we can say without any fear, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage."

August Twenty-first

Death of Stephen

"And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" Acts 7:59.

Stephen was the first to die as a martyr in the cause of Christ; and he seems to have resembled the Saviour more than any that followed after. His very face appeared like the face of an angel. His irresistible wisdom in arguing with the Jews was very like Christ's; his praying for his enemies with his dying breath nearly in the same words as the Saviour, and his recommending his soul into the hands of the Lord Jesus, were in the same spirit of confidence as that in which Christ said, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." There cannot be a doubt that it was by looking unto Jesus that he became thus Christ-like; and the last view which he got of Christ

seems especially to have given him that heavenly composure in dying, which is so much above nature.

Two things are to be noticed:

1. That it was a sight of Christ at the right hand of God.

2. That it was a sight of Christ standing there. Christ being at the right hand of God is mentioned sixteen times in the Bible; thirteen times He is described as seated there; twice as being there; but here only is He spoken of as standing. This appears to have made a deep and lively impression on the mind of Stephen, for he cries out, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God;" and then, with a sweet assurance that Christ's hands were stretched out to receive him, he cried: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

August Twenty-second

When a believer falls

"But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" 1 Corinthians 9:27.

As long as a believer walks humbly with his God, his soul is at peace. The candle of the Lord shines on his head. He walks in the light as God is in the light, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth him from all sin. But the moment that unbelief creeps in, he is led away into sin; like David he falls very low. A believer generally feels lower than the world; and now he falls into darkness.

When Adam fell, he was afraid; and he hid himself from God among the trees of the garden, and he made a covering of leaves. Alas! when a believer falls, he is afraid; he hides from God. Now, he has lost a good conscience; he fears to meet with God; he does not love the house of prayer; his heart is now filled with suspicions. If I had been a child of God, would God have given me up to my own heart's lusts? He refuses to return. "There is no hope; no; for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go." Though God has never been a wilderness nor a land of darkness to the soul, yet he says: "We are lords; we will come no more unto Thee." "The Lord hath forsaken me, and my God hath forgotten me." Ah! this is the

bitterest of all kinds of desertion. If you put away faith and a good conscience, you will make shipwreck.

August Twenty-third

Transformed

“And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons’ wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood. Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls, and of every thing that creepeth upon the earth” Genesis 7:7, 8.

All the beasts entered in. There came a lion and a lioness — they, too, entered in. And then there came in the tall cattle; there came a camel-lopard, with its long majestic neck bent down — it, too, entered in. And then came the birds; the eagle that loves to soar aloft in the sky, and feed upon its prey — it, too, entered in. And then the creeping things; there came a serpent, and perhaps, Noah might say when he saw them creeping along the ground, “These will bite us” — but they, too, entered in. So, brethren, it is true that all kinds of sinners may enter in. And it is sweet to see what a change came over them when they entered in. The lion lay down beside the lamb, and the leopard beside the kid. So it is with those that came to Christ. The lion-like nature is changed into the gentle nature of the lamb — the proud man is made humble. “If any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

August Twenty-fourth

The believer’s prayer for divine teaching

“Open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law” Psalm 119:18.

The law of God here spoken of is the Bible. In the days of David, the Law, or the five books of Moses, formed the greater part of the Bible, and so the whole was often called the Law. So, in the first Psalm, “His delight is in the law of the Lord.” At verse 97 he says, “O how love I Thy law, it is my meditation all the day.” And here, “Open Thou mine eyes.”

The wondrous things seem to be the great things of an eternal world — he had turned his enquiring eyes upon the wonders of nature, sun, moon, and stars, mountains, trees, and rivers. He had seen many of the wonders of art; but now, he wanted to see the spiritual wonders contained in the Bible. He wanted to know about God Himself in all His majesty, purity, and grace. He wanted to learn the way of salvation by a crucified Redeemer, and the glory that is to follow. These were the wondrous things David wanted to see.

“Open mine eyes.” — David was not blind — his eye was not dim. He could read the Bible from end to end, and yet he felt that he needed more light. He felt that he needed to see deeper, to have the eyes of his understanding opened. He felt that if he had nothing but his own eyes and natural understanding, he would not discover the wonders which he panted to see. He wanted Divine teaching — the eye-salve of the Spirit; and therefore he would not open the Bible without this prayer, “Open Thou mine eyes!”

August Twenty-fifth

Satan’s objections answered

“And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?” Zechariah 3:2.

“If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” Christ is the advocate of every one He saves, and not only is He an advocate after conversion, but before, and throughout conversion. He answers Satan’s objections. There are two arguments here by which He answers Satan. The first is the free election of God. Jerusalem was the chief city in the world for wickedness. They had sinned against light, against love, against long-suffering mercy. Yet Christ chose it. He might say, grant that it is the chief for wickedness, yet God hath chosen it. Grant that soul is the chief of sinners, yet the Lord is sovereign. “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.” This is the argument of Christ. Is it not strange that the very argument which troubles souls is the one which

Christ uses as the reason why you should be saved? Let Satan say, you have sinned against light, against conviction, against love; still, “the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?” This shuts Satan’s mouth — this is an argument which he cannot answer. The second argument Christ employs is, the brand is already plucked out of the fire. Christ here says, whatever that sinner may have been, he is now plucked out of the fire. And thus all Satan’s arguments are urged in vain.

August Twenty-sixth

A lie of Satan

“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” 1 Corinthians 10:12.

I am tempted to think that I am now an established Christian — that I have overcome this or that lust so long, that I have got into the habit of the opposite grace — so that there is no fear. I may venture very near the temptation — nearer than other men. This is the lie of Satan. I might as well speak of gunpowder getting by habit a power of resisting fire, so as not to catch the spark. As long as powder is wet it resists the spark; but when it becomes dry it is ready to explode at the first touch. As long as the Spirit dwells in my heart He deadens me to sin, so that, if lawfully called through temptation, I may reckon upon God to carry me through. But when the Spirit leaves me I am like gunpowder. O for a sense of this!

August Twenty-seventh

A vessel unto honour

“If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work” 2 Timothy 2:21.

I often pray, Lord, make me as holy as a pardoned sinner can be made.

August Twenty-eighth

Sin confessed and cleansed

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” 1 John 1:9.

I am persuaded that I ought to confess my sins more. I think I ought to confess sin the moment I see it to be sin; whether I am in company, or in study, or even preaching, the soul ought to cast a glance of abhorrence at the sin. If I go on with the duty, leaving the sin unconfessed, I go on with a burdened conscience, and add sin to sin. I think I ought at certain times of the day — my best times — say, after breakfast and after tea — to confess solemnly the sins of the previous hours, and seek their complete remission.

August Twenty-ninth

Complete holiness

“For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness” 1 Thessalonians 4:7.

If you have truly joined yourself to Christ, you will never aim at less than complete holiness. It is told of a true child of God, that, in his agonising struggles after holiness, he would often lie on the ground and cry, “Lord, give me up to sickness, give me up to suffering, give me up to death, but give me not up to any sin.” If you have indeed joined yourself to Christ, you will have the same desire after universal holiness. “Let not any iniquity have dominion over me.” “Quicken Thou me in Thy way.”

August Thirtieth

Lovest thou me more than these

“So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yes, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs” John 21:15.

Take heed what you love. Love what Jesus loved. Love not the world, neither the things of the world. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. Love not money; it is the root of all evil. Love Jesus. Forgiven much, love much. Love God; He is worthy of all the love. Love the brethren; make them the chosen

friends of your soul.

August Thirty-first

Sanctified understanding

“Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me” Psalm 119:98.

A sanctified understanding is worth all the godless wisdom of earth and of hell. O! what fools the wisest of natural men appear when they die. Remember that, if you be joined to Christ, you will receive the “spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”

Fourth of six booklets.

