

There is a Spirit Which I Feel

by James Nayler

Edited by Jason R. Henderson

Forward

James Nayler was a prominent leader and gifted minister in the early Society of Friends in England. Though a farmer by trade, and a man of limited education, his deep spiritual understanding, piercing discernment, and powerful communication of the gospel caused multitudes to acknowledge that he preached in the demonstration of the Spirit and power, as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Sadly, he is best known for a single (and much regretted) act of folly committed in a time of weakness and temptation, when, “because of the abundance of revelation” and the unchecked flattery of a few imprudent admirers, he accepted greater praise than is due to any man (as the appendix to this volume relates in detail).

The complete works of James Nayler in four volumes are available today, but the great majority of readers find his original writings quite unmanageable. Beyond the difficulties presented by archaic words, spellings, and expressions, Nayler wrote in what might be called a “stream of consciousness” style, setting forth in long run-on sentences (with apparently little forethought or organization) the thoughts and arguments that flowed into his mind. To the eyes of a modern reader, the writing style of the 1600’s is often considered unnecessarily wordy and convoluted, but Nayler’s writings are particularly challenging in this respect. In fact, when George Whitehead (an intimate friend and fellow-Quaker) first published Nayler’s complete works in 1716, he made literally thousands of alterations to Nayler’s original words and expressions, not because of any difference in sentiment or doctrine, but entirely with a view to greater clarity of communication.

With a similar motivation to that of George Whitehead, and from a strong desire that the writings of this pious and experienced Christian not be lost in history, I have taken upon myself the task of carefully modernizing some of Nayler’s most notable works. Modernizing is not a simple or straightforward task, and can easily be done poorly. Attempts to modernize early Quaker documents without a deep understanding of their context, vocabulary, religious culture, and particular testimonies have led to some very unsatisfactory results. For this reason, I have approached the task with the greatest care and seriousness, and hope that I am in measure qualified for the work by a true intimacy with Friends’ literature, having read and re-read many thousands of pages (in their original format) for my own personal edification and enjoyment; also by a heartfelt agreement with the spiritual views contained in them; by a very real sense of loving esteem and respect for the original authors; by an admittedly imperfect but sincere attempt to live by the same light and grace to which the Quakers testified; and by a measure of the fear of the Lord—believing that the Spirit of God is the true source of much of what is presented in these writings.

—JASON R. HENDERSON

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Chapter I

The Possession of Living Faith and its Fruits And How it Has Been Found to Differ from the Dead Faith of the World

Seeing that a right faith is the only ground of man's eternal happiness, and the only thing which gains the creature an entrance towards his Creator, for "without faith it is impossible to please God;"¹ and having found by experience how the true and living faith (which has the living power) differs greatly from that faith which is dead and without that power; and also seeing that so many at this day are at ease in a dead faith, with their souls in the grave—I am stirred up in tender love to declare something of the true faith of Christ which I have found effectual to salvation and reconciliation with God.

First, I shall say a little about the faith or belief which I have seen in the world, which is a literal faith, grounded only upon the history of the Scripture with regard to God and Christ, and what Christ did in that body which the Jews crucified at Jerusalem. This is a faith which does not know Him in Spirit, nor believe in Him as the Immanuel to all generations, and so it does not work the believer into a conformity to Him, by His coming again in the same Spirit and power and working in them the same will, mind, affections, and obedience to the Father (in their measure) which was in Him—the true Example, Author, Worker and Finisher of the true and living faith.

From this dead faith (having a variety of appearances according to the several opinions of men) come all the unclean spirits living in whatsoever abomination that can be mentioned in the world. All sorts of sects and religious opinions cover themselves with this faith. It is their strength, and in it they take refuge from all reproof within or without, though they openly live in the greatest whoredoms against the Spirit of holiness that can be mentioned. Though they keep at a distance from the life of Christ, yet they believe Christ came to save sinners, and will say that they are "the chief of sinners," and that "those who are healthy need not a physician," etc. as if the greater their wickedness, the nearer they draw to Christ. And by this false faith, the One who came to save people from sin and to lead out of sin both by example and Spirit, is made a covering for all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and to strengthen the wicked heart against the life of holiness, some in one sin, some in another. Yes, with this faith all sorts do strengthen themselves and harden their hearts against the light of Christ and the Spirit which reproves the world of sin and convinces of it, and would indeed lead out of it. Thus the holy Witness of God in all men is trampled under foot, and is little regarded in any, nor believed to be the way to the Father—though the world has no light but this, nor is there a promise of life in any other. This faith appears to me to be that faith of the devil, or the "dead faith"² of which the apostle speaks, though it is perhaps even more hardened against

¹ Hebrews 11:6

² James 2:17,20,26

the fear of the Lord; for when the devils believe they at least tremble. So I now leave this faith, being judged already by its fruits with the light of Christ in every honest heart that loves holiness.

Now I shall speak something of that faith in which I have found a measure of the life of Christ made manifest in me, in whose life alone is the true and eternal atonement, and union with the holy God, into which no unclean thing can enter. This faith is not a notion concerning what was done in another time (past or future—hundreds or thousands of years distant), but that which leads to the work of a new creature at this day, and a new birth spiritually begotten and born and brought to light, without which no one can see the kingdom of God nor enter therein. And this faith does not work by the comprehension of brain knowledge, as if, having conceived or declared of Jesus Christ in words or thoughts, I have therefore learned Him, or really know Him, or am grown up in Him to a perfect man. Such possessors of notional faith deceive their own soul, and also deceive others, by declaring and boasting of what God has not wrought in them, and leading men out beyond the measure of God's present work in them. But the living faith works powerfully in the Spirit (by love thereto,³), and the mystery of it is "held in a pure conscience,"⁴ working out the old leaven, purifying the heart, and making all things new. Indeed this faith judges, kills, and crucifies with Christ in Spirit the works of the flesh, casting out everything in me that is not of God, and renewing in me the things of God, in their order, by His mighty working in me. By this the soul is raised up out of the grave, and the dead is restored to life—truly, and not in notion.

The Ground and Work of Living Faith

Now, the foundation or beginning of this faith is a real believing in that which Christ did and suffered at Jerusalem, and that there in that body He bore the sins of the world, and satisfied the wrath of God for sins past, and overcame death, hell and the grave, and made way for the Seed to arise in all through the whole world who would believe in His light, which then shined through Him to all men, by which He may be seen to be "the way, the truth and the life,"⁵ openly triumphing over all that has risen above the Seed. Much more might be said of what He there finished, all of which I did believe according to the Scriptures, which was as an opening for me to receive Him from heaven in the same Spirit and power, and without which I could not have received the gift of that Holy Spirit. For God so purposed from the beginning, that the covenant of eternal life and power should be received no other way but by faith in Him, who, in the fullness of time, was there manifest in the flesh for the taking away of sins past, and making a way for the resurrection of life to come over all, to save from sins for time to come.

³ Galatians 5:6

⁴ 1 Timothy 3:9

⁵ John 14:6

The first effect of this faith was to turn my mind out of all my past sins, and to turn it to God, and to a holiness of life which I then believed possible to attain. And in this faith, I saw a need to receive power to grow up in Him, to His fullness and stature, and I understood that no lesser faith could save me, but only the perfect “faith of the Son of God,”⁶ which in former times I had not received. But now, in the light, I received this faith with such gladness of heart that it took my delight from all sin, and set my face towards perfection in Christ, which indeed was the joy set before me. Yet here the work was not done or finished in me, even though I received the faith and hope of the Son of God, and was turned from all my former sin and my own righteousness—so that, if I had then departed this body, I would have died in no less faith than the holy faith of Jesus Christ, and so being turned to His Spirit, out of the works of the flesh, I was turned from my sin, and so from condemnation.

Nevertheless, there was a great work to be done in me before I could witness freedom from the body of death, and see the root and ground of evil removed, and the Seed raised up to reign, and the soul brought into the holy city, where there is fellowship in the Father and the Son, and a glorious liberty of the new creature, and where “all things are of God,”⁷ as the Scriptures do witness. This faith did not work me into a conceit in myself, to glory in my knowledge, and become a teacher of others concerning what I had conceived without the life; rather, it led me down into the obedience of the Spirit of light, to wait therein for the resurrection of life. And I came to see in that light that the motions of sin did still work from the old ground and root, and that this must be removed by the power of Christ working in Spirit. I saw that obedience and watchfulness in the light was required, and that without obedience to this faith I could not come to a victory over the enmity, nor to “the glorious liberty of the sons of God.”⁸ For though this faith had turned my heart towards Christ and given me hope to attain Him, still I had not yet learned Him, nor was He yet formed in me. So was I led in the light of Christ to see what I really possessed of this Treasure in my earthen vessel, which I found to be very little, and I saw that His Seed was the smallest of all seeds in my garden. So I became little before that eye which told me the truth, though I had formerly been high in my own thoughts.

And so to the Word of the beginning of Christ I was led, or to the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, that with that light which teaches Christ I might learn Christ in every measure of Him as I grew therein. I was brought to know Him that was “born under the law,”⁹ and was shown the foundation of “repentance from dead works, and doctrines of baptisms, and eternal judgment.”¹⁰ Then I came in truth and life to see what they were doing whom the apostles exhorted to “work out their own salvation with fear and trembling,”¹¹ even after they had fully believed what Christ had done for them at Jerusalem in that body.

6 Galatians 2:20 KJV, LitV

7 2 Corinthians 5:18

8 Romans 8:21

9 Galatians 4:4

10 Hebrews 6:1-2

Many other scriptures did He open to me as I learned Him, which before were a mystery while I learned them in meanings without the life of Christ. But these were opened by the revelation of Jesus Christ as they came to be fulfilled in me, being led in the work of faith by the Spirit who wrote them.

Then I came to see that, “through the law, I must be redeemed from the law,”¹² and that my redemption from it must not be by making it void, but by the fulfilling of it. Until then the law had power over me,¹³ and sin took occasion by it to strengthen itself in me.¹⁴ But as I came to grow in the Spirit and power of Christ, I was in Him brought through it (finding it fulfilled in Him), and thus I became “dead to the law”¹⁵ as it came to be fulfilled in me. So I found the words of Christ to be true: “I came not to destroy the law but to fulfill it,”¹⁶ and, “It is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one jot of the law to pass away till it be fulfilled,”¹⁷ Indeed, I needed not an interpretation for this scripture, but a fulfilling of it in Christ Jesus. And so I saw the law to be that schoolmaster which brings us to Christ (Christ formed), and how we are “heirs under tutors and guardians”¹⁸ before we know the liberty of the Son of God, or perfect freedom. And I saw that the Scripture could not be broken nor twisted, but it must be learned in the life of it unto salvation, though “the unlearned twist it to their own destruction”¹⁹ by meanings without life. Yes, “The Scripture is of no private interpretation,”²⁰ but the one Spirit must open it all in the fulfilling of it; then are they “able to make wise unto salvation”²¹ through the true faith which is in Christ Jesus.

And then I came clearly to see Christ Jesus set before me in all things that I was to go through, in that faith which I had first received, and that the attaining of Him was the true hope of glory, and there was no hope outside of Him. This hope was as an anchor in all hardships and temptations that I was led through (which were not a few), but all was counted little as I stood in this faith, for the hope that was in me to win Christ. And I clearly saw that, notwithstanding my first faith in what Christ had done at Jerusalem, yet if I did not continue in faith to follow the same Spirit in obedience to all its leadings, hoping to attain Christ Jesus the end of that faith, and daily growing towards His stature and fullness, but instead turned aside, or sat down short of the leadings of that Spirit along the way, I would make void my hope of glory, and the work of my redemption. Then, that which Christ accomplished at Jerusalem would also be made void (with respect to me), for having denied my first faith, I could not be saved from the wrath to come. So

¹¹ Philippians 2:12

¹² Galatians 2:19

¹³ Romans 7:1

¹⁴ Romans 7:5,8

¹⁵ Romans 7:4

¹⁶ Matthew 5:7

¹⁷ Luke 16:17; Matthew 5:18

¹⁸ Galatians 4:2

¹⁹ 2 Peter 3:16

²⁰ 2 Peter 1:20

²¹ 2 Timothy 3:15

I saw that I must faithfully, without doubting, follow Him in Spirit through all trials and temptations, of which way He was a perfect example in His walking in the flesh. And through the Scriptures I was made to hope, seeing that He went before me in the same way into which He now led me. And I saw Him to be the same to all generations—for as He was then, so He has been in all His saints that follow Him. And even as they exhorted one another to look unto Him in their travel (who is the Author and Finisher of their faith), and to consider Him as an example who endured such hostility from sinners lest they grow weary of suffering and faint in their minds, so I also looked to the same life in Him, (which was also in those who followed after Him) and my faith and patience were doubled, and my obedience was without doubting, and my hope was made firm unto the end—which end was winning Christ in me the hope of glory.

Oh the great mystery of faith, which is hid from all until the revelation of Christ Jesus! But when the saints and apostles had Christ revealed in them, then they were made able ministers of Him, and had the mystery opened, and preached without doubt the mystery of godliness. Yes, “without controversy, great is this mystery,”²² and yet hid from the world—God manifest in flesh, which mystery of faith must be held in a pure conscience.

So coming to experiencing these things, I knew my faith to be the “same faith once delivered to the saints.”²³ And I came to know “the good fight of that faith,”²⁴ and that “faith which overcomes the world,”²⁵ which has the promise and inheritance of eternal life. And so in the learning of Christ I came to distinguish the faith of Christ which increases “from faith to faith,”²⁶ from the faith of devils; and the living and working faith, from the dead faith without works; and the faith of Christ, from that faith which is set up without Christ. And I found it is *not* the faith of Christ to believe that men can never be perfect or overcome sin and the devil, nor to make void the law of the Father without it first being fulfilled. And it was never Christ’s faith to revenge evil, but rather to overcome evil with good. It was never His faith to respect persons, or to believe that any could commit sin and not be sin’s servant. It was never His faith to sue, contend, fight, or persecute any, or preach for hire, or in any way to serve the mammon of this world. It was not His faith to observe His own will, His own times, or the world’s customs, but to observe His Father only in all things, and only what He received from the Father, *that* He did, and could do nothing of Himself, and He never believed them to be children of God who said and did not.

But the world’s faith, in order to uphold its sins and lusts, believes those to be children of God who “say but do not do,”²⁷ who are enemies to the faith of Christ, which presents men perfect to God by working out such evils. All of which I came to see, not by man, but in the revelation of Christ. And in His faith I

22 1 Timothy 3:16

23 Jude 1:3

24 1 Timothy 6:12

25 1 John 5:4

26 Romans 1:17

27 Matthew 23:3

learned Him, and grew more into His faith, and into Him, and thereby “His life was made manifest in my body.”²⁸ And thus I came to see what belongs to Christ in truth (as the truth is in Jesus), and what belongs to the world, but is called Christ’s (in order to oppose Him). And I saw that that which loves the things of this world is not His love, nor is it His joy that takes pleasure in visible things, nor His liberty which is in the works of the flesh, nor His peace that remains in sin, nor His patience that seeks its own revenge, nor His glory that mixes with pride, nor His worship that stands in carnal things, nor His honor that men seek after, nor His knowledge that is according to the flesh, nor His fear that is taught by the precepts of men. All of these are in the world and not in Him. They have a name to be His, but are enemies to His life, and were never begotten of His Father, nor learned in the Son. Indeed, by that truth and simplicity which I found in Christ (contrary to the will of man) I came to see the deceit in all of these things.

And so in the life of Christ I have learned the growth of the faith of Christ, and the riches of it, and the end of it, which is Christ Jesus in all His working. And I also know the world’s faith, and its uncleanness, whose end is not to attain the holiness of Christ in this life, but instead to live in the world’s delights and have Christ for a cover, and to be saved by the righteousness of Another—a righteousness in which they have no mind to walk themselves. And so the earthly faith does not work by love, for it does not love the life of Christ, but makes enemies to His cross who mind earthly things. But the living faith works by love unto holiness of life, and therefore purifies the heart, and “the mystery of it stands in a pure conscience”²⁹ in those that have it, and not in comprehending and talking of what was in another. For even the devils believe the holiness that was in Christ, and can preach it, but they cannot inherit it, because they do not love to live the life of it.

Hereby I know these two faiths clearly distinguished: The end of the one is the life of Christ in which He Himself walked, in the same obedience of the same Spirit to the same Father by the same power, according to the proportion of faith received from God, which faith is from above, and so lays hold on heavenly things for its strength, and brings forth heavenly fruits. The other faith professes and promises great things, but ends in the world, minds earthly things, and does not purify the heart, nor believe ever to attain the life of Christ, His stature or fullness, but accounts this an error in all who press after such attainments. So the end of the one is to hold forth Jesus Christ in life and power, the same yesterday and today and forever. The end of the other is a liberty to sin here (while they can take any pleasure in it), and then sanctification and salvation when they are dead. And according to the end of each faith so it works; for it is impossible for him that cannot believe for holiness to work holiness. But according to each man’s faith, so he will inherit in this world and in that which is to come.

And in the workings and attainments of this living, powerful faith I have found several measures according to my growth therein—from the beginning of the Word of Christ (or the first principle of Christ), to

28 2 Corinthians 4:10

29 1 Timothy 3:9

the fullness and stature of Christ. And there is much working in Spirit between a babe in Christ and a man grown in strength, and between faith received from Christ, and Christ formed in me. For though I received faith to believe in His fullness, and in what He was and did in the flesh, I had not yet learned Him in Spirit and Life in my own mortal vessel, nor did I put Him on all at once, but in the light of faith I saw I needed to run so as to win Him, before I could put Him on. And in this I came to see and know myself begotten again in Him who is the Way to God, and the Begotten of the Father was manifest in measure in me, in the pure image of a holy child, separate from the fleshly sinful seed.

Yet, after I had beheld His pure image and His pure mind and nature so far contrary to my own, still I saw He was not yet reigning in His kingdom, nor were all things put under His feet, nor could I say that Jesus was then Lord in me. But by the Spirit's working (by the faith which I had received, and in hope thereof) I was made to endure the loss of all things, and to deny all things that ever His Holy Spirit did war against in me, which might in any way oppress this holy plant or hinder its growth. Yes, I was made to acknowledge His judgment in the light upon whatever was in my heart or affections besides Him alone, (despite whatever loss I might meet with in the world). And as this judgment was acknowledged and consented to against myself and all my self-lovers, there I was separated from them in judgment, and they were subdued by the powerful workings of His Spirit and put under His feet, and I was set free from them to arise with Him above them, being brought out from under them. This was not done all at once, but according as He appeared in the light to manifest every particular evil. And as the faith that I had received wrought by love to Him a consent in my spirit to His just judgments upon all these things, I was made willing to give them up to the fire, and to come out of them, and join to Him in the execution—lest He should consume me with them (as must have been the case, had I stayed in them). Here I found the benefit of the light which goes before His face to prepare His way, and the salvation of faith which saved me through hope in Him, so that I was not destroyed in my sins. Indeed, this faith and hope gave me an entrance within the veil, or a hiding place in Him until the indignation was over, which had to pass upon the man of sin.

And so a voice was heard in the wilderness calling me out of sin, and into a way I knew not, except as the light of His covenant led me (like the spirit of Elijah, turning my heart towards Him, that He might not smite my earth with a curse at His coming; Mal. 4:6). And as I continued in this way, before I came to know pure rest in the kingdom of Christ, I met with many hardships and great travails, and many temptations and trials within and without—but truly the greatest enemies were within me, which, upon every hardship, would tempt me with unbelief to destroy my faith and hope. But this faith and hope was set before me, and it encouraged me to endure such hardships, and to follow the light in a way I had not known, and to walk in the clouds to meet the Lord, and to leave my former knowledge, wisdom, glory and riches to go a way I had not walked, and to endure great assaults on every side. And the world (out from which I was called) was ready to surround me and overtake me, to turn me back again to what I had seen and enjoyed before, ever seeking to persuade me that I would never attain to that which was set before me in the faith and hope.

Then I came clearly to see that though I had received the faith of Christ as a shield in this war (because of which the wrath of God did not take me away in these temptings, murmurings, reasonings and doubtings which arose in the fleshly part), yet I was not at present brought to enjoy the purchased possession. For though I had heard and believed the gospel of salvation, and was sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, I could not enjoy the purchased possession till I came to be “built up with Christ for a habitation of God through the Spirit.”³⁰ And I found by daily experience that my salvation was not complete so long as my soul was subjected under any earthly lust or passion; nor was the war over until, by the mighty working of God in me by His Spirit, these things came to be subdued under the feet of Christ, and my soul set above them with Him to reign in heavenly places. So even though “my salvation was nearer than when I believed,”³¹ still the soul is not safe while sin lives or the flesh lusts, for this wars against the soul, and every sin wounds it (as all know who are not “past feeling”).³² As long as sin defiles the soul it is not safe, nor does the honest heart have peace and rest; for the rest and peace is found in the holy city into which comes no unclean thing. And the soul knows no lasting rest and peace till all righteousness is fulfilled upon earth, and the soul extracted from all corruption, having put on immortality. Here death is swallowed up in victory, and its sting is taken away, which is sin; and the strength of sin, which is the law, is not taken away except where it is fulfilled—there only does “grace reign through righteousness.”³³ This I found to be the truth as it is found in Jesus, as I came to learn Him and put Him on by faith. And so I saw the folly of such as would make void the law by talking of faith and grace where sin is yet standing and the soul still taken captive therewith. For though I too had often sought peace in this way, I now saw that my soul could not inherit liberty any other way but as it came “to be purified in obedience through the Spirit.”³⁴

Now, this work was not wrought in me by the knowledge of Christ after the flesh, but only as I came to learn Him in Spirit; for spiritual wickedness had taken my soul captive, and by the Spirit it must be sanctified and set free. And I came to see that if I had been in His company here on earth as long as His disciples were in the flesh, and had seen as much as they did, and heard words from His own mouth, I would have still come short of this work—even as they were, in whom the child was unborn³⁵ when He went away in the flesh. For they “knew not what spirits they were of,”³⁶ until He came again to them in Spirit, and was revealed in them. Then they could preach the resurrection of the dead and the soul’s redemption, and desired to know Him no more after the flesh, having received Him in Spirit. Then they preached Christ within, the hope of glory, though previously they had looked for an outward kingdom

³⁰ Ephesians 2:22

³¹ Romans 13:11

³² Ephesians 4:19

³³ Romans 5:21

³⁴ 1 Peter 1:22

³⁵ He means the life of Christ was not yet brought forth and formed in them.

³⁶ Luke 9:55

and glory. For then they received His promise, “He that dwells with you shall be in you,”³⁷ and “I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you;”³⁸ and “the world sees Me no more, but you see Me, and because I live you shall live also; at that day you shall know that I am in My Father and you in Me and I in you.”³⁹ Yes, these received the One who was promised, whom the world sees no more, whose expectations are carnal, for none can see the kingdom of heaven but who are born of this Spirit and heirs of His life. And he that has the Son has life, and he that has not the Son has not the life, but the wrath of God abides upon him regardless what he says he believes; for none has the Son except as they receive this Spirit and are led by this Spirit and born of it.

And this I found also, that the Son of God does not appear in any except as He conforms them to His own image, which image He has always borne in this world, as the Scripture says: “When He shall appear we shall be like Him,”⁴⁰ and “He shall change our vile bodies and make them like His glorious body,”⁴¹ and “transformed from glory to glory by the same Spirit,”⁴² and “herein we have boldness in the day of judgment, because as He is so are we in this present world.”⁴³ This is not obtained by thoughts of believing without, but by a lively working of His power within, which works out the earthly image and nature and conforms to the heavenly image through that spiritual birth which is not of flesh and blood. Nor can flesh and blood ever discern this work in man, but has always hated it in whomsoever it has appeared in all ages. For it is of a shining nature wherever it is begotten of the Father, and cannot be hid where it is formed, but by its fruit gives light to the world contrary to the world’s ways, showing forth Christ’s coming in judgment against all deeds of darkness. And this heavenly birth of the Father is to be held forth in its clear image, without mixture, according to its several measures, that all may see that He is not of this world, and that He also takes them out of this world according as He grows in them, or they grow in Him. And these must go forth into the world bearing His reproach, that the Scripture may be fulfilled: “they are not of this world, even as I am not of this world;”⁴⁴ and this is the world’s light and its condemnation, even His coming.

And so I have found that the faith which joins to the world, and does not overcome the world, is not the faith of Christ, nor does it lay hold on the power of Christ, though it may believe the history of the Scriptures concerning Christ. This faith does not set up the kingdom of God in the heart, nor cast out the world there, nor save the soul from the pollution of the world through lust, and so is but a notion of salvation

37 John 14:17

38 John 14:18

39 John 14:19-20

40 1 John 3:2

41 Philippians 3:21

42 2 Corinthians 3:18

43 1 John 4:17

44 John 17:16

and not the power of salvation. For the Scriptures have said, “Whosoever is born of God overcomes the world, and this is the victory that overcomes the world, even your faith;”⁴⁵ and the faith which works not in this way “is like a body without a spirit which is dead.”⁴⁶ But the living faith that stands in Christ Jesus, purifies the heart and conscience, overcoming whatever would hinder the appearance of Christ in His temple, or the bringing forth of His virtues. And those who believe with this faith believe not in a lie, but in the truth and power of God as it is in Christ Jesus, and as it has been declared in Scriptures, not for a discourse, but for an inheritance of life, of whose fullness we all receive according to our faith.

Therefore, we find that those who were of this faith witnessed Christ to be present (which the world’s faith could never receive under any form or profession, but rather counted it blasphemy, and called His Spirit the spirit of the devil). By this faith Isaiah believed in his time, and witnessed the child born unto them, who was the mighty God, the everlasting Father, etc., whose name they knew to be Immanuel, and this was before He appeared in that temple at Jerusalem. And Ezekiel was called the son of man before that time also. And Paul said Christ was revealed in him, and spoke in him, and wrought in him, and that in his flesh was being filled up what was lacking in the afflictions of Christ for His body’s sake, which is the church. Many more men and women might be mentioned who confessed the same Christ present in them, both before and after His appearance in that body, whose testimony was never received by the wisdom of the world, neither then nor at this day. For the god of this world (being king in the heart) has blinded the eye of the mind which can see Christ’s spiritual glory by the light of the gospel, and he persuades the world that Christ is either past or to come, but never present. And so, as many as are brought to confess Him before men find it so at this day—that they are hated of all men for His name’s sake, that the Scriptures may be fulfilled, and His testimony finished.

But the faith which confesses Christ present is that which the world cannot bear nor receive. No, they will preach Him at a distance—what He was and what He will be—but their faith cannot know His present coming, or receive any measure of His appearance now. Nor will this faith ever give an entrance into His kingdom upon earth, nor the holy rest, for the faith that puts Him afar off is not the faith of Christ, which fills those who believe with the fullness of God.

And by what I have learned, it is forever clear to me without any controversy—that the faith which makes allowance for sin is not Christ’s faith, nor does it have a share or possession in Him. For the faith which is not holy came not from God, and so it cannot build up to God. Indeed, it is not saving faith that does not save from sins, but is rather a deceiving faith which deceives the soul and allows lust to defile it and destroy it, and so brings it under condemnation. By believing its lies, sin is let in upon the soul by consent, and the soul is persuaded that it cannot be otherwise, and so the devil and the world and the flesh and

45 1 John 5:4

46 James 2:26

sin have their victory over the soul (which should have the victory over all). What greater deception can there be to the soul than this?

And therefore, that which I have seen and learned I do openly declare: that this is a deceiving faith, and indeed a form of unbelief rather than the faith of Christ, for it makes way for the god of this world to reign and act in the creature in things contrary to the life of Christ, and the life of the soul. Again I say, that faith which makes way for the least sin is not the faith of Christ, for His work and coming is to destroy the works of the devil and redeem the soul from sin, and the least measure of true faith (that stands in His life) overcomes sin and the world in that measure. But he that commits sin goes out of that faith and acts against it.

It is a lying faith which persuades the soul of freedom from condemnation but gives it not freedom from sin, which is the cause of condemnation, and all shall witness this with me now or hereafter. For wherever sin has power, there death has power, and the grave and hell and condemnation have power also, for these are the wages of sin, and those who believe the contrary will soon find they were deceived. And may not such truly be said to be “past feeling”⁴⁷ indeed, who can commit sin and feel no condemnation for it already? And this is the effect of their false faith: they harden themselves against the faithful witness of God in their own conscience, until the seared conscience has “made shipwreck of the faith”⁴⁸ of Christ. It is the doctrine of devils which preaches the faith of devils to give way to the works of the devil, which all sin is, from the least to the greatest. And he that pleads for sin is a father to it, and he that commits it is a servant, and may expect its wages if he does not repent.

There are many at this day who indeed feel this truth, though they have long believed with this false faith, deceiving their own souls day after day, believing they shall not be condemned when they are condemned already in their own hearts, and feel the weight of sin daily pressing on their souls and burdening the conscience. Alas, the fear of death and sin keeps such souls in bondage, and lies upon them all their lives, and yet they force themselves to believe contrary to holy faith and a good conscience that they are somehow already saved and redeemed. Thus they make shipwreck of saving faith and a good conscience by believing a lie, contrary to their own daily feeling, with nothing more to encourage them therein except this persuasion, which well suits those who take pleasure in unrighteousness. But this persuasion comes not from God, but is rather condemned by the witness of God in all. This is the state of many at this day, though some, whose consciences are seared, can no longer feel this living witness in them. Their damnation slumbers not, for they have lost their calling and election.

And this have I learned in Christ: that there is a great difference both in effect and nature between that faith which is the gift of God and the faith which men make unto themselves. That which is the gift of

47 Ephesians 4:19

48 1 Timothy 1:19

God is of His own nature—clean, pure, and perfect, as are all His gifts, and so it naturally works the work and will of God in all who receive it freely and mix nothing with it to darken it or stop His working. By this faith (which is not of myself, but is the gift of God), we are saved from both sin and condemnation, and are begotten to the Father of faith in Christ Jesus, unto perfect holiness. Whatever is done in this faith is not sin, but whatsoever is against this faith, or not of this faith, is sin and brings condemnation, and this faith does not approve of it. But if I act without doubting, nor against this holy faith, then I am justified in my own heart, my own conscience is kept clean, and I am approved in God's sight. Yes, I have boldness through the obedience of faith in the day of judgment, that it is not my own work but the righteousness of faith which is in Christ Jesus. This is the effect of true, saving, working faith, and this is its nature and grace.

But I have found another faith which is not so in nature or effect, being not freely received from above. This is a feigned faith, which has its ground here below, and its end also. The earthly man, in his wisdom from the letter, reason, or comprehension, sets up an opinion or image in his mind having to do with God or Christ or religion, worship, doctrine or conduct, or any other thing, and then, looking upon this likeness with his reasoning part, gathers strength to believe it must indeed be so; thus he forms a faith in himself. And though this faith be greatly lacking, there being many things in the Scriptures and the practices of the saints (and especially the Witness of God in his own conscience) that will not suit with it, still the strong man (being uppermost in the strength of his comprehension), forces a faith against all these, and causes all else to bow under it. So this faith does not bring forth the birth of Christ, nor His pure image and life in man, either in matters of worship or in conduct. But however a man with this faith may imitate Christ and the saints, and still keep the world, and escape the cross, and save his life and credit and glory here, *that* he will conform to and glory in. And as for the rest, he believes it does not concern him now, at this day, to walk in all things as Christ did. For whatever evil he is not addicted to he condemns in all; but that which is in his own heart and eye, and brings him profit and pleasure, that he will cover, and will insist it is agreeable with true belief at this day, though formerly it was not. This is a faith made after man and not after God; it is a respecter of persons, times, and things, but will not bow these to worship in Spirit, nor bring them under the feet of Jesus. And being earthly by nature, this faith has earthly effects, and God will not acknowledge it with His power, nor go forth with that which man makes, but only with His own gift, which is good and perfect in every measure thereof.

And this also I have learned in Christ Jesus, and declare to all that seek faith in Him: that I never received any measure of this faith of Christ in vain, but whatever I acted or suffered therein, from the least measure till this day, in it I prevailed, in whatever the Light of the Spirit has led me. And I have found it to be a shield, and have found a growth in it towards Christ Jesus in every one of its works. And I have learned to stand single in it to the end, regardless how tempted or tried I have been before the end appeared; for the end of this faith is a conquering through the Spirit, as all do witness who prove it to the end in singleness of heart. Indeed, many are the cloud of witnesses that have gone before, who by this

holy faith have prevailed over the powers of sin, and entered into the holy rest, who have not sought their own kingdom but the kingdom of Christ.

Only this pure faith works towards the manifestation of Christ in all actions and sufferings, and orders all things in their place and time, and fits all relationships for His manifestation therein to glorify God; for God is not glorified in anything on earth except in that where the Son appears, who is the express image and glory of God, and in whom alone God reveals Himself and the glory of His judgments and mercy. Yes, the grace and truth of God is in the face of Christ, in whomever He appears, and so every measure of the heavenly faith works towards the heavenly appearance or manifestation, and the earthly faith works towards an earthly manifestation. So true faith in God is that which works effectually by love towards the image and life of God in this world, which is seen only in His spiritual begetting. And this being believed in, and set above all else, shines forth in its various measures, showing the virtue and glory of the Spirit of God. But the feigned, earthly faith allows earthly things to remain in the heart (for its own purposes), and in love to these earthly things it works disobedience to the Spirit, and so falls short of the glory of God; for it cannot hold forth the fruits of the Spirit to glorify God with an earthly lover in the heart, nor can one faith serve both God and mammon. Thus, he that loves the things of this world makes himself God's enemy, whose faith withstands the appearance of Christ in his actions or sufferings, and so withstands the glory of God which therein should be manifest to all men. This is that faith which has ever put Christ afar off, yet it uses the form and words to withstand the life and virtue. It is of this sort that the apostle speaks, warning that they "have a form of godliness, but deny the power of godliness."⁴⁹ Alas, these have always been the greatest enemies to the coming of Christ, being not of the faith of Christ, nor of the Spirit of Christ; but being from below, these withstand His coming from above to be brought forth in His virtue, and to be worshiped in His own Spirit. This indeed is antichrist.

It is this spirit and this faith that twists the Scriptures in order to seduce from Christ, and to destroy the way of His coming. And instead of bringing forth His life and virtue in a real manifestation, this spirit serves itself with a meaning or interpretation instead of serving Christ with actual obedience. And so spiritual birth is given a meaning or an interpretation instead of the actual life of Christ, and this meaning is set up to oppose His life, lest it should really come forth into the world. For instance, Christ said in Scriptures, "Whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also,"⁵⁰ and, "From him who takes away your goods do not ask them back,"⁵¹ and "I tell you not to resist an evil person,"⁵² but "to overcome evil with good,"⁵³ and "Love those who hate you,"⁵⁴ and many similar commands; these Christ meant really and

49 2 Timothy 3:5

50 Matthew 5:39-40

51 Luke 6:30

52 Matthew 5:39

53 Romans 12:21

truly, and showed them by example in Himself. And whoever receives the same Spirit, finds it moving them to these same things as it increases, and being obeyed it will bring forth the same fruits to glorify the Father in all generations; for the Spirit does not grow old, nor are its fruits barren, wherever it is really received in the faith thereof and obeyed.

But the other faith (in the earthly spirit) says, “Christ did not mean as He spoke; you must not take Him literally; those words must have a spiritual meaning!” And so their spiritual meaning devours the life of obedience, both as to the words of Christ and the Spirit of Christ, setting up a subtle meaning that is without the life of Christ and contrary to His example. And this meaning they desire all to accept, both against the plain words of Christ, against His example in his walking, and against the working of His Spirit in others. And if they cannot, in this way, destroy the true faith and fruit before it is brought forth, then their work is to render any a blasphemer in whom this Life is born and brought forth to light; for they count it great presumption for any to witness the life of Christ brought forth in them into the world. And though they preach of Christ in us, and the life of Christ in us, and the Spirit of Christ in us, and our body the temple of God, etc., because they find these words in Scripture, still they will not allow any to believe and obey unto a manifestation of His Life. No, this they will not acknowledge, but will instead put their meaning in its place, and set up the form to deny the power, and make Christ’s words deny His coming.

Oh how long has this false faith professed Him to be coming, and spoken of the life and glory at His coming, according to its own carnal comprehensions; and yet it will not receive Him in the same life and Spirit and power in which He has ever appeared. And so to this generation He is ever to come, but never present—except to make a covering for their sins past and present, and an encouragement for sin to come. Thus the devourer turns the best of things into a lie in all that will believe him, that he may keep Christ and the soul from knowing a present union, which he could not long do except by the consent of the creature. For there is a gift of God in everyone, which daily draws towards Him wherever it is not quenched by believing lies; but those who “receive not the love of the truth”⁵⁵ will perish, even as it was in the days of old. Oh, a narrow passage I have found it to be that leads in the way of truth and life, and misses all the enemy’s subtle pretenses. And I have found His words true who said “few are they who that find it;”⁵⁶ for the enemy is always ready to meet those who seek after God with a shadow, a meaning, or some other deceit to believe instead of the substance—always handling the words of God deceitfully, using the gifts of God to withstand the life of the Giver, and turning His grace into lascivious liberty.

And this I have learned in Him who is the Light of the world: that in my turning towards Him at His reproof (when I knew Him not), and believing in His light (whom I had not seen), I found a faith given

54 Matthew 5:44

55 2 Thessalonians 2:10

56 Matthew 7:14

to me which did declare the righteousness of God in Him—the righteousness in which Christ perfectly walked when upon earth, both in doing and in suffering. And being turned towards Him, I found the propitiation that God had sent forth, “through faith in His blood to declare His righteousness for the remitting of my past sins,”⁵⁷ that God might be just—who would not have passed by my past sins, had He not accepted Christ’s sufferings, nor would I have found liberty from past sin to follow Him, nor could I have been accepted in doing so, except in the faith and hope of the same righteousness. So God was just in justifying, and His forbearance was magnified towards me therein, and by turning to this righteousness of His (made manifest in the light of faith and hope), my face was set towards God’s righteousness in Christ Jesus to be attained and walked in, for life and salvation, in the time to come.

And so being turned towards God, all my past sins were behind me, and God’s righteousness was before me, and from henceforth I was to be found in God’s righteousness, walking in a measure of it, and in the faith and hope for the full attainment of Christ for my inheritance. And at that time, the great redemption that I experienced in Christ was in relation to these following things: I found Him calling me with His light, and holding forth to me His life and His sufferings, which were so holy that I could not help but confess them; I found Him turning me towards the same life and sufferings in faith and hope, and begetting a mind in me towards that same Life, and finding the increase of His light to lead me; and I found Him setting me free from the wrath of God for all my past sins of ignorance, which otherwise would have laid upon me as a weight or chain, binding me so that I could not have walked in the way of His light, etc.

But I do not say that if I turned to commit sin again, that that sin was cast behind my back also; for I found it to be otherwise. Indeed, I found the sin which stood before my face to be greater than the rest, standing in my way to God, and stopping me from following His light or growing in His life. And I saw that there was no way to escape it but by repenting of it, and receiving the just sentence of condemnation in myself, and bearing His indignation, until He that wounded me for it healed me again—which never took place except as I turned from the evil with my whole heart, and accepted the punishment till the advocate did arise to intercede, whose blood I had trampled, whose precious life I had pierced, and whose holy Spirit I had grieved, by turning away from His leadings.

Nor do I say that all my sins which I had formerly committed—the sins of which I had been convinced by the Light of the world, when I was in the world—that these were wholly taken away as my sins of ignorance were. For I found that, with regard to these sins, God was both merciful and just: merciful in that He did not lay them all at once before me, lest they should have pressed me down so I could not have followed the light or found strength, but must certainly have perished under them. And He was just in that, even as these sins were not committed all at once against the light of His Spirit, so He has visited me for them from time to time, and did not lay them before me all at once, nor in a way so heavy as those

57 Romans 3:25

sins committed after I believed and gave myself up to follow the light. Nevertheless, He indeed brought me to an account for them; and coming to feel the terrors of God, I have learned to fear, and to love.

So I have found the ground and rise and deceit of that faith which believes Christ to have taken away the sins of believers past, present and to come, with which belief many at this day make merry over the witness of God,⁵⁸ and slay the Just One in themselves.⁵⁹ And I have learned the meaning of that Scripture, “If we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth there remains no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation to devour the adversary.”⁶⁰ No one knows these things except the one who comes to find them fulfilled, and then they shall understand that “He that is born of God does not sin,”⁶¹ and “Whosoever believes is born of God.”⁶² But he that sins turns his back both on the faith and the birth that is of Christ, and becomes an adversary to Him in His work, despite what he claims to believe. And this I have found to be an everlasting truth, regardless what men believe or imagine: that a man’s sins are cast behind His back only as long as he keeps his face towards the Light of God; but if he turns from God’s righteousness, his own iniquities, both new and old, will rise up and meet him. In vain does such a man as this believe his sins are blotted out of God’s sight, for it is God’s eye that shows him the error of his way, and condemns him for it in his own heart.

Nor was the ground and root of sin removed just as soon as my mind was turned by the light from sin towards God. On the contrary, I found its motions and lusts still seeking to go forth to its various objects, in order to conceive sin afresh. This ground was removed only as I grew in Christ, and He in me, and as I came to learn the One who was in the beginning before sin was. And this One I learned in a faithful following and serving of His Spirit, in watching, in fasting, in praying, and in all spiritual wrestlings, as I was led into these by the light. And in this warfare I came to see the hardship of those that will be soldiers of Christ Jesus, and know the baptisms into His death. And I saw the slothful servant and the faithful servant, each with their reward. And the parables and figures of the kingdom were opened as that Spirit grew in me which interprets the Scriptures in the life, and opens their sealed mysteries in their season, as they come to be fulfilled. And so I experienced the gift of the Scriptures by inspiration, which alone is how they profit to the perfecting of the man of God. But the man of this world, not having learned in this way, twists the Scriptures to his own destruction, getting their words in the earthly part, before they are fulfilled in the heart through the Spirit. Such as these do not receive the Scriptures by inspiration, nor know the gift of the Holy Spirit.

58 See Revelation 11:10

59 See James 5:6, and Hebrews 6:6

60 Hebrews 10:26-27

61 1 John 3:9

62 1 John 5:1

And in this journey I have seen the slothful servant overtaken with a fault which he had once cast behind him, and never intended to join to again, though the diligent servant was kept free. And I have seen the wages of each servant allotted according to his diligence in that which God has entrusted in him, but not by his own strivings in his own thoughts, worth, or wisdom. And in diligent hearkening to and obeying the Spirit, I have found the true faithfulness towards God, though I saw that the mere acquiring of knowledge is what is highly esteemed among men. And I found that, though I have “a manifestation of the Spirit within me to profit withal,”⁶³ yet the times of my profiting are only in His hand, and that waiting upon Him when He does not move is my reasonable service, which is as profitable to me as if He did move, though I cannot see it. And though I found this to be a great cross to my hasty will, it is indeed the true worship in Spirit, for I saw that when I did not know this Spirit—to hearken, obey, and observe as His will leads—that I “worshipped what I did not know.”⁶⁴ At that time my fear towards God was taught by the precepts of men, but I was not taught of the Lord, not being born of His Spirit. But all the children of the Lord are taught of the Lord, and as many as are led by the Spirit, these are the sons of God. So I came to read and understand these Scriptures without interpretations or meanings that my own wisdom taught me, but by that which the Holy Spirit taught me. And I found that Scriptures thus learned and received are no longer notions that can be lost, but possessions in the inheritance among the sanctified of all ages. No subtle man could ever steal them or change them, or in any way deceive me concerning the truth of them by twisting them, nor take away the comfort I had in them, for my comfort and fellowship were in the same Spirit and Life that gave them forth.

So that which declares the righteousness of God for remission of sins past, and the righteousness of God as the inheritance in time to come—this I have found to be a faith without falsehood. And though it is a righteousness beyond declaring, yet it is inherited as the virtues that are in Christ Jesus come to be received in the Life. And whatever faith does not have this righteousness for its ground and end, nor the virtues and several measures of the growth of Christ for its life and increase, this I have found (upon trial) to be a feigned fancy of man’s mind. And he that says he has faith in God but is without the hope of this righteousness for his inheritance, or says he possesses Christ further than he possesses His virtues for his life and growth towards this inheritance, when he comes to be weighed with truth, he will be found too light to stand in judgment, or abide the fire, or to dwell with everlasting burnings.

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63 1 Corinthians 12:7

64 John 4:22

Who They Are that Are Under the Law,

*Who They Are that Have Made Void the Law against Themselves
And Who They Are that are Under Grace.*

Grace reigns through righteousness, and the law through transgression; and he that says he is out from under the law while the transgressing nature is alive, may pretend the law is void against himself, but he remains under it in the account of God.

For the seed or image of God being fallen, the transgressing nature has risen above in man, to whom there is no grace nor life promised, and who knows no obedience except for selfish ends. Upon this nature the law is added till the promised Seed arise. And the law is a schoolmaster till it brings unto Christ, who is born of the woman and made under the law, who takes upon Him the seed after the flesh, to redeem the soul from under the transgressor, that the plant of God may grow. So then man must witness the teachings and chastisements of the law, to bring him low till he comes down under the Seed. Then the Seed is set above the head of the transgressing nature, and having bruised it, the strength of sin is taken away, together with the strength of the law. And as the soul is raised up through the law (the law being fulfilled by the Seed through the Spirit), so it arises above the law into the kingdom of grace, which reigns through righteousness (and not by making void the law). For the grace is to the Seed, and the law to the transgressor; and as either of these reign in the creature, so is he under the law or under grace. The law has power over the man of sin as long as he lives,⁶⁵ during which time the Seed of the promise is in bondage. But as that is put to death by which the Seed is held captive, then the Seed rises under grace; and as it rises up through the law, it fulfills it. And the law being fulfilled, it loses its strength, as sin dies and so has no more power—for the “law is the strength of sin”⁶⁶ until it is fulfilled by the Seed through the Spirit. So he that is dead to sin is free from sin, and is under grace. But he that casts off the law while sin still lives, makes void the law against himself.

So he that is under grace is dead to sin, and dead to the law which is the strength of sin. In such a man, sin has no more dominion over the soul, for the power of it is subdued, which was the law unfulfilled. But if a man seeks to make void the law while the strength of sin yet remains, the law will overtake him in the end.

And he that learns these things in death and resurrection, and in eternal life, shall in this work learn what transgression is, and how the law is added upon it, and how it is the strength of sin in him (but not in the Seed), and what it is that makes an entrance through the law, and how grace comes to abound where sin has abounded, and to reign through righteousness unto eternal life.

65 See Romans 7:1

66 1 Corinthians 15:56

So where the transgressing nature is slain, there the law is at an end and fulfilled, and the plant of God brings forth its fruit, against which there is no law. But the law is indeed against the man of sin, and the man of sin is against the law as long as he lives. And the law will surely have power over him, and not one jot of it will pass away till it be fulfilled. So he that would cast off the law and make it void while remaining in sin is far from grace. But in the One that fulfills the law, grace and truth does abound.

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Concerning the Way of Life,

And the Knowledge that Devours the Life.

Do you desire to know the way of life distinguished from that knowledge which devours the life? Then be no longer as the wild donkey's colt, but take up the yoke of the Son, in whom you say you believe, that you may feel and know the life of faith; for only in obedience is the life of what you believe made sure to you, and thereby is faith and knowledge also made perfect. But until you attain power for "the obedience of faith,"⁶⁷ you are still dead and know only words. And so your faith stands in words without life, which accomplishes nothing, but will arise to condemn you when your time is out.

Therefore in all your seeking, mind that which works in a lowly mind, calling you into the obedience of what is there made manifest in the begettings of the Father, and not in the conceivings of the brain. For in brain-knowledge the boasting nature rules, who glories in the wisdom of words, but not in the words of life. But such as walk in the Spirit, and in the obedience of the Son, truly know and glorify the Father, and their praise is of Him, and their lives are hidden with Him from all knowledge except what is revealed in the obedience of the Son. From a man you may learn the knowledge of words, but the knowledge of life is only begotten of God. And he that has the Son has this life, which is not of the life of a disobedient nature; for whatever is begotten of God is made conformable (in all things) through obedience to the One that begets.

So then, feel your measure of the begettings of God, and in it be obedient. Seek not to rise above it in anything, lest the enemy thereby get power in you to puff up your mind in knowledge above your life, which will devour the life. And as you feel faith, love, meekness, gentleness, patience, or any godliness move in you by the Spirit, therein become obedient with all diligence, and hereby you will know its power against all the contrary motions in your flesh. In this way, you will learn the salvation of grace unto life eternal, which you can never attain by talking, or by any other way besides the obedience thereof.

⁶⁷ Romans 1:5; 16:26

And so you will not receive the grace of God in vain, nor words without the working power of life, but you will receive the living knowledge of the mystery of godliness, and will find it to daily increase.

For by obedience to the Spirit the soul is purified from its darkness and pollution, and made fit for the further manifestation of the hidden mystery, and the receiving of it in fullness, with ability to walk therein. And so, by the Holy Spirit, you shall be able to truly confess Jesus to be Lord over all powers in heaven and in earth, the opener of all secrets, and only revealer of the Father. And by Him you will become wise in your knowledge unto salvation, not unto vain babblings—for all such words shall rise and condemn those who glory therein.

But if in the Spirit you hearken diligently and obey, you will know that He who formerly spoke by the prophets does now speak by His Son, who is the everlasting power of godliness and the only begotten of the Father. And you in whom He is made manifest, will be made like unto Him in all things. The prophets prophesied of glory to come, but the Son declares the Father in this present life, according to the measure of Him formed; and as He arises in fullness, He opens the heavens and gives the inheritance.

Chapter II

The Lamb's War Against the Man of Sin

The end of it, the manner of it, and what He wars against; His weapons, His banner, and His kingdom, and how all may know whether they be in it or not; and whether the same Christ is in them that “is, was, and is to come,” and their faithfulness or unfaithfulness to Him.

The Lord God Almighty, to whom belong all the kingdoms in heaven and earth, does nothing therein except by His Son, the Lamb. By Him He creates and governs; by Him He saves and condemns, judges and justifies, makes peace and makes war. Whatsoever He does, He is at the Father's right hand in all places, who in Him has long endured the burden of iniquity and the oppression of wickedness that has abounded for many generations.

And now His appearance in the Lamb is to make war with the god of this world, and to plead with His subjects concerning their revolt from Him—their Creator—who ordered their beginning and gave them a being. For having broken the order that was in the beginning, and given their obedience to the worldly spirit with his inventions, they have now become so far one with that spirit that they have defiled their

souls and bodies, blinded their eyes, stopped their ears, and made the creature utterly unprofitable to God and unfit to be a temple in which He can be worshipped. They can no longer hear the voice or understand the mind of the eternal Spirit (by which they were created), but have become open enemies to every check and reproof of the Spirit which was given to lead them to God. This good Spirit does testify against their evil deeds, but they are not afraid to speak against it as a thing not worth minding, nor able to lead them in the way of truth. Thus the creature has fallen from God's call and service, and has become one with the god of this world, to serve and obey him in ways that insult the Spirit of grace, now using the creation against the Creator. Thus, it is against this evil seed, and against its whole work brought forth in that nature, that the Lamb makes war to take vengeance upon His enemies.

The end of His war is: To judge this deceiver openly before all the creation, showing that his ways, fashions, and customs are not how God ordered man to live in the beginning. So He seeks to bind him and to redeem man out of his captivity, all who believe in the Lamb, and are weary of their service and bondage to His enemy, and will but come forth and give their names and hearts to join with Him, and bear His image and testimony openly before all men. These, who willingly follow Him in the way wherein the Father has given victory over the enemy's power, are made new and redeemed to God, so that God alone may rule in His own work. But the rest who will not believe and follow Him, and bear His image, will be condemned with the destroyer into everlasting destruction.

The manner of His war is: First, in order that He may be just (who is to judge all men and spirits), He gives His light into their hearts, both men and women, whereby He lets all see (who will mind it) what He is displeased with, what is with Him, and what is against Him, what He owns, and what He disowns. By this light all may know what is determined for destruction, and so come out of it, lest they be destroyed with it; for it is His desire to save and receive all that are not willfully disobedient and hardened in the pleasures of this world against Him. Yes, He will receive all who are deceived but are willing to be undeceived, all who are taken captive but are willing to be set free, all who are in darkness but are willing to come to light; in a word, all who love righteousness more than the pleasures of sin. He has no desire to destroy them, nor to see them ignorantly fight against Him. Instead, His desire is to receive them unto Himself, that they may be one with Him against that power which has misled and deceived them. And as many as turn at His reproof, He does indeed receive, and gives them power in spirit and life to be as He is, according to their measure. But all must abide in watching and warring against that which has had them, and which has the rest of the creation in bondage, that He may restore all things to their former liberty.

What they are to war against: They must war against whatever is not of God, whatever the eye (which loves the world) lusts after, whatever the flesh takes delight in, and whatever stands as a respecter of persons (as the Scripture says)—the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, the pride of life. These are not of God, and whatever the god of this world has begotten in men's hearts to practice or contend for—yes,

whatever God did not place there—all this the Lamb and His followers must war against, and they must be at enmity with it both in themselves and wherever they see it. For the kingdom is known in the work of God alone, and all other works He will destroy.

So their war is not against the creature, for they wrestle not with the flesh and blood which God has made, but with spiritual wickedness, exalted in the hearts of men and women, where God alone should be. For by embracing and contending for the works of the devil, they have become enemies to God, and their souls are destroyed. Thus the Lamb's war is against the whole work and design of the god of this world—his laws, his customs, his fashions, his inventions, and all which seeks to add to or take from the work of God as it was in the beginning. All of this is at enmity with the Lamb and His followers, who have entered into the covenant which was in the beginning, and it is therefore no wonder that they are hated by the god of this world and his subjects. For the Lamb comes to spoil him of all that he has, and to destroy the whole body of sin (the foundation and strength of his kingdom), and to take the government to Himself, that God may rule wholly in the hearts of men, and men may wholly live in the work of God.

What their weapons are: As they war not against men's bodies, so their weapons are not carnal, nor hurtful to any of the creation; for the Lamb comes not to destroy men's lives, nor the work of God. But with His appearance in His subjects, He puts spiritual weapons into their hearts and hands. Thus their armor is the light, their sword is the Spirit of the Father and the Son, their shield is faith and patience, and their paths are prepared with the gospel of peace and good will towards all the creation of God. Their breastplate is righteousness and holiness to God, their minds are girded with godliness, they are covered with salvation, and they are taught by truth. And thus the Lamb in them, and they in Him, go out in judgment and righteousness to make war with His enemies, conquering and to conquer. They war not as the prince of this world does through his subjects, with whips and prisons, tortures and torments on the bodies of creatures, to kill and destroy men's lives; but the followers of the Lamb go forth in the power of the Spirit with the Word of truth, to pass judgment upon the head of the serpent who deceives and bewitches the world. And through these faithful ones, the Lamb both covers His own with love, and kindles coals of fire upon the heads of His enemies.

For with the “spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning”¹ the Lord will plead with His enemies; and having kindled the fire and awakened the creature, and broken their peace and rest in sin, He waits in patience to recover the creature and to slay the enmity. And though the evil spirit that rules in the creature casts up all manner of rage and envy, the Lamb continues to pity, offering love for hatred, and wrestling with God against the enmity—with all intercession, patience, long-suffering, and faithfulness, in truth and unfeigned love, and with all the fruits of the Spirit, so that, by any means, He may overcome evil with good. And by His light, He seeks to open that eye in the creature which the god of this world has blinded, in order that men may learn to abhor what God abhors, and see the fruits of death that they

¹ Isaiah 4:4

have brought forth. In this way all may see and be convinced that the light is no deceiver, but has the life and power of innocence and holiness, wherever it rules.

Truly, the Lamb's inward preaching has power to open the eyes of all that are not willfully blind because they love the deeds of darkness; and such as these are (by the light) left without excuse forever. But through His subjects He many times wrestles and preaches to the spirits in prison, with great long-suffering towards the world, towards nations, and towards particular persons, before He gives them up and numbers them for destruction. Yes, sometimes He pursues them until their rage against Him, and the cruelty they exercise upon His members, becomes so great that there is no remedy, as it was in the days of old:

And the LORD God of their fathers sent warnings to them by His messengers, rising up early and sending them, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place. But they mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, till there was no remedy.²

Now, these fruits are the banner which the Lamb holds forth to all the world in those in whom He reigns: As they come to obey Him, He covers them with love, gentleness, faith, patience, and purity, grace and virtue, temperance and self-denial, meekness and innocence, and all in white. These are they that truly follow the One who is in them, who "walk themselves even as He walked"³ in all things conformable to God, with boldness and zeal, knowing the Lamb to be their leader, and together with Him testifying against the world that their deeds are evil. And these are covered with His righteousness against all the storms and tempests they will surely meet with, together with all who have borne His testimony; for the Lamb has borne one testimony from the beginning for the convincing of the world. Thus, all who are willing to believe and to love holiness will see where it is to be found, and will come out to Him and be saved, that the whole world does not become as Sodom in the day of wrath. For the day of wrath comes upon all people and nations after Christ has thus appeared and been rejected.

What His Kingdom Is

The power, the glory, and the compass of the kingdom of God are not comprehended with mortal understanding, for it was before all beginnings, and endures forever, and orders and limits all spirits in heaven and earth. It rules in the rulers of the earth, and in all heavenly places, though often men know it not till they have felt His reproof for their rebellion against it. Indeed, He has dominion among the heathen, and His hand is in the counsels of the kings of the earth, and there is no place where He is not, who descends below all depths, and ascends far above all heavens, that He may fill all things.

² 2 Chronicles 36:15-16

³ 1 John 2:6

But His kingdom in this world, in which He chiefly delights to walk and make Himself known, is in the hearts of such as have believed in Him, and have answered His call out of the world; whose hearts He has purified, and whose bodies He has washed in their obedience, making them fit temples in which the Father is worshipped. In these He rejoices and takes delight, and His kingdom in such is righteousness and peace. In love, power, and purity, He leads them by the gentle movings of His Spirit out of all their own ways and wills (in which they would defile themselves), and guides them into the will of the Father, by which they become more clean and holy. He lets them know the depths of His covenant, and how far they may go and be safe. He gives them His laws and statutes which are contrary in every way to the god of this world, that they may be seen to be His before all His enemies. If they keep His counsel they are safe; but if they refuse, He lets them know the correction of the Father. His presence is great joy to all who have a willing mind; but with the crooked He shows Himself astute. The kisses of His lips are life eternal, but who may abide His wrath? The secrets of the Father are with Him, and He makes all His subjects wise. He makes them all of one heart—one with Himself, and of the same mind. His government is wholly pure, and no unclean thing can abide His judgments. As any truly come into His kingdom they are known, and their change is to be seen by all men. He keeps them low in mind, and begets a meek spirit in them. And with His power He leads them forth against all the enmity of the evil one, teaching the one who abides in His kingdom to be content in all circumstances.

Now is the time when many false Christs must appear and be made manifest by the true Christ, with all their false prophets, false ways, false worships, and false worshippers, who, though they are at war with one another, do not know the Lamb's war. So then, seeing He has appeared who is from everlasting and does not change, here is an everlasting trial for you all, to see whether you profess Him from the letter or from the light. Come now and see whether Christ is in you! Measure your life, and weigh your profession with that light which cannot deceive you, which has stood and will stand forever.

In all truth, before God and before your own souls, prove your work while there is time, lest you and your work perish together. First, see if your Christ is the same that was from everlasting to everlasting, or if He changes according to the times: in times of life and death, peace and wars, in reigning and in suffering, etc. And if indeed you have found the true Christ, then prove your faithfulness to Him in all things. Does He whom you obey as your leader lead you out to war against this world, and all the pride and glory, fashions and customs, loves and pleasures, and whatever else is not of God? Does He lead you to give up your lives unto death, rather than knowingly yield your obedience to sin? Does He justify any life in you now besides what He justified in the prophets, apostles, and saints of old? Does He give His subjects liberty now to bow to the god of this world and his ways in things which He has forbidden in the saints of old (for the denying of which, many both then and now have suffered)? Is He at peace in you while you live in fleshly pleasures or find fellowship with the unclean spirits that are in the world? Does He not lead out of the world, and to strive against it in watchings, fastings, prayers, and strong cries to the Father, that you and others may be kept and delivered from the bondage and pollutions of it? Is this the kingdom you have found in yourselves?

And does He give out the same spiritual laws against all the ways and customs of the man of sin in you, as He has done in His subjects in all ages? Does He beget in your hearts a new nature that is contrary to the world's nature, motions, and delights in all things, whereby He works out the old nature which inclines to the world and can be at peace with it? Is your peace now wholly in Him, and is that which crucifies the world to you, and you to it, your true joy and delight? Has He called you out of this world to bear His name before its powers, putting His testimony into your hearts, and the same weapons into your hands that were used by the saints of old against the powers of darkness, whereby you find power to overcome evil with good? Indeed, there are many other fruits which He has always brought forth in His chosen ones, whereby they were known to be in Him, and He in them, for which reason the world has hated them. And by all of these you may clearly know if He is the same in you today as He was yesterday in His people, and will be forever. For the Lamb does not change, nor conform to the world or the will of any creature, but rather changes all His followers till they become like Him in all things; for they must bear His name and image before all men and spirits.

Does it not greatly concern you to try your state, seeing how all must soon give an account for their lives and service? Or have you gone out like the beast of the field, regarding nothing but your bellies and your pleasure? Do you spend your time and strength in watching and praying to the Father of spirits for yourselves and the people of God, that they may be kept in the time of temptation and the assaults of the evil one (who seeks his advantage on weaker brethren)? Do you pray for your enemies, that they may be delivered from under his power, who are captivated by him to do his will, to fulfill his lusts and envy, and satisfy his wrath upon the innocent? And do you deny yourselves of pleasures, profits, ease and liberty, that you may hold forth a chaste conduct in the power and life of gentleness, meekness, faithfulness and truth? Is your conscience void of offense towards God and all men so that thereby you may shine forth in righteousness, and convince the enemies whom you pray for, thus following the One who laid down His life for His enemies? Is this your war, and are these your weapons? Is this your calling, and are you faithful to Him that has called you, so that you can by no means bow to the god of this world, nor his ways, even to save your lives or credit or estates in the world? And yet can you serve the lowest creature in the way of God, though it mean the loss of all?

I beseech you, be faithful to your own souls and consider: Do you find something in you that calls or moves in this way, or reproves you for the contrary? If there is, are you one who quenches this Spirit, closes your eyes, and denies the Lamb's call against your own life? And if there is not, is not your profession of Christ a lie? Are you not dead members, cut off from Him, and without God in the world? O that you would prove yourselves! For there are many deceitful workers in this day of His appearance, who do the work of the Lord negligently and deceitfully, doing their own work instead of His. And there are many who are called, and who abide for a while, but in the time of hardship prove deceitful, and return to serve and take pleasure in the world. Others are called and convinced, but come only halfway out of the world, as far as they can without loss or shame, but keep their covenant with it in whatever makes most for their gain, credit, or earthly advantage. Still others have answered their call, and been faithful

in the covenant of the Lamb against the prince of this world so far as they have seen, but not staying on the watch against the enemy, and not keeping low in the fear and zealous in the light, have allowed their simplicity to be deceived, and are led back into the old beggarly rudiments of the world again, taking for their perfection and growth what they once had vomited up. These expect great things in their work, but they are blinder than the rest, and more to be pitied, because their simplicity is deceived and lost. And there are many other grounds that do not bring forth fruit unto perfection, who are not found faithful to Him that has called them, and so it is now true that “many are called, but few are chosen”⁴ and faithful. Many are ashamed at the Lamb’s appearance, for it is so low and weak and poor and contemptible, and others are afraid when they see so great a power against Him. And many are at work in their imaginations seeking to understand the kingdom, and get power over sin, and find peace of conscience, but few will deny all to be led by the Lamb in a way they know not, to bear His testimony and His mark against the world, and to suffer for it with Him.

Now deceit has taught you to say (and maybe you think it true), ‘God forbid but that I should suffer with Christ until death!’ But come to the trial in deed and truth! Does He not suffer in the heart of man under all the pride and pleasures of the flesh, and by all manner of excess and customs and fashions which are not of God but of the world? Are not all things against Him which are not of Him and of the Father? Are not the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life His oppressors in man? And you who live in these things, and in the world’s fashions (and even contend for them), are you truly suffering with Him because of them, and warring with Him against them? For then you would be weary of them, and cease to practice and plead for them against Him. But this you will find to be true in the end: you cannot both suffer with Him and serve His enemies.

Oh, all you hearers of sermons of every sort, how long will it be before you hearken to what the Lord says in your own souls, who is no respecter of persons? For He rejects all who bear not the image of His son in well-doing, though they sacrifice with Cain, or pray in tears with Esau. Oh that with the light of Christ in your own hearts you would see how the world’s lusts have spoiled your souls of the heavenly image, and the spirit of the world has captivated your minds to itself and its likeness; and how you lie dead in sin, covered with earth, and daubed over with the words of men. Oh that you would awake before wrath awakes you, and put on the armor of God, not relying any longer on men who beat the air to fight your battles, against an enemy who has already gotten into your hearts. But, as soldiers of Christ, may you all come to use spiritual weapons against all spiritual wickedness that is exalted in the temple of God, for this fills the heart with wicked and worldly encumbrances so that you can neither see nor serve the Lord.

With these spiritual weapons, every thought is to be taken captive to the obedience of Christ. This is the true warfare, and it is “mighty through God to the casting down of every stronghold” of the man of sin in you—“being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled;”⁵ for whatever will not

⁴ Matthew 20:16; 22:14

be led by the Spirit of God is for condemnation. These weapons alone are effectual toward cleansing the heart from all that rises up against the life and knowledge of God, for they make way for His appearance by the power of Christ— His light and life—which no man’s words have power to do. And blessed are they who feel and find this treasure working in their earthen vessel, for such shall approve their own work to God, and have praise from Him and not from men. Thus you will come to see what others have said in Scripture concerning “the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world,”⁶ for you will savingly feel the power of His cross, His death and resurrection, and the everlasting purity of His life, to which the eternal love of the Father flows freely.

Called, chosen, and faithful are the servants and subjects of Christ’s kingdom, in whom (at this day) He wages war against the prince of this world, the beast and false prophet, and all that serve under Satan’s dominion and obey the laws he has set up.

Now, you that cry, “The kingdoms of the world have become the kingdoms of the Lord and of His Christ,”⁷ see that this be true in you, and that you do not lie to yourselves. You must know the Lamb’s war before you can witness His kingdom, and “those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful.”⁸ He that preaches the kingdom of Christ in words, without knowing the victory, is the thief that goes before Christ. So take heed that your own words do not condemn you; but mind your calling and how you have answered it, and whether you have been faithful in the war unto which you have been called. For Christ has a war with His enemies, and He calls His subjects to serve Him therein against all the powers of darkness in this world. He will overturn all things of this old world—all of its ways and fashions—and will make all things new which the god of this world has polluted. For in these things the children of the devil have corrupted themselves, and served the devourer by following their lusts. And it is against such things that the Lamb makes war in whomsoever He appears. Yes, He calls all men to join to Himself, in heart and mind and with all of their might. And for this end He has lit His candle in their hearts, that they may find out every secret evil that the man of sin has there treasured up, even the thoughts and intents of the heart. There He will cast out the strong man with all his stuff, and subject the creature wholly to Himself, that He may form a new man, a new heart, new thoughts, and a new obedience, in a new way, in all things therein to reign—and this is the kingdom of God.

Now many are called to this war, but few are chosen and faithful. They that are faithful in their calling, these He chooses, and in them He reigns, and with them He makes war against His enemies on every side, under whatsoever banner they appear. The sword of His Spirit He has put into their hand, and His Word is in their mouth, and with these they make war with all the world, even all that will not be

5 2 Corinthians 10:4-6

6 John 1:29

7 Revelation 11:15

8 Revelation 17:14

subject to Him; and indeed, the world is at war with them. And he that is faithful will make no peace or agreement, neither will he bow or yield till there be a subjection to Christ. These are faithful to Him that has called them.

So you that are great in words, prove yourselves, whether you are truly in His kingdom and among His subjects! For if you are, you are at work with Him in this His day, in which He is coming “in thousands of His saints, to take vengeance”⁹ into His hands, and inflict it upon His enemies. But you who are asleep and at ease in the flesh, at peace in the world’s ways and fashions, which are invented and maintained by the man of sin—you are not of His kingdom.

But you will say, “God is love, and we are commanded to love all, and seek peace with all, etc.” I say, is God’s love in you different than it has ever been in Christ and all His saints, whom the world ever hated, but whom God loved, and in whom He testified against the world even unto bonds, persecution, and death? Were not these in God’s love? Did they not keep His commandments? And will you take their words in your mouths and condemn their lives by your practices?

The Lamb’s war is not against the creation, for then His weapons would be carnal, like the weapons of the worldly spirits. But “we wrestle not with flesh and blood,”¹⁰ nor against the creation of God. No, the creation we love; but we fight against the spiritual powers of wickedness which war against God *in the creation* and take it captive into lusts which war against the soul, so that the creature may be delivered into the liberty prepared for the sons of God. And this war is not contrary to love, nor contrary to everlasting peace, for without it there could be no true love or lasting peace. Indeed, it is our love to God and man that constrains us to be faithful in this war.

But the love of God is not to that seed of bondage, nor did He ever command you to seek the peace of that seed; “for the friendship with the world is enmity with God,”¹¹ as the Scripture says. And had you not fallen into self-love (which is utterly blind as to the love of God), you would see a great difference between the creature and the seed which keeps the creature in bondage and out of the love of God. Can you love that evil seed and not hate the creature, and God also? All who know the Lamb’s battles, who are in the true love of God, know these things well.

For does not the spirit of pride, gluttony, drunkenness, pleasures, envy and strife, keep the creature (who you should love, according to God’s command) in bondage? Does not the creature groan to be delivered from the vanity, customs and fashions of this generation? And is not the whole time of man taken up in the service of lusts and inventions which the man of sin has conceived—*inventions* in foods and drinks, in apparel, in worship, in sports and pleasures, etc.? Is not the whole of creation captivated under this

⁹ Jude 1:14-15, Literal Translation

¹⁰ Ephesians 6:12

¹¹ James 4:4

spirit of harlotry, so that a man's whole life is often spent in vain? Alas, men and women come into the world and depart out of it again as though they were made for no other end but vanity and selfishness; scarce one in ten thousand knows any call from God to serve Him, or has an ear to hear that voice. And if any do hear and obey, the world concludes them deceived, and is ready to devour them because they testify against the evils which destroy men's souls, and make void man's service to his creator and devour the creation.

And can you love this spirit, bow and conform to it, or allow it to reign in yourselves or your brethren, and still pretend to seek love and peace, and to obey God's commands, boasting in lofty words about Christ's kingdom? And do you count it a low and foolish thing when men faithfully and zealously bear their testimony for God against these evils? Will not God eventually find you out, and expose your deceit and unfaithfulness in your generation? Will He not break your peace and annul the covenant you are making with the world to settle yourselves in ease and pleasure? Will He not bring you out with true judgment, wherein it will be seen of what nature your love is, and whose kingdom you are in, and who it is that you love and serve?

The Day has dawned, and the Sun has risen for many, and it shall not set, nor cease its course, until He has rightly divided between the precious seed and the children of harlotry and deceit. And now the holy seed is called forth to appear with its banner against the man of sin, and with "the sword of His mouth He makes war,"¹² and "with the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning"¹³ He consumes all that is filthy and unclean. And all that are faithful have their armor on, ready day and night to follow the Lamb as He moves, counting nothing too hard if they may preach reconciliation between God and the creature to those who have fallen to the prince of the world, and been led captive according to his will. And this is love indeed to lay down all for such as are yet enemies.

Oh, perilous times have come! Now is the earth and the air corrupted and filled with violence and deceit, and ungodliness abounds everywhere. Satan is loosed and has gone forth to deceive; multitudes of spirits are sent abroad and have power given them to enter all who dwell in the earth, who inhabit dark places, who love not the light. Woe to the world; woe to all who have treasured up wickedness in themselves! For Satan will seek out his own in them, and his vessels will be filled—filled with wrath, filled with pride, filled with lust, covetousness, and all manner of unrighteousness. Every bottle must be filled, that the Potter may dash them one against another. Woe to the drunken nations whose uncleanness is in their streets; yes, whose streets are filled with pride, filled with oppression and deceit, lying, swearing and cursed speaking. Their filth is vomited out openly and yet they are not ashamed. Vanity and folly have become their glory, wickedness shines boldly, not in a corner but in the broad places of the streets.

¹² Revelation 2:16

¹³ Isaiah 4:4

Alas, there is no safety for any who look outward, for sin lies at the door ready to enter! And now the watchmen are blind (having become enemies to the light), so that the house is easily filled with evil spirits. Legions of devils may enter and inhabit the darkness—proud spirits, lying spirits, flattering spirits, deceitful spirits of all sorts, which, being let in, work in the vessel according to their several natures. Yes, they work the works of their father the devil, holding forth his image to all that look outward, tempting all in order to enlarge his kingdom. For when the lust of man looks outward, then pride calls and holds forth an object to the eye, which being let in, conceives and grows until it can bring forth its own increase, and become a tempter to others. Vanity calls out from the devil's treasury to all that pass by! Spiritual harlotry cries aloud in the streets to entice the simple and defile the virgins, seeking to pollute the chaste spirit and corrupt the mind from God.

It is only by watching in the light with diligence, faithfulness and patience, that the enemy is kept out, and his seed is killed within. But while the root of pride and lust remains within, it is fed by fetching in more of its own kind from without. But the faithful watch allows him no passage—neither in nor out—and so his supply is cut off, and the seed of the evildoer is kept in captivity, and the devil cannot come to relieve his own. For, notwithstanding “a man’s enemies are those in his own house”¹⁴ (which is the case with all until they be truly dead and buried), yet a faithful watch in the light will keep the soul from being deceived. And though the tempter will seek to draw out the mind with all his wiles and subtlety that he may come into his own, yet into the light he cannot enter. So he that dwells in the light dwells in God and has immortality for his defense. Such as these hold fast to the Head, and feel His power of meekness, truth, peace, love, and patience; and learning to stay their heart and mind on Him, they are not tempted to depart. For Christ is given by the Father to be head to the “church which is in God,”¹⁵ which dwells in the light, and He is over all principalities and powers and all spiritual wickedness. This is the Savior, and is that name and nature to which “every knee must bow, and every tongue confess,”¹⁶ and all who put Him on in truth and righteousness put on immortality, eternal life, and freedom.

Chapter III

How Sin is Strengthened & How it is Overcome

¹⁴ Matthew 10:36

¹⁵ 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1

¹⁶ Romans 14:11

That sin is in the world, and that all have thereby become children of wrath, is generally believed and confessed by all; but how sin is strengthened in men and women against God and against their own souls, or how it is overcome, few rightly understand or have a desire to know. Yet for the sakes of those who do, I here declare something of what I have received from Him who is faithful and true in all His testimony.

How Sin is Strengthened

This I have found: that even as sin got its root at first through lust, so to this day it gains its strength by desires going forth to lust after something—whether it be spiritual or carnal, or anything above, before or besides what the eternal Spirit communicates to man, or begets in him. For the inward eye of mankind is blinded by the god of this world, which eye should look unto God for all things; and there is another eye open (the eye of unbelief), which looks unto visible things, and gives occasion for lust to bring forth affections and desires after something which the Spirit of God does not lead into. Then all the power and wisdom that is in man is set to work for the obtaining of his desire, and this becomes sin both in the desires and actions; and the more it is followed, the stronger it becomes.

Now, whatever is hereby obtained becomes a treasure of wickedness, laid up within, in the dwelling place of the wicked one, whereby lust is increased, and the Seed of God¹ is burdened and buried. Man thereby becomes daily less sensible of the will of God, and the movings of that pure Spirit which should keep the soul alive to the Creator, and draw the mind wholly up to the Father to wait upon Him alone for the supply of all things, both for soul and body. But every desire that springs from this root of evil, being allowed to go forth, defiles the man, and brings in that which oppresses the Just One, until by continuance man grows into the nature of the enmity, and the imaginations of the heart become wholly evil, and that Witness in him which should give the knowledge of God and the knowledge of sin is buried. In this way man becomes callous and “past feeling,”² utterly dead in sins and trespasses, which become by custom as natural to commit as for the ox to drink water.

Yes, it is with greediness that man in this condition hunts after his own destruction, having dammed up the way of Life in himself by so often transgressing it. Indeed, he has become degenerate from the nature of God, having received in, and willingly joined to, that nature of Satan, which, like leaven, works all who receive it and yield to it into its own nature. And as they grow therein, the fruits of the same root and nature spring up, which man brings forth with delight, being always furnished with subtle ways to color and justify his wicked deeds. Yes, being in covenant and agreement with sin (some in one thing and some in another) everyone pleads for the allowance of that sin which most suits their present lusts, pride, profit, pleasure, credit or esteem in the world, or some other selfish end. With the world they take

¹ Sown into the heart of man.

² Ephesians 4:19

counsel (and not with the Spirit of the Lord) to know what is sin, and what is not sin, but none will believe that they can be set free from all sin by Him who testifies against all sin by His own Spirit. So it is that “the man of sin”³ gains his kingdom by consent, for man, being willing to keep covenant with him in one evil, becomes guilty of all.

How Sin is Overcome

Now the way to overcome these things, and overcome the one who has his power therein, is by faith in Christ Jesus—the Light, and Life, and Way to the Father. For without believing there can be no victory; but in the faithful following of Him, the patient bearing His cross and enduring His sufferings, the enmity comes to be slain, captivity is led captive, and man is set at liberty in the holy Seed to serve the Father in Spirit and life again.

First, Christ (being the Light of the world) must be believed, for He comes to manifest and reprove the deeds of darkness, and to open true judgment and give discernment. His light makes a separation between the works of God and the works of the devil in the mind and spirit of the creature, letting man see what spirit exercises his mind and affections, along with the moving, working, and fruit of each spirit. Without this light, none can rightly know what must be destroyed, and what must be saved; what we must join to, and what we must war against; for by this light alone man comes to the knowledge of sin in himself, in its ground, root, and all of its motions. Though the written letter, or some other external means, may show what sin is by the clear fruits that are brought forth, yet only the Spirit within can discover spiritual wickedness in its first motion and rise, which is the only place to kill it before it becomes sin in the creature. This light must be believed and diligently minded all along, for such is the subtlety of the enemy, having gotten power over the will and the senses of man, that he will set them to war against the creature to destroy the work of God in the soul. This cannot be avoided any other way than by minding the light of Christ, in order to make a separation between that which is to be cleansed, and that which is to be destroyed. No matter how much a man might seek after this, it cannot be done without the Spirit, for it is a spiritual work.

And here is the cause why many are kept at hard labor all their time, and never come clear out of sin and uncleanness—because they do not believe in that which has the power to separate and lead out of evil, but instead set to work in the dark, without that eye which sees a clear separation. So it is that some destroy themselves in their attempts to destroy sin, and, not minding the light of the Savior, are led by the destroyer to fight against that part which Christ comes to save (even while he that comes to destroy lies hidden in the dark). But he that believes in the Light which manifests all things, reproves all things, and judges all things, will (with the true eye) see what to war against, and what to join with all along in

³ 2 Thessalonians 2:3

the work. For Christ alone is the covenant of light, and He is given for a leader. And whosoever believes and follows shall not err in judgment or practice; but unbelief in this Light is the cause why there are so many blind guides, and why so many people die in their sins.

Thus Christ is the Way of God, and is to be believed in as He manifests the works of the devil and distinguishes them from the works of God—condemning the one in the flesh, and justifying the other in the Spirit. And as He manifests every spirit together with its working, motion, and end, and its ground and increase, showing from where they come and to where they return, hereby the creature may know who it is that exercises his mind and members, and to what spirit he yields himself in his obedience and service. In this way man may come to know the use and end of all his works, what to choose, what to refuse, what to justify, and what to condemn in its first motion, before it is brought forth or formed. In this way judgment may be kept continually upon the head of transgression, and liberty proclaimed to the Just One within, to reign without obstruction.

It is for lack of faith, and not coming to feel Christ in this way, that so many perish in sin, even while seeming to strive against sin—because they do not believe that the light is sufficient to save from sin. For the light manifests sin while still in the ground, before it has sprouted, and condemns it in its first motion. And if man would but join with Christ, in faith and diligence, to condemn sin in the ground, in its first temptation and motion, it would wither and die, and not long be able to live or prevail. And if, for a time, it should continue to live in the members, yet this would not be unto condemnation; for I have seen a great difference between sin condemned in the creature (though not yet wholly dead) and sin lived in and pleaded for. For if your life and judgment is in that Light which condemns sin, then you are dead to sin and alive to Christ, and it is “no more you that sins but sin that yet remains in you,”⁴ to which you are dead, and to which you do not consent, approve, enjoy, nor in any way give your strength to. Instead, your faith and love, delight and strength is in the One who condemns sin. He that truly is in this faith and love, by the power of its working, shall see his enemies perish. And by that faith and love, the Just One shall live in that creature, and He will be condemning and killing sin till it all be done away, and the new creature of God will be found alive in Him alone, and will be presented to the Father without spot or wrinkle.

For this I have found: the Light which manifests sin in its first motion, and judges and condemns it there, has the only power to kill sin before it is committed, and so also has power to save from condemnation. And this you shall find—that even as Christ does not live unto justification where He is not believed in and loved, followed and confessed, likewise sin does not live unto condemnation where it is hated, condemned, and denied. For where that spirit of wickedness is seen in the Light and separated from, and judged apart from the creature (the creature joining in judgment with the Just One), there sin will wither and Satan will flee, for there he has no kingdom, nor a hiding habitation. And whenever the Light is minded, and judgment has free passage and consent in the heart, there it will search out Satan’s hidden

⁴ Romans 7:17,20

things, and judgment will pass upon all his deceit—his root and ground, with his fruits. Thus, by faith in Christ (and not by the strength of the creature) the strong man is spoiled, together with all his goods.

For according to every man's faith, so shall he receive from God. Now, he that believes in salvation, and yet cleaves to and lives in some sin, and pleads for it, and believes he must do so, this faith stands in an unclean thing, and unclean things will continue to live in this sort of faith, and be justified by that man. And wherever man is approving or justifying anything that is unclean, there he condemns the Just One who should give dominion over all that is unclean. And so the wild plant has its liberty to grow until it overspreads the plant of God, and covers the man, wholly stops his ear, blinds his eye, and hardens his heart against every motion to good, or every check for evil. This man should not look for any good fruit, or think that such a faith will be counted for righteousness.

But on the contrary: He that feels a strife in himself between the clean and the unclean, and sees the one reprove for sin, and the other plead for sin, and yet believes in that which is pure, clean, and just (which condemns all that is unjust and unclean) —this faith stands in that which is pure, and “the mystery of faith is held in a pure conscience.”⁵ And if this pure faith is followed, it will purify the heart and cleanse the hands from unjust actions. It is by this faith that the just shall live, and grow, and spring, and bring forth, and the pure plant spreads and covers the inward earth with the knowledge of God, His holiness, power, purity, and grace in the heart, which is like the working of leaven till it has wrought out the unclean nature, and conformed the whole man to himself. This is a work of the holy faith, which none can receive but he who believes in holiness; for none can bring clean fruit out of an unclean faith.

And this I have further to say, for the encouragement of such as honestly desire to be rid of their sin, and set free to serve God in holiness without deceit: When you feel in yourselves the moving of that Seed which is holy, bearing witness against all that is contrary to holiness, and condemning it (and condemning you for joining with it), then, I say, *believe in that*, for that is Christ in you. Believing and following it, you will feel it making a separation in your inward man between that which Christ comes to save, and that which He comes to destroy. Yes, this is He that comes from above to set before you life and death divided, so that joining to the life and believing you may be saved from death. And as you are faithful to this Spirit which condemns sin in the flesh, so you will feel a warring against, and a working out of sin daily. And as you clearly join to this, denying whatever it condemns, then you are one spirit with Him in his work, and are no longer in the flesh, nor to be condemned with the sin that remains in the flesh, but are one with Him that condemns sin (and condemns self in sinning), until “sin becomes exceeding sinful”⁶ in your eyes, as it is in the eyes of God. And as you grow to like and love that pure Spirit in all of its laws and leadings, so you will become dead to the law of sin, and it will lose its power in you, not being minded, loved and served; for your mind, love, and fear will be exercised in that which condemns it.

5 1 Timothy 3:9

6 Romans 7:13

Here the “faith that works by love”⁷ takes the victory, and not your striving in your own strength only from a sight of sin by the outward law. For by the works of the law you cannot be justified; but, by the working of faith in Christ Jesus, as you feel His Spirit working in you, and as you are one with Him in His work, in this you are justified. And in the beholding of Him by this faith you will be changed into His likeness by His mighty power, even by that Spirit to which you are turned. And as He grows in you, and you in Him, you will feel that power arising which will make you able to give the “answer of a good conscience toward God”⁸ with lasting peace, and so by His resurrection you shall be saved from condemnation, from which your own works cannot save you.

This work will go on with joy if your heart is honest; for you will see the Holy One set before you, condemning sin. And the beauty and holiness of all His motions will delight the honest heart, and make the way easy to follow Him for the joy that is set before you; for in all your tribulations, trials, and temptations, this faith will present Him before your view. Indeed, this made the saints of old endure the cross and despise the shame, and bear the reproach, following the Lamb joyfully in all His leadings.

So you that love holiness, it is near you; power over sin and Satan is near you; salvation is at hand. Do not go forth to seek abroad what you have lost in your own house. He is your salvation that condemns sin in your bosom. He that reproves wickedness is with you; He that is pure is your peace; He that never consented to sin but stands as a witness against it—if you have such a Spirit in you, you have the Spirit of Christ the Savior. So take heed unto Him, believe in Him, mind His leading, and follow Him. If you part not from Him, He will be your everlasting peace and an overruling power to subdue your sins. By Him you shall tread down the enemy’s strength with ease and delight, and shall be able to say with those who have come to the same spirit, “Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.”⁹ Only the faith that sees Him has power to overcome the world, for he that beholds His glory treads the world’s glory under his feet. And whatsoever is seen in Him does so far exceed all other things that it takes the mind out of all other delights and leaves them empty; so that neither things in heaven, nor things in earth, principalities nor powers are able to separate from the love of Him. And how much more will you leave your delight in sin when you come to delight in Him! Yes, love will constrain you.

And this is joy indeed, and love unspeakable, when the soul finds that treasure in his own house freely given which he has long been seeking abroad, and could never purchase neither with life nor estate. And the more you behold Him, the more His glory and love will appear. In His Light you will behold the pure motions of the Holy One, and will come to see what you are without Him, and what your true needs are, without which you cannot be happy. And you will see that you cannot have lasting peace till His virtue has filled you, and His glory has covered you, and His power has armed you against every temptation.

7 Galatians 5:6

8 1 Peter 3:21

9 1 John 4:4

All of this He will make you to inherit with Him as you continue faithful, and hearken to His movings to obey them in all things. He will thereby lead you in His way, the way by which He obtained all glory and power, and the inheritance from the Father. And keeping in this way, you will find a cross to all your own ways, and to the world's spirit in all things, which will be easy if you keep your eye single to Him who is set before you.

But if you look back into the world, you look into temptation without Him, and there the spirit of the world presents you with all that you will lose and not gain, setting before you what you must forgo, with all the hardships and impossibilities that may be, and you see no power to bear it. But keeping your eye to Christ, you will always have power and peace before you in your way, and the hope thereof will be as an anchor, and the faith as a shield, and the love will give you life to undergo all trials for His sake. And bearing His cross daily, it will divide you from your sins, and crucify the worldly spirit with the lust thereof, and kill all that yet wars against your soul and keeps you from your inheritance—thus the cross is called the great “power of God unto salvation.”¹⁰

And as you become faithful to this cross, you will feel the fruit of the Holy One springing up in you, moving and being brought forth in you towards God and towards man. Your faith will grow, and your prayers will be with strong cries to the Father, as the Spirit sees your needs. Your love will spring up and move in you, and flow towards God and man upon all occasions. And if you willingly serve it in its smallest motions, it will increase; but if you quench it in its movings, and refuse to bring it forth, it will wither and dry up in you, not being exercised.

The same is true of gentleness, meekness, patience, and all other virtues which are of a springing and spreading nature, wherever they are not quenched, but allowed to come forth to His praise (who is their Author), in His will and time, and to the comfort of His own Seed. And if you are faithful daily to offer up your body as a sacrifice, in order to bring forth His image, name, and power before His enemies, then what He moves you to bring forth shall be your inheritance, and it will daily increase with the using. But if you will not give up for His name's sake, but would hide the treasure and escape the reproach, then it will be taken from you and given to him who will yield the Lord of the vineyard His fruit in due season. For that which the Father freely begets, He desires to freely bring forth an increase, so that its shining in the dark world may praise Him. What a glory it is to see peace shine in the midst of war, love in the midst of hatred, meekness in the midst of strife, righteous judgment in the midst of wickedness, innocence in the midst of violence and oppression. Yes, even as a lily among thorns, that which is of God does shine among the men of the world. And in this way His nature and beauty does appear in His temple, to which all must confess and give praise.

¹⁰ Romans 1:16

This is the righteous Day which many have talked of, but the children of the Day are those only in whom the brightness shines forth. So then, that which God begets in you is His Son, and you must confess Him in the midst of his enemies, and thereby will the Father be glorified and his Son crowned. But if you deny Him your body to testify against the world, He will deny you His life to redeem you from the evil of it. But the breaking forth of the Son is the beginning of the good day, when that which so long has condemned you for sin begins to shine forth freely in acts of righteousness. Then is your darkness turned into light, your condemnation into peace, your sorrow for sin into rejoicing in holiness. This will be a good day to you, even the Day of the Lord's righteousness and redemption to your soul, and a witness to all men of the appearance of the Just One. And whoever refuses to bear this testimony, all his religion will prove in vain, and consist of words without power.

There is a way in which the barren one becomes fruitful, and a little is more serviceable to God than the one who has great riches for himself. You who see your lack are near it, and the lowly of mind will more readily follow it. It is prepared for the honest of heart, who seeks to serve God, and not himself, who takes heed of his own ways, being careful not to form anything in the mind to offer to God; for God will be served by His own begetting in you. Take heed therefore that you make nothing out from yourselves, nor murder that which he freely begets in you. But let your minds be always heavenly, waiting with patience in that light which lets you see your poverty, so that your hearts may be open always, turned upward towards God the Father of every good gift. In this way you will be hid in the heavenly mind from the nature which encompasses the earth in its dark comprehensions, and desires to encompass heaven also. Wait in the cross to that mind, and as you come into the patient stillness, you will feel the begettings of the Father stirring in you to be brought forth. To this you must become a servant, setting aside all subtlety, and all that is hasty, and whatever is your own, or has an end to yourselves. And experiencing a measure of the pure mind, behold what way it moves in its appearance against the worldly spirit, that, with your whole heart and might you may bring it forth in its own image, without reasoning or consulting with anything of your own, or anything of this world. For these begettings of the Father arise in a contrary nature to that which is one with the world. They bear another image and fruit, and have another glory in their appearance, in which the Father alone is glorified, even in the Son of His own free begetting and forming. Herein is the Father glorified, in that Christ is brought forth with His fruits into the world, by which it may be known how far He is above and contrary to the worldly spirit, both in His ground, root, and offspring.

And whosoever will give up themselves to serve Christ herein, by His increase shall become rich towards God, and increase in strength daily against the world. And by bringing forth a new creation, and by His beauty in holiness, you shall become glorious and beloved in the sight of the Father, whose image and begetting you bear, and in which you shall become heirs of the eternal glory.

But if you look back into the earthly mind, there the worldly spirit will meet you with his counsel; and consulting and reasoning therewith, you will take counsel in the night where you cannot find the counsel

of God, nor see His work, or end, or glory. Instead, you will be presented with the pleasures and glories of this world which stand in visible things, and are pleasing to the visible eye and senses, which glory the god of this world sees into, and leads into, and in which his wisdom and knowledge stands. And in this spirit that knows not God, nor His works, nor seeks His glory, you will meet with the thief and the murderer, the sons of darkness, who will strongly persuade you to murder the pure motions of Life, and not to bring them forth. Or else they will persuade you to bring forth a marred image, which is not a clear and perfect testimony against the world's kingdom, power, and glory. This you cannot avoid if you look back to the world's counsel, and consult with your own reasonings, from which arise the thoughts, cares, and pleasures of the world which encumber the mind, choke the Seed, and cover the Pearl with earthly affections and lusts. This continually hardens the heart, and strengthens the will against the innocent Life, "crucifying again the Son of God,"¹¹ refusing to bring Him forth in His time, and according to His motions. And having rejected this, you cannot beget Life again of yourselves, nor in your own wills, though you may procure a likeness of it from another spirit, and in that nature which resists the truth and corrupts the mind, and brings forth its own will. Indeed, many have gone this way, who, having disobeyed the still motion of the meek Spirit, and looking for higher things, God has given them up to a lofty spirit, and to the strong workings of a contrary nature. These now have a power wherewith they resist that which calls them out of the world, and they have a spirit which draws towards the world again. And this spirit, having gotten into the temple of God, is worshipped there as God. To it they yield obedience, and so become the same as they were, if not sevenfold worse, without hope of recovery.

Therefore, in the fear of God, you must watch with all diligence. Hearken in the simplicity of your hearts, and take heed that you do not slip and cease to listen, or bring forth any false conceptions. But "be diligent to make your call and election sure to you,"¹² not only by having the knowledge of it, but also by bringing it forth, that it may be yours forever. For that which you bring forth of the Seed is your inheritance, and none can take it from you; and in it you have power against all contrary spirits. While the Seed is still in the ground, these spirits will strongly tempt you, and seek your Life to stifle it. But when the Life is brought forth, it remains before you, and is put on as a breastplate, and becomes a defense to set you over the head of the evil one. But if it is not brought forth, it withers, and becomes as dry bones in the womb.

Therefore, even as you give your minds wholly to hearken, so you must give your strength wholly to obey. And when you feel His purity move in you, serve it with your whole strength, and bring it forth. Give up your bodies as a sacrifice for His sake (whom you have not seen), that His life may be made manifest in your mortal flesh, and through you to the world, that He may be seen in His brightness by all that love Him, and also before His enemies. Then you will find that "the body is for the Lord, and not for fornication."¹³ But if you rest in the knowledge of this mystery, and do not bring forth the Life, with this

11 Hebrews 6:6

12 2 Peter 1:10

knowledge you commit fornication, and teach others to commit fornication also. This kind of knowledge in a disobedient mind becomes the mother of harlots and fornications in the earth, with which the kings of the earth are deceived, and none are thereby joined to God.

For it is not the hearing of the truth that purifies the soul, but the obedience of truth which makes the vessel fit for the master's use. And by His using it, and its obedience, it becomes a vessel of honor to glorify the Son, and to do the Father's will in the world. In this way, the Father is glorified in the Son, in whom He shines forth, even as the Father begets Him again in you, and you in Him, who was with the Father before the world was. And as His life is brought forth by faith and obedience, you will be changed into the same image and nature, and delight only therein, being born of the same Spirit, even as he that is born only of flesh delights in the things of the flesh.

Chapter IV

A Door Opened

To the Imprisoned Seed in the World

And the way of freedom sent out into the world by the Spirit of Truth, in love to the sheep that have long been lost; to serve all the simple who seek the life of what they profess, and to show the proud and false in heart the cause why they are shut out of Truth's power.

“And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

— John 8:32

Every creature born of corrupt nature has that spirit in him which lusts against God, and that seed in him (growing up with him) which daily seeks to ensnare his soul further into wickedness and vanity, and to increase his separation from God by drawing into iniquity and filling the temple (where God should dwell and be known) with the accursed things which God hates and cannot behold. This evil seed, being subtle and ambitious, often prevails above the pure Life in the heart, and leads the mind out from it into many temptations, presenting it with delights to the carnal part and the outward senses, whereby the Seed of God becomes ever more veiled and hidden from the creature.

It is because of this, that man knows not that Word of life by which he was created, nor can he come to be guided by it in himself, till the head of this evil seed be bruised through believing in that light which comes from the life, by which the world was made. This is that Rock which follows man with its unchangeable testimony, faithfully bearing witness to that which is of Himself, and against all the ways of the evil seed. It calls to and reproves the world because of evil, and as many as receive and hearken to its call by faith come to hear the Word of life, wherein power is received to become the sons of God.

Now as the power of life arises in the promised Seed, then the head of the evil seed is bruised, and the one who had taken the soul captive at his will into every vain and evil work thus comes to be brought under. And as the created soul comes to be redeemed out from under the power of darkness, so it comes to be guided in the light of that life by which it was created. And now being turned to God by faith and obedience, that light which before reproved him for deeds of darkness (following him from one to another, and condemning him), now becomes his leader out of the world, to the Son of God, in whom God's righteousness is revealed unto justification. And as righteousness is received and abode in, sin is remembered no more, and man is changed into that divine nature which changes the inward man. So he comes to love that light which before he could not love; for no man can love that which is of God until he has first received God's love.

Now the Light of the world is God's love to the world; for God so loved the world, even when it was in the power of darkness, that He gave His Son into the world as a covenant of light, that whosoever follows Him should not abide in darkness but have the light of life. Now God's love stands in Christ—the Light of the world; Christ is His covenant with the world.¹ And whosoever rejects and does not receive Christ, the Light, this one is out of God's love, out of God's covenant, and remains in the enmity. And this is the cause why men who love their evil deeds speak evil of the light, and cannot receive it as God's love, nor as the way to life; for to such it is their condemnation—not that it was intended for this purpose, but to men loving darkness rather than light, it becomes condemnation. But to him that believes and is obedient, to this one it is precious; for whosoever follows the light out of the evil world receives the nature of sons, the love of the Father (which the world cannot receive), the power of godliness, and the treasure of eternal life. These are not given to any till they come out of the world, even as He is not of the world, for therein stands God's covenant with Abraham's seed forever.

So while men remain in that corrupt nature, God's love to the world, and the witness of the Spirit of truth, is to reprove the world of sin, and to testify condemnation against its deeds. But to such as have received His light, the same becomes their leader, comforter, and Savior. And this is the cause why the one loves, and the other hates, for each nature manifests the state in which it stands towards God, according as it has obtained from Him either love or condemnation. And whoever will not receive God's love (which calls him out of the world), must abide under the power of that seed which God hates, in which condition

¹ See Isaiah 42:6; 49:8

he will seek to murder those who stand in God's love; for the evil one, having blinded the mind which denies the light, gives him to think he is doing service to God. Alas, this is the sad end of all professors of Christianity who reject the Light of the world; for he that walks in darkness knows not where he goes. God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all, nor has darkness any fellowship with Him. And in this are known the children of God and the children of darkness—he that loves the light brings his deeds to the light. This one has fellowship with God in his deeds, and works the work of God. But he that denies the light works in the darkness, and cannot believe the power that is in the light, being himself under the power of darkness.

And therefore he that is born after the flesh does not know him that is born after the Spirit of light, nor can he judge his ways, which are strange and wondrous in his carnal sight. Nor does he know by what power and love the sons of light overcome the world and take delight in denying its pleasures, and vanquishing all its vanities out of their heart and mind. Indeed, these can no longer rejoice in the world, nor make merry with its amusements, but instead rejoice in the truth, and are made glad by that which saves out of such folly. The wicked know not the life of the righteous, nor the Spring from which his virtues arise, nor the power of his change, nor the end of all his patient sufferings and trials, but stand wondering at all this as though it were folly and madness. For the eye which would give them a sight of these things is blinded by the god of this world, and the soul being in bondage under the prince of darkness, cannot inherit the immortal treasure. And this must be, until there is a denying and coming out of the world to receive the inheritance of divine light and understanding, which none can receive nor become one with, except as they come out of the world, and out from under that seed of enmity which seeks to pervert all the right ways of God, and to twist all His gifts to man's destruction as far as he can prevail.

Now this destroyer (or seed of enmity against the life of man and his salvation) is kept from a sudden effecting of his purpose upon the creature in whom he is head, by nothing more than the patience and long-suffering of God, who wills that none of His creatures should perish, but that all might hearken to the truth, and so recover themselves and be saved out of the snares of this subtle deceiver. Thus does God often bear and forbear with man. With much patience and striving by the Spirit of truth, He checks and reproves and warns, even at the very instant when the act of sin is being committed. And if the evil one has gained such power in the creature so as not to permit him to mind reproof before or in the act of sin, then afterwards, when the heat of temptation is cooled, then God shows the evil and danger of such wickedness, that so he might preserve him in fear against the next temptation. And thus (in many) the Lord keeps back destruction a long time, so that some continue a long time before the wicked one gets them to fill up their measure of iniquity. And some, in the time of God's patient forbearing and long-suffering, come to repentance and turn to that which reproves them and are saved; but others go on to destruction, which they swiftly draw upon themselves after the Spirit has ceased striving with them and reproving them; for then all fear is lost, and the evil one has his liberty according to his own will. Yes, when the creature has been given up by the Lord, and the Spirit of truth has departed, there is nothing but deceit left to guide the soul that has dealt deceitfully with the Spirit of truth. Such a one, at best, has

but a form of godliness without the power; for the power of God is in that Spirit and life which is known by withstanding the evil one. Only those who are born of the Spirit have the life and power, and know its strength and virtue unto eternal salvation. But this Spirit is hidden in those in whom death reigns, and they are left to their own thoughts and notions.

And this is the cause of the strong contention that has ever existed between the children of light (who are born of the Spirit of truth and have their light and strength in the inward man), and the world's professors of religion, whose expectation stands in something outside of them, about which they have only heard others speak who had it within them. The latter, not knowing the power and mystery of the living faith (which is held in a pure conscience, and which alone has the power to bring out of the world's darkness), are kept captive therein, contending against the spiritual light. And so, while these continue in the world, they go about seeking to comprehend and measure the Spirit of truth (which the world cannot receive or know) assuming that this Spirit of light and life has no other operation besides what they find in themselves. Thus they stumble at it and are disobedient and unbelieving in heart. Now, to us who believe, it is the elect and precious cornerstone, and we come to it for all of our supplies. But to the wisdom and religious profession of the world it is a rock of offense and a stumbling stone, though it witnesses in their hearts in secret, and leaves them without excuse.

Those who reject this light and Spirit have nothing else that can show them so much as one of their thoughts, or divide in their understanding between evil and good, either in thought, word, or action. These cannot discern between what is really of God, and what is of him who shows himself to be God (but is not) in order to deceive; nor can they perceive the various motions of every spirit that is in them, to receive the good and deny the bad; nor can they know the roots of life and of death, or which plant to pluck up and which to feed upon. And how can such as these labor in God's vineyard? Indeed, without obeying this light the body is a house of darkness and a habitation of every deceitful spirit, where the heart remains desperately wicked, and no man knows it but he in whom the light of truth shines. But He that declares to man his thoughts, His name is the Lord of hosts. This one is the true Cornerstone who the stumbler cannot comprehend by his wit, and so rejects Him; but without Him there is no true building or working the work of God.

Therefore, you sons of the darkness of this world, take care what you set yourselves against! Are you not opposing that light which would limit and chain the evil one in you, which also condemns you for every evil work (both secret and open), and will not let you be proud and loose and lustful? Is it not the light in your own hearts which testifies against you for deceit and falsehood towards God and towards men, for deceit in religion, hypocrisy and falsehood, and for making a form of what you have not personally witnessed? And does not this light expose all deceit in your dealings with men, in your trading and speaking and acting, both as rulers, priests and people without respect of persons, or any other thing? Yes, it has respect only to that gift of God in you, which is of His nature, given to you to guide you in the light of God, out of all the ways of the deceiving spirit.

And now, if one comes to you preaching this doctrine, he is made manifest in spirit to that gift of God in your own hearts, and you are pricked by it in the heart. But then the evil one is stirred up to fight against the measure of truth in you (which acknowledges the truth that was spoken to you by another). But rejecting this, you join to the evil one who rises up in wrath against the witness of truth in you, and so you deny the very thing that would chain and bind him. Yes, you deny the Lord of life, and give strength to your enemy to crucify the Just One in you, and to quench the Spirit of Truth, and weary the Lord with striving, till at last you are given up wholly to the power of darkness, who will then keep you seeking salvation without, even while he is heaping up evil within.

For that which seeks to devour your souls is within you, even while the enemy keeps leading you outward to seek salvation. Nothing can condemn you but what is within you. Sin is within before it is acted, and so salvation must be within before you are cleansed. The old deceiver has taught people to think they are saved by a mere belief in God at a distance, but these neither know Him nor worship Him in Spirit and truth, nor are their bodies His temples, nor can the Holy One dwell or walk in them, because of uncleanness. Indeed, their vessels are filled with the powers of darkness, and the heavenly place is an abode for spiritual wickedness, so that God departs from the children of men because of their uncleanness. Even so, the liar continues to speak peace and preach salvation, and the creature believes it, being filled with darkness. But the children of light do not receive this doctrine, for they can see and feel, and so are not content with words but with power. A talk of God does not satisfy the soul of a good man, until he feels His presence and power. God without and the devil within is not the saints' faith or salvation; but God within and the devil cast out is the saints' true glory and strength, and they are made bold through the might of His Spirit within them to war daily against the prince of this world, knowing that, "He who is within them is greater than he who is in the world."² This is the faith that overcomes the world, and he that is born of the Spirit has the Father and the Son. But he that has the devil is God's enemy and knows Him not, nor where He is, but judges Him after the flesh and according to outward appearance.

Now consider, were men not entirely blind in their minds and "past feeling,"³ they could never sit down believing they are saved even while they are daily captivated in sin, and often led to do that which they know they should not. Indeed, this leading is by the power of lust, enticing and moving into every temptation, and causing the soul to fall into many hurtful evils, which put down roots and gather strength daily in them, heaping up wrath and vengeance by adding sin unto sin. And truly, all of this must be accounted for in the end, when each has filled their vessel to a full measure.

And consider, can you say you are redeemed from the devil while he still has this power in you which you are not able to resist, but are led captive at his will, contrary to all fear of God or power of righteousness? Are your bodies redeemed to God, and are you members of Christ even while you yield your members

² 1 John 4:4

³ Ephesians 4:19

unto unrighteousness? Are you saved even while you are servants of sin? In what does your redemption, your faith, and your salvation stand, seeing that nothing can stand with God but that which brings forth His nature? Is not the one who brings forth iniquity still in the bonds of iniquity? Is not he a servant of sin in whom sin reigns? Is not he a child of bondage, who is bound to bring forth whatever the evil one begets in him, and to serve him in what he moves him unto? Mind this, you who are born after that fleshly spirit who works in your flesh to do his will and bring forth fruit unto death! Does your profession save you, though you are not turned from dead works? The foundation of repentance is not yet laid in you, and therefore death reigns over you, contrary to the life which would bear fruit unto God. Truly, this is the state of the servant of sin, in the spirit of bondage, and not the state of the heir. The one inherits God's righteousness and brings forth the fruit of that Spirit which pleases God; the other brings forth the fruit of the flesh which pleases the world. These two seeds are within man, and are at enmity and disagreement, and there can be no concord between them, no more than between light and darkness. Their various fruits are made manifest by the light, which condemns the one and confesses the other to be of God and wrought in God.

Now, as many as are quickened with the Spirit of life have a feeling of these things before they bring forth their fruits into the world, for they have come to a discerning of things that differ in nature and effect by tasting and handling the Word of life, and knowing the election which is before the world was. By this they are made able to judge the ground and the end of every motion in them; and abiding in this, they need no man to teach them, neither can they be deceived. And this makes them boldly and openly bring forth such words and works as are begotten in them by the Word of life, which show the whole world to lie in wickedness, and make its wickedness manifest by the light of life. And in this light the prince of this world is judged and condemned, and the secrets of hearts are made manifest according to the nature of every spirit, for all comes to be seen in the Day of the Lord's appearance. Yes, to this Spirit of Truth all flesh must give an account—to Him who lives in all generations as an unchangeable witness against the evil seed, however he may transform himself in words and professions. For there is no agreement between their two natures, be it in a person, a family, or in a nation, nor can any one person, family or nation serve them both; but whoever serves the one hates and condemns the other. So that, he that serves deceit condemns the Just One, and so condemns that which could save him and that which must judge him in the end. This is the cause of that fleshly liberty which some presently feel, namely, that the Witness of God is crucified in themselves. But these will find horror of conscience when the Just One appears for judgment, manifesting the unstable state of all who are not faithful, but revealing the everlasting peace and power of those in whom Christ has dominion. Then the fruit will be seen of those who are presently in sorrow, who are diligent in waiting and wrestling (through faith and patience) from the beginning of the work of Christ Jesus till the end. All these things are comprehended by the one who has learned Christ, through being faithful to the Spirit of Truth who is sent in His name to testify concerning what is of Him and what is of the spirit that lusts against Him and keeps the creation in bondage.

This is the one way to life and salvation held forth freely by the Spirit of Truth, and sent forth by the Father in the name of Christ Jesus. For the Spirit has several operations in different vessels according as He finds them towards God. In some He is a condemner, in some a leader and teacher in the things of God, in some a perfect justifier in the sight of God, and in some a giver of gifts and power to such as receive this testimony of Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, He is but one in all, unchangeably just, equal and holy, who by the power of His Word changes all things that are changeable, and brings all things back to the beginning—before people, nations and tongues were divided—where man lives by the Spirit of a pure life.

Now, all that desire to be set free from the bondage aforementioned, and from the law of sin and death that has its strength in the fleshly part, diligently mind and seek to feel in yourselves what follows:

The Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, by whom the world was made in the beginning, has a law that is spiritual, proceeding from Himself, which law sheds light (in spirit) on good and evil, and testifies against the power of sin and death. As many as receive this light by faith and obedience are brought thereby under the law of life, and those who are faithful to it are led in a way whereby the fleshly part in man (where sin has its power) is crucified and slain. In this way, the Seed of the covenant comes into its proper dominion and freedom in the soul, which before was kept in bondage by the man of sin. For while the strong man keeps the house, his strength is in such things as the carnal mind takes pleasure in. But the law of the Spirit calls men from these things, and all who mind its light are led to fix their minds on spiritual things and to feed upon the Word of life. Thus the inward man is strengthened and made to grow up into the stature of a spiritual man, filled thereby with spiritual power, life and virtue, to bring forth fruit unto God, and to live to Him, even as the other man lived to the flesh and brought forth fruit unto death.

Thus the Spirit of life draws men by the light and says “Come!” All that mind His voice, and as many as hear and obey, He changes and feeds with new life, whereby they become new creatures, born of the Spirit. But the fleshly spirit also draws, and says “Come!” holding forth visible idols to win the carnal affections, and to captivate the mind from the Spirit of life into carnal objects. These promise much to the eye of earthly wisdom, and have a likeness of the substance in them, but their end is death, and those who obey this call pass their life in captivity to vanity and separation from God. So then, here the children of freedom (which is in Christ Jesus) are made manifest to the world by their coming out of it; and the children of bondage are also made manifest, for they cannot cease to serve it. And between these two there is no agreement; for he that is a servant of sin is free from righteousness, and the servant of righteousness is free from sin. And just as he that is in the flesh cannot please God, neither can he that is in the Spirit please the world—for these are children of opposing kingdoms and contrary natures. And he that is born after the flesh has that spirit which lusts enviously and seeks to devour the creation; and he that is born again after the Spirit of life is brought into the restoration, as it was in the beginning, and brings forth to God the fruits of eternal life and salvation.

And as it is by the creature's yielding and consenting to the subtle one that the life is lost, and the evil seed gets strength in man to rule and bring forth fruit according to the power of darkness, so too, by the creature's believing in the light, and yielding to the motions of the life and law of holiness, the evil seed comes to lose its strength and its ability to feed upon carnal things. So that life which is by faith comes again to be renewed in the vessel, and it arises through the Spirit and reigns above death. The righteousness and virtue of this life are clearly not of the nature of flesh and blood, but rather the nature of God, and these things are made manifest in the earthen vessel by the power of the Spirit against the will and lusts of the flesh. Thus man comes again into the restoration and redemption of the body, and into the free service of that Spirit and life of whom he is the offspring, and for whom and by whom he came into the world. Here there is no condemnation, but a true reconciliation and peace with God, and unity in Spirit and life, even as the Father and Son are one. For here the lusts are slain, the enticer is denied, the accuser is cast out, all things are become new, and all things of God. Here man is no longer in a house of bondage to sin, but in the glorious liberty of the sons of God, where the spiritual nature that is quickened in him does not feed on carnal pleasures but upon the living God. In this way the inward man becomes a natural branch of the holy Root, and a plant of the living God, bringing out freely whatever the Root sends forth, by which God is glorified, the vessel made honorable, and the soul filled with peace and fatness, having no more sorrow and death to oppress it.

Now, to know the light and life which are in Christ Jesus and are made manifest by the Spirit of truth, this is both the first and the last in this great work. And by this light, it is seen how unnatural man has become, being driven from God, away from that pure life which gives him breath and being and would preserve him from destruction. Yes, man has fallen so entirely from this, and become contrary to it in nature and judgment, that of all things in the world it is his greatest cross to be guided by that light which arises within from that holy life, and daily calls to him in spirit. And having degenerated into a contrary nature which is subtle and selfish, he is made willing to join with the enemy in any way against the witness of the pure light within him—either to revile, reproach, or crucify its appearance, turning light into darkness by covering it with deceit.

But apart from this light, there is nothing else within a man that is holy and just, or that calls him from the paths of the destroyer into the way of life, or brings forth through him any fruits of obedience or spiritual worship which God will accept. There is no other thing that is always present with man, to show him when he is enticed with lusts and tempted to sin, or the way to escape the temptation. Yet man is so exalted in the contrary nature that he has forgotten his Creator, and lifts up his heel against the reproof of His Spirit, trampling upon the lowly motions of the Holy One and the law which proceeds out of His mouth, counting the light and virtue of His life to be a low and contemptible thing, not able to save. Thus does lost man daily despise the Spirit of grace and truth in his inward parts and reject the Holy Spirit to the hurt of his own soul, denying that pure and single eye by which the holy men of God saw, discerned, and spoke in all ages, as the Scriptures do testify. All of this is lost to that man who is exalted above the pure light and lowly Spirit in which God meets with man to teach him the knowledge of the truth.

Therefore, you teachers and people of all sorts and sects, who so violently have set yourselves against the light of the Spirit both within you and others: how long will you kick against that which pricks your heart for your ungodly walking and pretended professions? Why will you not be still and commune with it in your own hearts, that you might come to a true feeling, and discern what nature it is, and from where it comes, and how it works, and against what? You will also see what nature it is in you that the light chiefly condemns and works against, and from where it comes. Thus, with the light of truth you will come to judge between things that differ in their ground and end, and so come to walk in the light, in judgment, and in truth of heart towards God and man.

Now, let the truth of God in you (without any mixture) feelingly answer these following things:

1. What is the cause that, while professing to seek God and serve Him, you are so unwilling to serve Him in that which is of His own nature, and to worship Him in Spirit and truth, in your own vessels, whose bodies should be the temples of God, who is not worshipped in temples made with hands nor in a nature contrary to Himself?
2. Will a mere talking of what God is or was in others (in whom He was formerly known to walk and speak) deliver your souls from the power of the prince of darkness and deceit that is in you, unless you receive Him even as they received Him, and feel His power overcoming and casting out the one who has taken you captive to do his will against your faith and conscience?
3. Will God be found by you, or will He accept your worship while His temple is possessed by His enemy, and a contrary nature moves you therein? Can you meet with God in anything but that which is holy, knowing He hears not the prayer of the one who regards iniquity?

Therefore, your first work should be to know the One in you whom God accepts, for He alone (who appears without sin) must present you to the Father, else you are reprobate in God's sight. For there is no hope without knowing Christ in you and you in Him, the everlasting Priest, to make the offering upon the altar of atonement. And though because of the height of your minds He that is without sin may be low and little in you, yet "without Me you can do nothing,"⁴ says Christ Jesus. Mind what He says, "You can do *nothing*." What are you doing then, who are not in His Holy Spirit? Can you worship by tradition, or be saved by the letter? Will you make Christ a liar, who says, "Without Me you can do nothing" and "I am the light of the world,"⁵ and "Every branch that abides not in Me is cast out and withers, and is burned in the fire"?⁶

⁴ John 15:5

⁵ John 8:12; 9:5

⁶ John 15:6

Mind this, you who reject holiness in spirit, and the light that shines from the Holy Spirit within. If you abide not in what is holy, are you not cut off? Are you not withered and prepared for the fire? You who have no abiding place in that which is holy, are you not cast out, having power and knowledge to do evil, but not to do well? Are you not cut off from the true vine and planted into a wild vine of a contrary nature? Your light is withered, your seed is corrupted, and your tree is known by its fruits, which now bears fruit but not unto God, nor from God. Will you say “you hope you are born again of the Spirit, and are baptized into the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit, and worship in Spirit,” and yet look outward for salvation and for light, and speak evil of that which is able to overcome the world? For this reason your hope is not an anchor, nor is your faith that which overcomes.

The Scriptures declare, “He who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him.”⁷ Now consider in yourselves: where is He that gives you to see when the evil one touches and tempts you? What nature is He that does this for you, and where is He? Is He not light and understanding, and is He not within you? And is He not of a contrary nature to the evil one that tempts? And does He not show you the temptation before you consent to it (if you mind Him)? So then, what is the cause that the evil is committed, seeing the light appears against him? Is it not because you join to the evil one, and like his motions better than the One that shows them to be evil? Thus you deny the holy and just One, and become one with the evil one. And then you say, “The light is not able,” when you have denied it, and have not been faithful to join to it in counsel and strength, but have given your strength to the contrary spirit. But they that are born of God’s Spirit and light do not do so, but when they are shown the evil one and his temptation (whatever it be, or under whatever pretense) if the light testifies against it, then they are diligent, watchful and sober, in the fear of God, lest they should be drawn from the light and enticed. With all their power they join in obedience to the way of the light, so that there is a war and a wrestling before the thing is over. But the enemy, being resisted steadfast in the faith, flees, and the glory returns to God who dwells in the light. And if at any time the evil one prevails, then the creature sees the cause to be in himself and not in God, and so is humbled and warned. This he comes to see when the temptation is over and the enemy has fled, and when he has come again into composure with God in the light; for while the darkness was risen up and the enemy was in the house, he could not see it.

Thus experience is gained through tribulations and trials, but they who do not endure the temptations never come to learn of God, but fall through unfaithfulness to the light. These are kept captives to the will of the enemy of all righteousness, who always tempts to evil and reigns over the members—leading out the eyes, ears, hands and heart to iniquity and vanity, and the tongue to plead for it, against every reproof. And having denied the reproof of the Spirit of truth within themselves, the same cannot be received from others; for the contrary spirit reigns alone in that house, turning the ear away from knowledge, and the heart from spiritual understanding.

⁷ 1 John 5:18

This is the cause why many are kept without the feeling of God's power and the knowledge of His Word; for the mysteries of His powerful counsel are revealed to the faithful, who have overcome through faith and patience, and in whom Satan is subdued and trodden underfoot. But wherever this devourer has risen above in the creature, whatever God gives or reveals is by him perverted to a contrary end, which God never intended, so that a wrong nature and a contrary spirit (which God hates) is lifted up and exalted. This is evident in the light of truth throughout the world. For what gift of God does the spirit of the world not abuse? If God gives wealth, wherever that spirit has risen above, there the creature is puffed up above the rest of his brethren, as though he were no longer of the same flesh and blood. If God gives beauty, it is turned into lust, pride, and wantonness, both begetting and deceiving adulterous eyes. Wisdom is turned into folly and wickedness, scorning the innocent and outwitting the simple-hearted; and those who have the most of it, are most able to accomplish their corrupt ends. When God gives grace, it is turned into fleshly liberty, and His long forbearance is made a cloak for sin and hypocrisy.

There is not one thing that God can give which this evil one will not twist and turn against the Giver, so that, though God is good and full of mercy by nature, yet He will not show Himself to those in whom the strong man keeps the house. This makes the creature even more shameless to kick against his Creator, and puffed up to forget his maker and feeder. Thus a fruitful land becomes barren because of the wickedness of him that dwells within, though it was not that way from the beginning.

But it is not so with the children of light, who have the Giver in their hearts raised up above the gift. Here the pure counsel orders the gifts, and every good and perfect gift is brought forth in its own nature, form, and manner, undefiled and not disfigured by the spirit of the world. Yes, here the springs run forth from the clean Fountain, and both the plant and the fruit are holy like the Root; for the spirit is clean and the flesh undefiled, and everything remains as it comes forth from God. In these vessels the old man is put off, and all things are of God, and every gift of God is known by its fruits and nature and end, as it was in the beginning. Here the gifts of God return to God by glorifying Him here on earth. Riches bring forth good and merciful works, and not pride and vainglory; wisdom stands against oppression and does not deceive; and righteousness reigns through grace unto life eternal.

The religion of these is pure and unmixed with the world, whereby the sons and daughters of God are known in the streets by the garment of virtue and decency with which they are covered—even the fruits of the Holy Spirit, and the faith and truth which are in Christ Jesus. These are the “vessels of honor,”⁸ fit for the Lord to shine through against His adversary (the spirit of the world) in fruits that cannot be condemned; for here the gift is not defiled by the vessel, but manifest that it comes from above, reaching to the witness of God in every heart. Yes, these are sons of God without rebuke in the midst of an unclean generation, shining as lights, honoring God, and answering the end of man’s creation. God does not withhold Himself from these, but is rich towards them, till they come to be filled with the fullness of God.

⁸ 2 Timothy 2:20

But the unclean and slothful, who defile the flesh with their lusts, from these He withholds His riches and fullness, so that they do not know the sons of God, neither where they come from nor where they go, who follow Christ out of the world, never returning there again except to testify against it. The vessels of these are no more filled with lust, or the spirit of this world, but are filled with the Holy Spirit who has made them new creatures for Himself to walk in, and to shine forth in fruits of the Spirit.

And now, all you barren and earthly-minded professors of Christianity, who have filled your vessels with carelessness, deceit, and a fleshly mind, in vain do you hunt about with your old wineskins thinking to retain the heavenly treasure. Alas, you travel about in search of notions, but it is to no purpose in the sight and esteem of God, for you are in the wrong work while you remain in the world's nature and in the old creation. Your words and ordinances are void of the life of God, and you cannot receive or bring forth His fruits until you are renewed; for nothing you do will avail but a new creature. Your old vessels are full of old wine from wild grapes, and that which defiles the conscience is raised up in you. Thus God withholds His gifts from you which abound in His new creation, and you know nothing of them except what you feel to condemn you. So you fight against Him and say there is nothing now perfect, and so you condemn the new with the old and judge them alike. Thus you err, not knowing the gift of God nor the works of His hands, which are all perfect as He is perfect, who walks not in a defiled temple nor lies in the bosom of harlots, for these are outside of His power and have gone astray from the perfect way of a holy life.

Therefore, it would profit you most to take the candle of truth and sweep your house, and cast out the old leaven with whatever is of the world. Yes, you must wait in that which works in Spirit against all that is old, until all is made new. There is a new vessel which will not receive the old, nor mix with it, but will only hold what is new. This God will fill with Himself, that His Seed may spring up and not be hindered, and His lily may grow without being choked. Here the lamb may be safe from the wolf, and the pure kept from pollution; for the plant of God is more pure and tender than to grow while the pollution of a covetous, proud, lustful, and earthly mind is alive in you.

So to judgment you must come first, to acknowledge condemnation upon all that is old, before you can receive what is new, or know its growth in you. What agreement has the spirit of meekness with the spirit of pride, contentedness with covetousness, holiness with lust, Christ with Belial, light with darkness? Read and understand, for here is the cause why you have sought and labored many years, but have found no freedom, nor that rest which the thief and the unclean cannot devour. Consider these things while they are near you, lest your hearts harden through unbelief and the deceitfulness of lust. Do not refuse Him that calls and gives you light in the dark, but keep faithfully on the watch, warring with all your power till all that He testifies against in you is brought under His feet. And when Truth calls, do not answer with deceit and excuses, lest He turn away from you and call others more worthy.

If you say the world holds you back, then it is time to break those bonds that have grown so strong already. Do not delay, for they grow stronger every day, and what will the end be? Consider and understand, and

do not say you lack strength, but turn with that strength with which you have long served the world, and you will find God (who gave it you) to be the better master; for the Redeemer is served with less vigor than the spirit of bondage. Whatever strength you have received from God, do but faithfully give it unto the service of God in the light; for He requires no more than He gives. It is deceit that makes these excuses in you, and not a willing mind; and if you were in the fear of God, you would not utter such words that do but witness against you.

Therefore, you who speak this way, in truth of heart consider what state you are in, and who is your father and has power in you. Can you do evil with both hands, live for your lusts, serve the world, travel the earth for your profits and pleasures, with power, wisdom, and delight, and yet have no power to do well? Oh, if you did truly love God and His true worship your hearts would be smitten with sorrow, and you would find power to bridle your tongue, and limit your eyes from vanity, your ears from pleasure, and your hearts from deceit, that so you might only hearken to the light. Yes, then you might hear the voice of Him that is sent into the world to call you from under the power of Satan unto the living God by preaching light to you who sit in darkness, who are dead while you live. For you cannot be quickened until you hear the voice of the Son of God, which the deceiver keeps you from in your worldly pleasures and lying professions, using the saints' words to cover yourselves from true judgment. For though you use their words, you do not have their Spirit, nor power to live their lives, nor are you plants of that root and nature which brings forth fruit unto God.

Therefore, that nature in you which is so entirely unprofitable should be denied its will, and its way should be stopped. Yes, you must die to that seed which now rules and has strength, and which runs to and fro to seek food for itself, but does not seek God. And you must turn to that which is pure, and wait therein for the anointing and the rising up of the holy Seed; for without Christ you can do nothing. That seed which is neither willing nor able is not His, but is the seed of the evildoer, and is manifest by his fruits, his thoughts, his words, his profession, his prayers, his lusts, his sin and his righteousness. All of this is of one nature, and it rises up in you to withstand the coming of the Seed of the covenant—Christ Jesus, the life of God and the light of men,—who has God's power and righteousness, which were in the beginning.

Christ's light will show you His law, and the Spirit of prophecy will testify of His coming, so that His way may be prepared before His face. All of your crooked, perverse, and shameless ways must be made straight, your hidden and subtle ways must be made plain, and the refiner's fire must pass through your house and take hold on all that will burn, until it is consumed. For until the filth is purged out and an end is made of sin, God will not dwell in His temple, nor will everlasting righteousness be brought in for an inheritance.

Here you will come to learn the first principles of pure religion, and the doctrine of the beginnings of Christ. For here the foundation of repentance from dead works will be laid in your heart, and you will see what kind of treasure your careless minds have treasured up in your vessels by all your deceitful and

unprofitable words and works. Yes, you will see by that light which will not lie, and find that all will fail you but truth. Whatever you have gathered by craft and deceit will now serve no purpose but to deceive you; for truth in the inward parts must be your only stay. And when all else is weighed and found too light to abide the trial, to the Rock you must fly for refuge (though He is now lightly esteemed), that is, to His light within that gives you the knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Nothing outside of you will make your peace, but only that which works in you and cleanses your house of your adversary.

It is by this that the holy men of God (who have gone before you in the regeneration) have preserved a clean house and a pure conscience, walking above all that the world can offer or promise, having learned (in the day of trial) that all proves a lie but truth in the inward parts. These learned of Him that none are true worshippers but those who worship the Father in Spirit and truth, and have found that the whole mystery of faith and godliness is learned within, and held in that which is pure; for only the pure in heart have seen and heard and learned of God. Such as these are sons indeed, who are born of the Spirit, led by the Spirit, and filled with the Spirit, having power, light, and understanding to do well. Yes, these are temples of the living God, who is holy, and are vessels of that Spirit which the devil is not able to resist. And every true child of God has this in measure, by which they resist the world and overcome it, for “whatever is born of God overcomes the world.”⁹ God is faithful, and will not forget Himself. Blessed are they who have a measure of that which God cannot forget nor allow to be tempted beyond measure. For in this alone is the election by which the soul is saved, and in it the creature finds favor in the sight of God.

Therefore consider this, all you who mock at a pure conscience and reject the gift of God within, speaking lightly and reproachfully of it: If you knew who it is you reproach and mock, you would rather bite your tongues than utter a word against Him. You would change your minds and seek Him, together with those that sell all they have to find the pearl. And though this now seems little in you so that you dare not trust to it, yet all that have proved it, prize it as the great power of God to salvation, and find that they have no election but what is in it. It was in this that Noah found grace in the sight of God when the earth was corrupted; and in it he walked with God and was saved, being just and perfect in his generation. And it was in this righteous Seed that Lot was grieved by the uncleanness of Sodom, and by it he was saved. So then, the election of God stands in that which was before sin, is grieved at sin, and testifies in man against all uncleanness; this was the elect Seed before the world was made. It is this you must make sure unto you,¹⁰ but those who say they have no power to do well deny His call and so cannot do it.

He that calls you out of sin, and the part of you that is vexed because of sin, is still little and low in you; but the god of this world is lofty, strong, and powerful in you, and has lifted up your heart on high to seek great things far above the pure Seed of true light and understanding which God has chosen and elected to Himself, and in which He communes with man, and teaches him His fear and knowledge, and gives Him

9 1 John 5:4

10 2 Peter 1:10

spiritual power and salvation from sin. So now your lofty looks are too high for this door, and you despise the day of the small and simple One, being unwilling to wait for great things where so little is seen, for you have no faith. Thus you run ahead of your rest, and the poor in spirit takes the kingdom before you, to whom the election and blessing belongs.

Now consider the calling of God and His election. Has He elected the rich in notion and high in profession, the proud and the extravagant? Has He not chosen the weak and poor, the foolish and contemptible to confound all this? Yes, He that is pure, meek, and holy calls, and the soul that is meek, lowly and loves holiness, answers, obtaining grace to be holy in every manner of conduct. Here the calling of God is made sure, and the election is known by answering the call and keeping in the election, which was in God before there was transgression. But whoever denies the One that calls out of darkness into light (by the power of His holiness, lowliness, meekness and truth, manifest by the gift of His Spirit within you), this one denies both the calling and the election, to lay hold of something without and to cling to a changeable thing where the election is not. For the election, being the light and power of holiness and truth, is preserved in God, even if all the world be deceived, defiled, destroyed, and changed.

Therefore come down off the mountains, you that have lifted yourselves up on high without God, who have a form of godliness without the power of God. Feel after that gift which is pure, lowly, and righteous in you; for God is a Spirit, and in the Spirit and truth He is known and served, and there His counsel is received. In the measure of truth in your inward parts, feel that which never sinned to be near you; then draw near to God in Spirit, and keep there, and wait and hearken, abiding in that Seed which cannot sin. In this, wait upon the Holy Spirit and mind His motion continually, being obedient thereto, that you may come to serve the living and not the dead, and so be able to say your Redeemer lives, and that you know Him and have heard His voice. Then you may say you have learned of Him, and are joined to Him, so as to be made conformable to Him who lives and sins not. And His appearance will be your daily salvation and peace, and well as your growth and increase in God, and an entrance will be daily ministered thereby into the everlasting kingdom, which is in Christ Jesus the light and truth and power of God.

But if you go out to any other thing for help or counsel besides that Spirit which is pure, just, meek, and lowly, and which springs up in you to bring forth fruit to God in that Seed which is pure and clean, then you go from the fountain of living waters to dig cisterns for yourselves. In this way you go out into your own works, and what you bring forth is your own righteousness, and not that righteousness which is revealed from above to all generations of God's elect. So you will go through your work with labor and toil, and when you have brought it forth it will not satisfy that part in you which hungers after God, but will only puff up that nature which is selfish, and exalt that which is already too high to receive life from God. This righteousness is not accepted by God, for it is brought forth by works and not by virtue of the divine nature. But the righteousness which God accepts springs freely within from an eternal Spirit, and those who enter into it, enter into their rest, and keep the holy Sabbath, being freely fed and covered by the Lord.

Therefore, if you desire to be born of this heavenly birth, then cease from flesh and blood, and from whatever it does for you (within or without) that is defiled, and wait in that which calls to you and convinces you of sin. Yes, wait and be faithful, until you find a life and a desire quickened in you which can delight in nothing but what is pure, just and holy, and loathes whatever is contrary, and cannot join to it in thought, word, nor action. This is the life of the holy Seed, if ever you feel it move and breathe in you, and as its spiritual birth grows in the vessel, it makes it heir of the heavenly treasure, though at first it is weak, as a child without understanding or strength. Yes, at first you do not know how it could ever come to have all power and dominion in you, by reason of the abundance of corruption that has risen above in you, and the strong bonds of iniquity that rule in your flesh, which all war against the resurrection of this innocent birth, and by which the strong man keeps his house with subtlety and spiritual wickedness against the pure and simple life. Yet if you will but abide in that which first gave you light, and be obedient thereto, you will feel it arise and lead you a way you do not know. And though you may come through great travails and temptations, and many fiery trials and tribulations, where you are sifted and winnowed, yet not one grain of that pure seed shall perish or fail in the way, for the Spirit of light and truth will lead you. This is the path which has been tried in many generations; for this is Christ Jesus—the light and salvation of ages, who has overcome the devil and the world, and all the power of darkness for all that were sanctified. And now He is come to do it in you, that you may also inherit the purchased possession and sit with Him in heavenly places also.

So then, your work is faith and obedience, and patience towards Him who is Spirit and light in you; to Him you must give up your life and your all. He will confound your corrupt wisdom and give light to all who are yet under the shadow of death. He will build up in you the way of peace, and you shall no more live by your works and natural gifts, but because He lives in you, you will live also, and your life will be that which is begotten of God and never dies. This He will do for as many as give themselves up wholly to the light that leads out of sin.

But you who pray and profess, and seek and cry for help abroad—not knowing the One who has help in His hands for you, nor waiting in Him alone, that in all things you might observe Him—you worship what you do not know. Though in words you talk of the God who lives, yet in works you deny Him and give your strength to what is dead and not living. But tell me, should not every man know his God to live in him, and go to his own God for life, according to “the manifestation of His Spirit given for the profit of all?”¹¹ And should you not hear and know and learn of Him—not in dead forms, but in the power of the Spirit of life? His Word gives life to as many as have an ear open to hear the living Spirit, and can discern the living from the dead. But whatever you look to for life and salvation which is not of this Spirit and power, will kill and devour your strength, for nothing gives life but the Spirit of God. Only this pure Spirit can feed the hungry soul with the bread of life, and to this Spirit you must give up all that you have

11 1 Corinthians 12:7

and are. Yes, you must spend your time and all your strength in hearkening and obeying, that you may grow in that life which is bread indeed. But when you give your strength to customs, forms, and carnal rudiments, to vain pleasures and delights, setting your minds on visible things, you spend your strength for what is not bread, and your labor for what does not profit unto life eternal. Instead, you should wait in that which is pure, that He may open the door of life to you.

Now mind and consider your ways, you who have looked outward to the mountains to worship and feed yourselves. You may read of Israel's sin in going out from the temple, in which the Lord had said He would dwell and be sought. They built altars outside of His temple, and there they called upon Him but found Him not, for which He rejected their worship and their temple also. And where has Christ said He will now be worshipped? Is it not within? For Christ has said, "The true worshippers worship the Father in Spirit and in truth."¹² Mind this, all you professors of Christianity. He will not be inquired of in Jerusalem or any outward temple, but in Spirit and truth; and the body is now the temple, as He has said: "I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will put my law in their inward parts, and all shall know me from the least to the greatest."¹³ The Godhead does not dwell in temples made with hands, nor in your high places and steepled buildings, but in that which springs from Him. Can you read this and understand it rightly? It is in that which springs from Him that the Godhead and power are known. But the high-minded are too far off it to feel it.

It is the poor and lowly in spirit that are near to the power, and only he that has become as a little child can understand it, who is not too great in his own thoughts to hearken to that Seed which is little and pure in him. For this Seed springs up by birth, and is the nature of God, but it is not known in the lofty mind which has divine notions but not nature and life, nor the sonship which is born of God. A sanctified life and vessel is God's offspring; but he that says he will but does not, is not born of truth, but of fornication and falsehood. So then, read your birth and nature and kindred with the light of truth. It is not the uncircumcised in heart that is the offspring and child of God's love, but rather the pure and clean in heart, mind, and spirit. And if you desire to be godly you must know this in yourselves, or else you are without God in the world, having neither seen Him nor known the one you pretend to worship. Instead, you are alienated from Him in your minds and in your members, and in your whole strength, so that you have neither power nor understanding to do well, being taken captive by a contrary spirit in all your abilities of spirit, soul and body. Indeed, your wisdom is perverted and your understanding darkened, having departed from God at the root.

And now this should be your way of return: to sink down to that gift which is holy and pure in the light, and give to it your whole man, and all that you are and have. Consult no more with your wisdom, nor follow your own understanding, but let that little Seed in you lead you, which is pure and simple, for to

¹² John 4:24

¹³ 2 Corinthians 6:16; Jeremiah 31:33-34; Hebrews 8:11

this alone you must bow and bend and confess. This will be your restoration to God, to give all that you have to the Holy One within, who, when He has made foolish your cursed wisdom and brought down your high conceit, and bound the strong man, and tied the colt to the vine, then He will arise in power (who is meek and holy) to rule in your strengths, gifts, and wisdom, having purged out the enmity and renewed your abilities. Thus all will be restored again abundantly; all will be new and clear and able, by the power of the holy One who will reign and govern therein. And you shall know the Lord (whose offspring you are) to be both root and head and all in you, and you shall no more say, "I am weak and can do nothing," but, "I can do all things through Him that gives me strength."¹⁴ Then the devourer shall no more pervert your strength, but great shall be the Holy One in your midst. So you shall no longer sow for the devourer (as you have formerly done), nor bring forth fruit unto blasting, but your fruits shall arise unto God, who will receive them with good will, and your prayers shall not return empty when He has bent you for Himself, and taken away the accursed thing from amongst you. And then you will see that all who despise the day of small things neglect their own mercy, to follow the teacher of lies. These do not turn at the Holy One's reproof, and therefore worship without power.

And you will know the life and power of redemption, sanctification, and justification, and the renewing of the Holy Spirit in you, when your strength is redeemed to God, your wisdom redeemed, your hearts, tongues, eyes and ears, and all you have redeemed unto God, into that which is holy, to be guided and exercised in all your conduct, possessing your vessels in sanctification. Here the renewing of the Holy Spirit is known, which sanctifies and justifies through the redemption of both body and mind, and the reconciliation which is in Christ Jesus. For Christ is not known to be Lord except by the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth, which truth is an inward witness against all who say they are redeemed to God by Christ Jesus when another lord still rules in them and leads them captive into sin. In this way, Jesus Christ is denied by them, and suffers in them, and they remain separated from God and in a nature contrary to Him. Therefore you must come to that which changes your nature, and not only your words and forms and teachers. You must come to Him who begets another seed and kills that which is begotten of harlotry and lust (which is according to the prince of this world), so that God may be served in His own Spirit, in His own truth, and in the nature of His own begetting, being holy as He is holy in every measure of your growth. Thus the least of His children may be known to be of Him, coming out and being separate from the world in soul and in body, and bearing His image and reproach.

And as many as honestly desire to be heirs of this holy power and kingdom, patiently wait till you feel something move in you which is of this pure nature; and having felt it alive in you, rejoice in it with hope and faith, and keep therein, and be not discouraged because of its littleness in your present sight, neither seek to judge and measure it thereby, for you know not what power it has with God, and how precious it is in His sight, and what it will do for you by His hands in the time of need. You have not yet proved it,

¹⁴ Philippians 4:13

nor can you prove it, while there remain greater things than this in your thoughts to run to. The power of holiness and truth in the inward parts is only known in the depths, when the fire of wrath comes upon all vain hopes and hypocritical confidence, when all that is without a man is removed far away, when all relations, friends and acquaintances become farther off than strangers, and whatever things the creature seeks for comfort turn against him and add to his grief. Then the power of holiness is known, and truth in heart with God, and a clean conscience will speak peace; and none can take this away from you so long as you abide in it. One who has proved it commends it to you, who has been stripped of all that he might learn and know the treasure of life and holiness with God. Therefore, judge not that which is holier and lower than yourselves, but let that Seed which is just and holy judge all that has risen above it in you, which is not of His nature.

The reason why this Seed is so little esteemed by you is because you are so great in the contrary nature. So the proud despises the poor, and the rich undervalues him that is better than himself. This you will find to be true, if you will measure with that by which God esteems and weighs all flesh, namely, that which is His own. So do not judge the most holy, but believe and obey, for the time for you to judge has not yet come, until the most holy and just One has become king in you, and you in Him. Therefore, keep in that which is holy and just, and grow in Him that He may rule in you, and may arise (through the death of His enemies) to be greater than the greatest herb in the garden, greater than the world and the prince of it, which is the devil, from whom comes all unbelief, false fears and doubting, and exaltation against the Holy One. And as these towers fall which are lifted up against the Lord, so His way will become plain, and truth will take His place in you as King and Lord, and unbelief will have no place. And as the pure Life arises, you will find a change in your mind, your nature, your judgment, and your government, and you will come to know that the kingdom and power of the Most High stands in the anointing of the most holy, and that the kingdom of God is within you, and that the poor is he who inherits it.

So you must not fix your faith upon that which seems great and strong in you, or that which seems hopeful, or promises great things. Rather, believe in that which is most holy, true, and righteous in you, that you may come to the Anointing in your own particular. It is He who will bring you into the assembly of the sanctified where the Holy One reigns over all; for it is He that is sent into the world that lies in wickedness, to gather them one by one into sanctification, and therein to present unto God as many as receive Him.

Now, all the world take notice of this: this is He whom the Father of lights has now sent into you that are in the world. This is the Holy One, sent of God to call you and give you light, who says of Himself, "I am the light of the world."¹⁵ Hear Him and believe, that you may become children of light and truth; for this is the glad tidings and gospel of Christ Jesus. Outward professions and forms would limit the Holy One to themselves and exclude others, but God's gift is free in Christ Jesus, and His offer is to all men; for He

¹⁵ John 8:12

would “have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.”¹⁶ He excludes none but those who will not receive His gift, His Son, the most Holy One who calls you, and who through the preaching of the gospel has come near to you. Yes, He is in you with His light (without money or price), giving you to see the way out of darkness, which nothing else could do for you. And now, if you receive Him and keep His sayings, and obey His movings, He will dwell in you and take up His abode, and you shall know that the Father has sent Him to call you out of the world into the light of life. If you deny Him, He will deny you; but if you receive Him the Father will love you, and power from above will be given to become the sons of God.

Therefore mind that Spirit which calls you out of sin, out of the world, and gives you light to see the sin and deceit in your own hearts. Hearken to that which is holy and would turn you from evil, for this is from the Holy One, the most High within you; believe in Him and follow Him. Do not believe those who tell you He is not within you, who are “past feeling”¹⁷ in themselves and have already rejected Him. But you who feel Him, abide in Him who is holy within you, and who witnesses against all unholiness. If you do not cut yourselves off through disobedience and unbelief, He will in no way cast you out, but will increase your light through obedience, and purify your souls and cleanse your vessels, and work in you mightily by His truth unto salvation. So you shall see that His working is pure and good, and is that which no other can do for you. Yes, this is the Lord your righteousness, though you do not yet know Him as He is.

And if you will receive the Most Holy, this is your time and the day of your visitation by Him. His light is now rejected by the builders of this world, and the wisdom of the wise will not know Him. No, they will not allow Him to rule over their carnal rudiments, nor be all in their hearts, nor guide by His light unto salvation. So He is preached to the outcasts, who are far off and have not sought Him. These He seeks with His light, and if you do not reject Him He will make you see light, though you have sat in the region of death, and gross darkness has covered you. Therefore, hearken to the One that says “come,” and feel the Spirit that draws you, that you may answer His love freely, as it is freely offered. Know Him by His holiness, and let His unchangeable witness in you (both day and night) persuade your hearts that He is the Lord who changes not. Yes, He that declares unto man his thoughts, the Lord of hosts is His name. And you who withstand His appearance in Spirit, and tell people that this is not to preach Christ (though you profess Christ is in you), tell me, what is Christ in people, if He is not light, and a holy life, and a faithful witness against the contrary nature in all in whom He lives? How else may He be known in Spirit, life, and power, if this be denied? So then, let the mouth of antichrist be stopped, that the simple may continue on the right and living way, free from all who will neither enter the kingdom themselves nor permit others, who have always resisted the Holy Spirit.

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16 1 Timothy 2:4

17 Ephesians 4:19

The Fruits of the Freeborn Cleared from Legal Performances, and the Children of Bondage Shown the Nature of their Works.

The children of this world—who have the form but not the power of godliness, and who have notions of life, but not the nature and Spirit thereof—judge the children of light with their dark thoughts and their unfruitful spirit; and when they see us acting in the life of Christ Jesus, they then say we are under legal performances, and that we think to be saved by our works and by our own merit, etc. But these are greatly mistaken and are not in that Spirit which can see us or judge the nature of our works or our aim in these things. Therefore, let all be silent and hear what is now said to you, if you have an ear to hear. For though you yourselves may be dead, withered branches, cut off from that tree which is good by nature, yet it is not so with such as are born again and ingrafted into the good olive tree; for he that is really born of God knows two different seeds and natures, which spring up and bring forth fruit from different roots, according to their different kinds.

Now, the first of these is in bondage, together with its branches, and it brings forth fruit unto self, from an outward observation or literal command, or when something within that is carnal or natural sets itself to work. And thus attempting to work in spiritual things which are contrary to your life and nature, you move on with difficulty, and if you attain the outward performance, then the boaster rises up to glory in what you can do—though you do all for self-ends, and look to be praised above those who cannot do as you have done. But you who have not succeeded in the outward performance, but wearied yourselves therein, and found nothing but bondage, you turn back to fleshly liberty again, and judge all others according to what you have found in yourselves, saying that all good works are from the spirit of bondage, and from boasting and seeking merit with God.

But you should not judge the children of light according to the flesh; your measure will not reach that birth. For he that is born of God is a branch of another root and seed than you know, which has another nature, inclining to God from which it comes, even as the first branch inclines to the world from which it comes. And as the natural man does evil naturally with delight, his root and life being of this kind, so the spiritual man (in his measure) does good naturally after his root and life. Yes, it is his pleasure and joy to bring forth fruit from the root that is good by nature, even as it is the delight of the other branch to bring forth fruit from the root that is evil by nature. For as is the heavenly One, so are those who are heavenly, and it is no bondage for the heavenly branch to bear heavenly fruits; but to the earthly man this is bondage, being a striving against his nature. Therefore Christ says, “make the tree either good and its fruits good, or the tree evil and its fruits evil.”¹⁸ Thus good trees, evil trees, and fruitless trees are known to be of differing natures, bearing different fruits.

18 Matthew 12:33

So then, it is but your own darkness that thinks this way, and with evil thoughts you judge amiss. Will you say of those who are really planted into the living Vine that their fruits (which freely spring from here) are legal and are bondage, and that we think to be saved by our works, and by our own righteousness, etc.? No, these are the fruits of those who are saved already, and who have ceased from their own works and received righteousness from God. Indeed, the works of these are no more legal, but spiritual, no more from bondage but free, and he that is in Christ is fruitful in good works, and free therein by birth. And he that abides in Christ sins not, nor is his seed of the evil one.

If you could understand this, you would not condemn the fruits of the living with the fruits of those who are dead while they live, whose fruits are withered. These are broken off from the One that is good by nature and planted into that which is wild by nature. Thus you cannot judge the spiritual man, or his fruits, his freedom, his offspring, or his end; but he can judge all fruitless trees, though he himself is judged by no man. I know it is hard for you to do good who are accustomed to do evil, even as for the leopard to change his spots; but it is otherwise with those who are changed already, born of the light, and heirs by birth and by nature to the everlasting righteousness and truth. For such as these it is hard to do evil, being against their nature, seed, and sonship, which are in God. And though you cannot believe this, yet he that is born of faith can and does; for the least child of God can read this in their measure, who know the difference between the old Adam and the new. And even as in the first nature all are in sin and bondage, so in the second are all made righteous and free unto God's work; and in the second the new creation is known wherein righteousness dwells, as God has said, "I will dwell in them and walk in them."¹⁹

Will you call this self-righteousness, where all things are of God, and all things are made new? Are these legal works and a yoke of bondage? If any man be in Christ, all things are of God, and it is God that works in us of His good pleasure both to will and to do. No, this is not the spirit of bondage, but rather the good will and pleasure which God freely works in us. And reproaching this, you reproach what God works by the hearing of faith, which is the same righteousness that was wrought in Abraham, which was also in God before Abraham was, and is a free gift to all who (by Abraham's faith) come out of the world unto Him who is not of the world. But you who abide in the world do not inherit this righteousness, for you remain in self and are seeking yourselves in all that you do for God and for men. "How can you believe?" says Christ, "who look for rewards from men,"²⁰ and are not in that Spirit which works freely? Yes, you look for praise, honor, merit, and respect of persons, both teachers and people, in that nature which is outside the faith of Jesus Christ. For He went from place to place doing good freely and preaching freely, and so do all who are born of true freedom. You speak of His life, but know it not by birth and virtue, which is naturally good even as the first and fallen man is naturally evil.

19 1 Corinthians 6:16

20 John 5:44

Now, the bondage is found in that which works against the pure nature, and not in that which is freeborn; and the law is upon the transgressor and upon all who have degenerated into that nature which is carnal and sensual. If this carnal man does anything as unto God, it is from something that is laid upon him from without, and not in the Spirit; and *this* is legal and under bondage, for it is not done by the free Spirit, who by nature does the things contained in the law.

And truly, little would the natural man either do or know, if there were not an outward law or letter, or a heaven and hell to set him upon working. Here is the bondage and the fear that has torment. But it is not so with the spiritual seed, who are begotten and born of God in Christ Jesus, in whom they freely receive like a branch from its root. And what the root sends forth through these branches are the fruits of His Spirit, against which there is no law. This is not legal, but spiritual and free, and such are a law unto themselves; for there is no law against the Seed, but the law was added upon the transgressor (because of sin) until the Seed should come; and wherever the Seed is born and rules, there the creature is not under the law or letter, or under traditions or bondage, but is led by the Spirit, and born of that nature which was before transgression. And by this, the fruits of righteousness are brought to light by the working of the Holy Spirit, who works both the will and the deed from His own good pleasure, and with the same good will and pleasure the fruit is brought forth without bondage or constraint.

And in whosoever the bonds of iniquity are broken, there the world has ended, all things have become new, and all is of God. There self-righteousness does not dwell, nor the spirit of bondage, but there is a new creature in Christ Jesus (not in self) which is created unto good works. Here the heavens are new, and the earth is new, and righteousness dwells in Christ Jesus who is revealed from God in Spirit and power, to which the law and the prophets bear witness, having foretold what glory and freedom should be revealed in the latter days at the Seed's appearing.

But before you can judge concerning this freedom, or the nature of the works that spring from it, or inherit the power that brings forth this righteousness, you must acknowledge the judgment of Him that condemns the man of sin in you, and receive Him for your lawgiver. This will break you off from the world, and cause you to deny its forms and images, and bring you from under its power.

Therefore, take heed to yourselves, all you that name the name of the Lord and call Him master. Depart from iniquity and obey righteousness; this is His work, if you are His servants. He has called you to holiness, even as He is holy, and so you must turn from the world, and repent of the works of the prince of the world, denying him and his works both openly and in secret. If you will serve the Holy One you must bear His mark and open your heart to Him and your mouth for Him, even as confidently as the servants of sin do the same for it. In this way your light will shine against the darkness of this world in the face of a perverse and crooked generation, and it will appear to all men that the ways of the Lord and the world are not one, nor are their servants one, nor their words one, nor their garments one, nor their table one.

In all things you must bear His image and glory above His adversary, that it may appear to whose family you belong, and what the work of your Lord is in the world.

And herein all people may see themselves, as in a mirror, whether they be for God in this His day, or whether they be against Him. There are but two masters of whom Christ speaks, and none can serve them both. The one is hated and the other is served; so now, who has hired you? Who do you serve, and who do you hate? Is it the world you serve? then you hate Christ. Is it Christ? then you deny the world. These are plain things, and you may see clearly as you go your way whose business you are about and whose hand you strengthen. If you commit sin and contend for it, then you war against Him who was made manifest to destroy sin. And if you say sin must live in you while you live on the earth, then you believe the devil must have a place, a power, and a kingdom in you as long as you live. But if you believe to overcome sin, then you wait for the kingdom of God (which consists in righteousness), seek it daily with your whole heart, and believe to see it.

Now it is not words which take the kingdom, but the power of faith against the evil one. Neither is it religious forms and professions or any outward thing that can vanquish the devil, for he is a spirit, and must be resisted by a spiritual power. Indeed the weapons which cast down his seat in man are spiritual and mighty through God. But alas, many are led from form to form which deny the power of God in them, but obey the power of sin in them; not knowing the power which lays the axe to the root of the evil tree from which all evil springs. But you have not yet come to labor in the vineyard of God till you be set to work against sin, and to pluck up and cut down (with His spiritual light and power) every evil thing that offends in the kingdom of God, which kingdom is within you. For that which offends is within you, and that which is offended is within, and that which is lost is within, and there it must be sought. Yes, the Pearl, the Seed, the Word, the law of the Spirit of life, and the covenant is within, but these are not seen or believed till the house of God is swept, and the fruits of darkness are denied, and the light of Christ is turned to, and the Righteous One is obeyed. But you will see the unrighteous one, and the power that works against him, when the ground of darkness is removed by the working of faith.

Now, as many as are called to this work, and entered into it in truth and faith, must not be idle, but must obey the Spirit of life until the house be cleansed, the unclean thing cast out, and the Pure One exalted. Then you will find your holy rest within you, and your God near to you, and your souls dwelling at ease with God in your own habitation, whose temples you are. And this is not self-works, nor self-will, but pure faith and obedience to the Seed, or living Word of God, which wars in you against the world and every selfish, fleshly lust and delight. This is the Seed of the holy covenant, which Seed is Christ, the Holy and Just One, if you can receive it. This is He that makes you clean and keeps you so, as you obey and walk in Him. From His Spirit you must receive your law, which Spirit gives to you His life to inherit here on earth. And if you walk in the Spirit you shall not live according to the flesh.

Then the common objection (which the spirit of this world makes against the holy life and kingdom) is easily answered, wherein they say, "If it is possible to live without sin, then there is no need for a Savior." For those who have truly learned this life and knowledge find that the One who cleanses the house must also keep it clean; and He that is the death of sin is also the life of righteousness; and the same light and fear of God which leads to the putting off of the old man (with his affections and deeds) leads also to put on the new man, who is renewed after the image of Him that created him, where Christ is all in life and guidance, and the good Man keeps the house, not the strong man. How can any say he needs no savior when he can do nothing without Him, whose righteous life is both his food and clothing, and Christ's light is the daily armor against evil in every thought, word, and work?

Therefore, all you who profess Jesus Christ to be your Lord and master in words, let it be also in truth and righteousness, so that in whatever place or employment you are found, you will be chiefly about His work and not your own. Now, His work is manifest whenever He appears; for it is always against sin, to destroy the works of the devil in this world, so that the kingdoms of this world may become the kingdoms of Christ Jesus, and that the most Holy One may rule and bring forth His fruits therein. Now His servants are known by this, that they stand for the kingdom of Christ in this world, and against all the works of the devil. And the servants of the devil are known by the contrary, by being about his work, which is to keep sin in this world as long as people live, for this is the strength of his kingdom. If you take away sin, you take away his kingdom here, and his power here, and his place here, for where he is resisted he flees. But where he is received he sets up his throne and takes pleasure in his servants, and they take pleasure in his work, which is to increase deception and vanity in them, and to fill their hearts with every lust. Thus they are carried away after every desire till they have no delight in anything that is contrary, nor can believe that any can receive power in the Spirit of Christ against the devil, or know such a redemption as to overcome sin in this world. And here an agreement is made with death, and a covenant is established with unrighteousness.

All who are of this mind and belief, you are not yet servants of Christ Jesus the righteous, nor have you received His faith, which is pure even as He is pure, and which believes unto righteousness and victory, and not unto sin. This is the faith which overcomes the world and the prince of it, and resists the devil steadfast in the faith, in hope of victory in the end. These have their hearts turned and their faces set towards holiness, and are set on their journey out of the world. Their mind is fixed on Christ's holy and pure light in all their travails, tribulations, and temptations, which works more hope, and more strength daily, and every trial that they meet with in the way gives experience and renewed strength against their adversary the devil, while they keep close to Christ in faith and love. And though they feel the devil in the sensual part to be strong and powerful, and past their present strength, yet they yield him not the kingdom, but sink down into the faith and hope and patience of Christ Jesus, waiting for the resurrection of that life which never sinned, and for the appearance of Christ without sin to save them from the power of death which wars in their members to bring forth sin in this world. And this is their true service and faithfulness: to wait for the kingdom of God within them, and the righteousness thereof, and the coming

of their Lord, with their minds girded up with holiness, and their hearts steadfast, not to consent to the least work of the devil, even if it would gain the whole world for the sensual reason and wisdom.

And if these are overtaken with a fault, it is not willingly, but as a servant of Christ they stand against their own sin as far as they then see it. And knowing sin to be a work of the wrong master, they abhor it and themselves for it, and deny it, and will never plead for it or seek to hide it, but rather confess it, and cannot have peace until it is cleansed out. These are the little children who have an advocate with the Father, to whom sin is like death, and they dare not speak a word for it, but only against it, both in themselves and in others. And these appear against sin openly and confess all (with their hearts and their words) to Him who is holy.

But what a difference is there between one of these—who when they either see or are told of their offense against the Lord are broken into tears or sorrow before the least reproof, condemning themselves openly for it, and condemning it in themselves—and you, who when you are reproved for sin (which is both open and known) set yourselves with all your strength and wisdom to excuse it, and (like the devil) employ the Scriptures to strengthen yourselves against just reproof. Yes, with hearts full of envy and mouths full of reproach, you stand up, seeking to ensnare those who reprove you in love to Christ's kingdom and to your souls. You scoff at those who seek to recover you out from the works of Satan, those who desire that his kingdom might fall in you, leaving him fewer subjects in his power; and that you be added unto the kingdom of Christ by being brought under His commands, through denying your old master, and confessing and condemning his evil works. For truly, there must be a denying of the devil and his works before Christ will receive you.

* * *

Christ Jesus Known to be King in His Temples, through the Power of the Holy Spirit and the Sword of the Spirit, Lifted Up Against the Man of Sin in True Judgment.

You who look for the kingdom of Christ Jesus, know that it stands not in observations, words and forms, but in the power of the Holy Spirit, in judgment, in truth, and in righteousness. If you desire to know His appearance unto salvation, wait for it in that Spirit and power which is holy, and which judges and condemns sin. For to know His spiritual power within as a witness against all sin (by the breath of His mouth and the sword of His Spirit)—this is His kingdom with men (if you can receive it). Herein men find power to judge all contrary spirits within and without, and all contrary actions; but whatever opposes and denies His kingdom in His temples is antichrist.

For Christ's temple is the new creation of holy men and women in whom He speaks and dwells and walks (as the Scriptures testify), and in whom He judges the prince of this world and all his works in the children

of darkness. And in His own temples Christ shows forth His nature and virtue as a witness against the devil and all his works. Whoever would hinder this is antichrist, who sits in the temple of Christ to resist the Holy One and to reject the righteous judgments of Christ against sin in His temple. Such as these cry out “Do not judge,” whenever Truth speaks, and “You must not judge lest you be judged” when the Spirit of Christ testifies against sin in true judgment. So through deceit these would turn Christ’s words against His work, who said “I will redeem Zion with judgment.”²¹ For when Christ said, “Judge not lest you be judged,”²² He did not speak these words to save sin from judgment, nor to stop the mouth of truth and righteousness, for He then would have contradicted Himself where He commands them to “judge with righteous judgment.”²³ Indeed, Christ has been manifest to destroy and not to save sin, in whomsoever He is manifest, and for this end He lives in His people.

Therefore you professors of Christ in words and forms, seek His kingdom in you, and take heed that your forms do not withstand His powerful appearance in Spirit. His kingly authority stands in His heavenly, holy nature and virtue in Spirit, and not in perishing rudiments and outward shadows. Read in Scripture how often antichrist has deceived people by causing outward forms to withstand the spiritual power, and so has kept people in words without life, opposing Christ in His kingdom. Therefore, in the first place, seek to know His spiritual nature and virtue, which has power against sin, both in word and in deed. Here is Christ’s kingdom, here is His glory, and here He reigns. His kingdom is spiritual and holy, and it is within, where His testimonies, laws, and judgments are known.

And you who are talking of Christ’s appearance, where do you think He will rule, if not in the heart (the chief place in man), there to judge, govern, speak and give out His law? Will you allow the evil one to utter his voice openly in man, in swearing, lying, cursed speaking, and every evil work, and yet Christ must be silent and dumb in His vessels when he sees it? Is this not Christ’s privilege in His redeemed ones, even as the prince of this world has power in his captives? Indeed, this is the reasonable service of His chosen vessels: to give up their bodies that He may speak and act and show forth His virtue and life and power therein against the spirit of the world in his vessels. And were it not for the words of God spoken by them, the holy men of God would never have suffered or been hated; but Christ has said, “It is not you that speaks but the Spirit of your Father that speaks in you.”²⁴ This is the voice which the world does not know, and so seeks to stop, saying it is not the Lord; but such as these know not that justice and judgment are the habitation of His throne in the hearts and mouths of His people.

What? Must the Spirit of truth refrain from judging deceit and falsehood where He dwells? Must not that which is holy judge the unclean? Must not that which is lowly judge the proud, and that which is chaste

²¹ Isaiah 1:27; See also Isaiah 4:4

²² Matthew 7:1

²³ John 7:24

²⁴ Matthew 10:20

judge all lust? Must not “he that is spiritual judge all things?”²⁵ Must not “the saints judge the world?”²⁶ What sort of nation would you have this to be, you who would root out judgment and yet profess Christ within you? Is Christ truly in a people where there is no judgment against sin, pride, excess, lying, swearing, false ways and false worships? Would you have all sin to pass openly without reproof? Has the land wholly become like Sodom? Consider the words of the men of Sodom to Lot in this case: “This one came to sojourn here, and he keeps acting as a judge.”²⁷ For this reason Lot’s “righteous soul was tormented from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds.”²⁸ Would you have sin go on openly in the streets without reproof and shame? Where then is the Holy One? In whom does He dwell who is of “purer eyes than to behold iniquity?”²⁹ Is Christ a king? Is He a judge? Is He pure and clean in heart? Does He live? Can He see sin and be silent where He has a mouth by which to speak? Consider His walking formerly in His servants, and what He did and spoke in them, and against what. And is He not still a God of judgment near at hand against His adversary, (though those who do not know His voice put Him far off)?

So you who say you are for Christ and His kingdom, consider whose kingdom sin is in, and whose work it is to defend it from judgment, and distort the Scriptures to contend for it. This is most surely to “justify the wicked and condemn the righteous, both of which are an abomination to the Lord.”³⁰ Therefore, if you love the appearance of Christ Jesus, you must not love sin, but in that Seed which cannot sin, you must feel Him who suffers because of sin, and yet is without sin and is against sin. And if you come unto Him whose appearance is holy, just, and true, and therein join to Him, you will love that which condemns sin. Then you are truly for Christ, when you can feel and suffer with Him, and then you will see that nothing is offended when sin is judged, except he that is guilty thereof.

* * *

Grace Received, and Grace Rejected.

The grace of God is that which brings salvation near to man, giving him a sight of truth within himself; for God desires that all men come to the knowledge of truth that they might be saved. All men are naturally darkness, being “without God in the world;”³¹ thus the grace of God is offered to all without respect of persons. Now this grace is one in every man and neither spares the evil nor denies the good in any out

25 1 Corinthians 2:15

26 1 Corinthians 6:2

27 Genesis 19:9

28 2 Peter 2:8

29 Habakkuk 1:13

30 Proverbs 17:15

31 Ephesians 2:12

of respect to either person, wisdom, strength or the riches of this world. It has respect only to the Spirit of truth in all, and man's obedience thereto, seeking to teach and lead all to salvation, and to the true worship of God in Spirit, to eternal life, and to the growth of the holy Seed in man, quickening the soul which has suffered from sin. This it does by condemning sin in every motion, and also by ministering comforts, promises, and power in the Spirit in such a way that the soul may arise above the power of the son of wickedness. Yes, it is grace that ministers light and understanding in the inward part to the soul that hates sin, daily opening (through the obedience of truth) that eye which the god of this world has blinded, and purifying the soul by putting off the body of corruption. And it is also grace that blinds the eye of him who says he sees but knows not the way of sin, and also ministers the law upon him.

This is the ministration of free grace to every soul that receives it, working powerfully in all who abide in it, through the Spirit of Christ Jesus. And as the Scriptures say, this "grace has appeared to all men;"³² yes, and daily appears in all who truly wait in Spirit for its appearance, giving to these a sight of truth in themselves, testifying with or against every motion of the heart according as it stands in the sight of God, whether it be good or evil. In this way, "their consciences bear witness, and their thoughts accuse or else excuse them in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ."³³ So then, it is not a fault in the grace why some are not saved by it from sin and condemnation; but grace being rejected becomes man's condemnation. The same grace that saves the one who receives it in faith and obedience also condemns the one that rejects it in disobedience. This is the grace of God that changes not, and which appears to all men, but only reigns unto salvation through righteousness where it is believed to be sufficient and obeyed.

So then, that which is of God in man is His grace, which ministers spiritual light to the soul in the midst of darkness, and life to that which is dead in sin. It leads man through the vale of death up to God from where it came and to whom it belongs. And the light of this grace is judgment and discerning in everyone that receives and is led by it in judgment. But the same is condemnation to such as turn grace into a license for immorality, denying the life thereof and the truth it leads into. These cannot be saved through it. But he that receives it and joins to it in Spirit becomes one with it, and by his daily sinking into its counsel, it grows in him and he in it, until it becomes a habitation and covering for him against all evil. So he becomes gracious in words and works, daily receiving of Christ's fullness, even grace for grace.

Now he that has received of this grace and is faithful therein must not minister from it to strengthen the transgressor (who loves his sin and so is under the law), nor cast his pearls before swine. For grace ministers judgment to the wicked, that thereby they may know their condemnation by the light of truth, and no longer deny grace its reign.

³² Titus 2:11

³³ Romans 2:15-16

But to such as are heavy laden and weary of sin, these he is to encourage against the sin and temptation (which all that turn from the devil must expect to meet with). And he that receives the teaching of grace comes therein to the leading of the Spirit, and so becomes free from sin, and is no more under the law but under grace. But the law has power over all that walk after the flesh, and every appearance of grace is a witness against them, by declaring them to be under the law of sin and death, and not in covenant with the One that appears against sin in the power of grace and truth, who is Jesus Christ the Lord.

Chapter V

Milk for Babes

And Meat for Strong Men

“A banquet of aged wine; the best of meats and the finest of wines.”

— Isa. 25:6

O come young men and maidens, old men and babes, and drink abundantly of the streams that run from the fountain, that you may feel a wellspring of living water in yourselves springing up to eternal life; so that as He lives (even Christ Jesus) from whom all the springs do come, so you may live also, and partake of His glory, who has ascended to the right hand of the Father, far above principalities and powers.

To you tender hearted ones, who have felt the call of the Father’s love, and who now see more blessing and beauty in innocence and meekness than in all conceit and self-exaltation arising from lofty knowledge—my soul is with you herein. And now, wait low, and diligently hearken unto that which has given you the sight of this excellency, until the Life itself springs up which naturally possesses the riches that come from above. For though this Seed lies far below all fleshly affections, lofty thoughts, and hasty desires (and by these things is veiled and hidden from you, so that you cannot come to the life and source of it), yet, as you deny these and put them off, by sinking down through all earthly things, the Seed will rise up. Under all these things your Beloved suffers, while they are risen above Him in your minds; and it is through the fall of all these that He must arise and take His kingdom, before you ever come to have a quiet dwelling-place in Him, and He in you.

Therefore, you must come and be planted into the likeness of His death, that you may feel the fellowship of His sufferings and partake of His meekness and patience therein, who bears all things. Your faithfulness to Him must therein be thoroughly proved, in the faith and patience of which you shall learn the

One whom you love—both His reproaches without and His temptations within. Yes, even in such trials as cannot be uttered you will learn of Him love, obedience, patience, meekness and long-suffering, and how He arises through all these things, and through His resurrection chains down His enemies and takes them captive. Thus you will have fellowship in His resurrection, wherein you shall attain to the resurrection of the dead and the inheritance of eternal life.

But dear children, think it not strange when, for the attaining of this, you come to be rejected by all, denied, condemned, contradicted, and tempted with all manner of spirits and evils, assaults within and without, with fears and dread, in weakness, watchings and fastings, and with tears of sorrow night and day. For you will be led into the wilderness and there be tempted and tried in the night with great temptations, and will see no way out, and be led in a way you do not know, a way of wrath and terror, passing by the gates of hell with none to pity you nor take your part; chastened alone that you may be proved to the uttermost. So when you come into this, faint not, nor look back, but lift up your head through all, and know that now He deals with you as with sons and daughters of His love.

Take heed that you do not murmur, nor judge Him with your own light, nor repine at His rod. And do not cast an evil eye upon the instruments He uses to afflict you, whoever or whatever they may be, for this will only beget wrath in your minds, and then you will lose the life you seek, and thus suffer in vain. But in the greatest floods keep your eye to your Beloved, retaining patience and meekness in longsuffering, with faith. Let these be ever in your heart as the end of all, and believe that all that befalls you is only to waste away that which would hinder you from being joined to the One you so highly prize. So in all things keep with Him; let His joy be strength unto you in all, and so the appearance of His beauty will refresh you in new life, as the old wastes away. Make war together with Him against the enmity, and let His love quench all wrath that would arise. Let Him be your shield of faith, and while you fix your mind singly upon Him, whatever you are led into shall be profitable towards your desired end; though without Him you can do nothing.

So if you pray to the Father, let it be by Him; and in all your wrestlings, you will find that His meekness, patience and longsuffering in faith prevails much with God. If you resist the tempter, let it be with Him, for it is His goodness alone that has power to overcome evil; and He will be your strength at all times if you hold Him steadfast in your minds. In the fire and in the floods He will be with you and will be your power and peace, and will make a way through all. Though at times the clouds may be so thick, and the powers of darkness so strong in your eyes that you cannot see Him, yet continuing to love Him and believe, you will have Him present. You will feel His patience calling you down out of the storm, and His meekness moving you to follow the One who has gone the same way before in all His saints. This is your Beloved, who now goes before you. Hear Him alone, and then you are faithful—that is, when you look for no other to be with you in all things, nor to redeem you out of all trials, except Him whom you love. And though the tempter should offer you relief some other way (for if he cannot drive you from the meek and

patient One by suffering and threats, he will then flatter and promise in order to draw you from Him), yet this is your faithfulness, that you abide in your trial until meekness and patience bring you out.

For whatever you seek to redeem you out of trouble, that will be your lord and master, and you will be its servant. Therefore, take heed that you acknowledge nothing for a helper besides Him who you desire to inherit; for he that makes flesh his strength inherits the curse, and the earth comes over him, and he must serve it. But stay your mind in the meekness of Christ, in His peace and patience, and you will receive the earnest of your inheritance in the day of trouble; and when you come out, none shall be able to take it from you, nor will any contrary nature be lord in you or over you. But the One in whom you have trusted shall rest upon you, and His glory shall cover you and become your life and your leader forever.

By being faithful in these trials, you shall both learn Christ and discover the wiles of Satan, and come to perfectly feel what each one has of his own ground in you to work upon, even by their present working in your minds. For that which thinks the sufferings hard, and the time long, is not to be trusted. This will work a distrust in the reasoning part, and tempt you to look out for freedom and ease by some visible help. And if it cannot prevail with you to hunt about for freedom, yet if any carnal way be opened, it will form a fair pretense as though it were of God, and seek to seduce you from the just and faithful One. Yes, it would eagerly keep you from your chaste waiting upon the One you love, taking advantage by your haste, weariness, and weakness in the journey. But that in you which seeks only to be obedient to God in suffering and acting, with faith and diligence, hearkening to what He says with all long-suffering, meekness, and patience, thinking it a greater thing to obtain counsel from Him than ease from another, counting nothing dear that you may win Him, thinking no time long, nor anything hard to endure for the joy and beauty that is set before you— *this*, I say, will never deceive you. And following it you shall feel and see your Redeemer in your midst, and with Him you shall arise and live. And He shall set you out of all darkness, and above all fears, and your freedom will be perfect and your inheritance large. But all who would not stay their minds on Him alone will be consumed in their fiery trials, which all their haste, ease, and distrust can never bring to an end.

And having learned this mystery of godliness and found the worth of it, and having found His way to be perfect and pure, and Him to be faithful to all who walk therein, you will be able to direct the simple and unlearned in the way to rest, and your words will have a manifestation of life in them, and His quickening power will be with you.

And this you shall feel along the way: that the more diligently you wait upon Him in all conditions you pass through, the more of Him you will receive, by drinking in the heavenly virtue that is in Him, and by supping with Him continually. Thus you will come to be filled with Him, and all haste and impatience and distrust will be covered and overcome by Him, and what is mortal will be swallowed up by immortality, till He becomes your whole life, and all your thoughts, words, and actions have their rise and being in Him. In this way, self will be seen no more, and neither death nor condemnation will have any entrance

or power. And this you will find to be the house from above, where all righteous spirits live and walk and have communion as they come to be perfected. This is that heavenly city, of which the Lamb is the light and salvation, and into which none may enter but those who through His meekness and long-suffering are ransomed.

So with all diligence, sink down to feel the election, not minding that part in you which boasts in lofty words before it is tried; for when it comes into the fire it will not patiently stand in the trial. But giving that part up to death, seek for that which lies beneath it in suffering, that which calls you down from every lofty thought. Come down into the low valley with Him who bears all things without complaining, so that with Him you may suffer, and with Him you may learn to obey. And when He is with you in all things, and you are with Him, then you will know the election, and “make it sure to yourselves”¹ in life and in death. And though you are brought down with Him in the flesh, yet He shall raise you up in the Spirit; though you are sown weak, yet you shall be raised in power. In this way you will be changed by Him, if you are careful to arise only with Him, as He raises you, and if you do not cast off His yoke nor flee His cross, nor heal your own wound. For though your wound be mortal, yet the cure is immortal; and though you go down in shame and reproach, yet you will rise in glory, covered with immortal honor and eternal life, with power and strength to fulfill the will of God, and with “the answer of a good conscience.”² It is through this baptism and resurrection that you shall attain the prize, and so become one Spirit with Him who dwells in the light—one in death, in sufferings, in patience, in faith and in obedience.

For the light demands that righteousness be fulfilled, but the first birth does not have the power. Therefore, through the law the firstborn must lose his life³ (which law has power over the transgressor as long as he lives⁴), for the soul cannot be joined to Christ till he be dead to the law.⁵ So the law must kill the first birth (which is earthly) because of sin and disobedience; but that birth which is of the Spirit will live because of righteousness and obedience. In this way, the boasting nature is excluded, being concluded under sin, so that, through the mercy of God, the meek Seed may arise over all and fulfill all.

For the light says, “Love your neighbor as yourself;” but this the first birth cannot do, and so it is exposed and excluded. Therefore, the law lays hold of the life which lacks this love, and the creature must give it up to death that he may know the meek Spirit who gives the power of another life—one that has righteousness and obedience in it. And as the creature draws his mind and affections and faith away from the first birth (which has words without power), and gives these to the second birth, then the first begins to fall, wither, and die in that vessel. And as the heart is diligently set upon the second, so it arises in the

¹ 2 Peter 1:10

² 1 Peter 3:21

³ See Galatians 2:19

⁴ Romans 7:1

⁵ Romans 7:4

faith, and Christ raises the power of obedience in that vessel. Thus, as the new creature rises up through the law (fulfilling it), he also brings forth fruits above the law, against which there is no law. In this way, he who walks in the new covenant finds the power of obedience unto righteousness, and knows an end to the law. For, when that life which arose through disobedience (the transgressing nature, for which the law was added), is denied, dead, and buried, then the law becomes dead also. And He that fulfills the law in you is the same that gave it forth, who becomes the end of it in all who live in Him by faith. Such as these truly inherit righteousness as they put on His life through death.

So being faithful in the light you will learn the One who kills and makes alive, who casts down and raises up, who condemns and justifies; and so you will know the way of death and the way of life, and will see who it is that is hardened by the law, and who fulfills it, and the life and end of both. And you will see the cause and the end of all the tribulations, earthquakes, thunders, darkness, and great temptations, and the trial of your faith herein will be as the refining of gold, and will bring you to inherit the knowledge of God and eternal life. Here you will find power to judge the prince of the air, to understand the mystery of iniquity, and to deny the god of this world with all his snares and traps wherein the unlearned professors of Christianity are caught and held captive at his will. Though some of these have an outward knowledge and form of the truth, in imitation of what others have learned, yet all of this you will be able to judge and comprehend. For he that is faithful and diligent unto the end of this great tribulation shall be made white and have judgment committed to him. Yes, he will be given the key of David's house, to bind and loose, and shall sit in the Lamb's throne of judgment and righteousness in heavenly places. Over such as these neither the grave nor hell shall have any dominion, nor shall their old iniquities have any more power, for the strength of sin is dead.

Therefore brethren, be faithful in the light when you come into this condition. Take heed of unbelief, and do not hurry out from under the refining hand, lest you tempt the Lord of your life and grieve His meek Spirit. For in this way many have provoked Him to leave off His chastening, and so their stains remain. These prove to be bastards and not freeborn children of His kingdom, power, and glory, and in time their old iniquities overtake them again.

For whatever of the old man comes out of the fire unconsumed, not being dead and buried in this baptism, will be like a continual canker seeking to spread, and like an enemy daily waiting his opportunity (upon all occasions) to rise up and overtake the pure plant of innocence, separating you from your Beloved. This will make void all your past sufferings, and let in old evils like a flood upon you, as has befallen many at this day. Therefore, be faithful to the end of all iniquity, the root as well as the branch. Thus your righteousness will arise clear and unspotted, and your old sins shall be buried, never to arise again—neither to accuse nor to reign. This is your victory over death.

And know this for certain (whatever others might imagine): that though the evil seed is sown when men sleep, and takes root through their pleasures, and springs up through their ease and delight, yet the end

thereof is bitterness and great tribulation. But the precious Seed is sown with tears, conceived in sorrow, and brought to light with sighing, nights of watching, days of mourning, and with much labor of spirit and travail of soul. For though the world has conceived a faith in the air, which brings forth nothing but various sorts of winds striving upon the earth (without foundation, and building nothing to perfection); yet it must not be so with you. For to you the true Light has sprung up which leads to the foundation of God, and you have received a faith which gives you a sight of that Stone which the builders cannot see. And to you it is given not only to believe in Him, but to suffer for His sake, and so to run as to win Him, and to strive as to obtain Him—that is, His name, His power, and His nature. For this your soul groans, longing to possess and inherit His power, His love, His meekness, His patience in all tribulations, His faith in all fears, and to have the power of His grace and virtue living in you whereby you may be rightly furnished for every good work.

Therefore, your work is to war against whatever would keep you from coming to this foundation and cornerstone. It is not beating the air that will fight your battle, but warring against all deceit and lofty notions, and all spirits that would possess your minds with words and forms without the power of righteousness. The true light gives ability to see all deceit, and all that lies under the power of sin (which are the subtle paths of the destroyer), and how nothing less than victory over sin and deceit will satisfy your souls. Yes, it is only *life* and *power* that can give you peace. Therefore, yours is an inward work, and not vain words, and that which strikes at the root of sin will be your best weapon. It is not flesh that profits you, but the Spirit that must quicken through hardship that which ease has slain, before you come to perfect peace.

For though the Scriptures speak of a Seed that is heir of all things, who gives His inheritance to all in whom He is formed, whose name is wonderful in counsel and strength—yet this Seed is not brought forth without hard labor and travail, and a passing through the pangs of death. For when (like Rebecca) you come to the Lord for counsel and find that there are two kinds of seed in the womb, then you will see that a great work is to be done before you can come to rest. Yes, before the Seed can reign the strong man must be bound, and he is strongly armed with all manner of wiles to save himself. It is not words and concepts that will “cast out the mother and son”⁶ who do not inherit the promise; yet this must be done, or all is in vain. For he that is born of flesh is in bondage to things below, and this birth cannot inherit immortality, for sin has power in it. So he must die, that the Son of Righteousness may arise and live in you, and bring your life to light with Him as He appears.

So being faithful in the light which comes from the Son, and which condemns all the lofty ways of the firstborn, you will be led into lowly ways which cross your life in the first birth. The Spirit will lead you through watchings and fastings, and great tribulations whereby the false birth must be famished; for in the leadings of the Spirit (through the wilderness) there is nothing for lust to live upon, nor a way for

⁶ Genesis 21:10; Galatians 4:30

man's wisdom to exalt itself, or seek its ease and pleasure. Therefore, be faithful to your Guide, however much the first birth (which must be destroyed) grumbles and rages in the way.

And with all diligence, press into that which calls home your wandering mind, and give heed with watching and wrestling to abide therein. As you are faithful in this, it will be enlarged until it becomes a habitation for your pure minds to dwell in and find rest, after having been tossed to and fro as in a wilderness. And by killing (through careful watchfulness) all that would draw you out, and by sinking down into humility and steadfast lowliness, you will come to feel the plant of God that brings forth this meekness and holiness, and the springs of living virtue. There you will meet the Lord in His kingdom on earth, where He delights to walk as in a garden. For indeed, His delight is in those who wait to feel His fellowship, and to receive His counsel in purity and coolness. And here He will let you see whatever might break His covenant with you, or lead you out from eternal life, and with His Spirit will lead you to war against it. Being faithful in this spiritual war you will not fail to have victory, till every encumbrance in your minds be cast out. Then heavenliness will become your quiet habitation, and in the meek Spirit you will feed upon heavenly food, which no ravenous earthly spirit can steal or devour from the soul.

And as you get an entrance into this heavenly mansion, diligently keep watch, and in the light stand armed against the thief, keeping out whatever of his would enter into your affections or desires, under whatever pretense. For if it enters into your affections, it will steal away your minds from this pure, innocent plant. This is adultery, treachery and harlotry, which you must wrestle against in the power of His love.

Therefore, with willingness of mind put off all old idols from your affections, whatever has any place there; for by allowing entrance to these through lust, the Son of Righteousness has suffered, and the innocent One has been crucified within. And until all that has risen up over the Righteous One in your affections be condemned and cast out, the Son of Righteousness will not arise into His kingdom, nor give you entrance into this holy habitation. For He must fulfill all righteousness before full enjoyment can be known, and this work is stopped wherever unrighteousness is retained and its seat in the heart is not condemned and cast out. So it is that many seek to enter but are not able, for the cursed thing (which has no place in God's kingdom) is not cast out. But righteousness has no fellowship with lawlessness, nor the temple of God with idols.

And this I say to you, which is an experienced truth in this journey: If you either retain your old lovers, or allow anything to enter your affections and draw out your minds from this pure plant of righteousness and truth, you shall in no way enter into the kingdom of heaven. For this is the way, and it must make your entrance. Therefore fight against whatever would draw you from it, and with violence break through and take the kingdom. For only he that has been faithful in the baptism of John (in order to fulfill all righteousness), shall receive power to press into the kingdom. And though you will find violent powers seeking to keep you out, these must be violently overcome with the Lamb through warfare. For the strong man, having gained a possession within, is not easily bound and cast out. His is a spiritual wickedness in

heavenly places, and so you must wrestle with a heavenly virtue contrary to him, and of a greater power, in order to get the victory.

So press into the heavenly Spirit and its power, in order to overcome the earthly spirit and its power. Strive earnestly in a meek spirit to obtain a measure of faith and patience that is larger than your temptation, and this will endure to the end of temptation, in a meekness and love that covers all strife and wrath, and with a longsuffering that will famish all haste, and whatever seeks its own ease. And so in all things, drink with desire of the heavenly virtue from above, whereby you may become strengthened with all might to withstand the assaults of the enemy, both within and without. And taking up the cross, learn to put on Christ Jesus—who is the great power of God unto salvation, and the wellspring of eternal life and glory—which is done by sinking down into the heavenly feeling of His life, which is contrary to the will of the first birth. Here you will be overshadowed from above, and can look for the Savior to overcome all things below.

And as you come into a feeling of these virtues, hold them fast till He comes who is the fullness; and with whatever measure you have, wrestle against all that would draw your minds out from it. For with your measure of Him you must make war against whatever is contrary thereto. And as you are faithful to abide in this measure, you will feel every high thing fall before you; for that which cleanses the vessel of all corruption is your weapon, and that which springs up of a pure nature is your life. So then, beholding this as it rises, and keeping your eye constant in the faith and hope of attaining His fullness, your work will be the work of love, your obedience will be delightful, all your sufferings will be made easy, and any loss of former glory will appear great gain to this eye. This is that faith which works by love and avails much with God, and when it is followed, it overcomes the world and sets free from it in all things.

Therefore, in the light seek to be led down into that life which is not of this world. Come unto Him who seeks not Himself, who finds no rest in things of the earth, who is rejected of men, denied of His own kindred, and forsaken of all. And as you come unto Him you will also come to be proved as to whether you will forgo all these things for Him alone, so that He may further appear in you and cover you with Himself—both with His contempt and reproach, and with His patient power to bear all. For only He can bear all things and never be moved, and so overcoming in Him you shall know the white stone and that rock which breaks the nations, but builds the house of God.

But in all your journey take heed of the adulterous mind, for it secretly devours the precious life. Take heed of that eye which looks outward, and do not give way to it for a moment; for if you consent to it upon any pretense whatsoever, you enter into covenant with it against the holy Seed, and destroy the chaste mind. So whether the bait be rough or smooth, hold it as an enemy, for that which gets in by consent must be got out by double the suffering to the delight it brought with it. But if you withstand it as an enemy by constant and patient resisting, it will flee and grow weaker upon every assault, and He that gives you the victory will grow greater in both your esteem and delight.

Therefore, do not think it strange (so long as any old leaven is within, not yet purged out) that the nearer you draw to God in the lowly, suffering meekness, the deeper you sink into tribulation, and your sufferings increase in the fleshly part, for this is the Son's way to perfection, and wondrous are the works of the Father learned in the deep. For by the hand of God upon you (being faithful in suffering to the end of sin), you shall come to see the root and offspring of all wickedness, how it came to be laid, and how the Lamb was slain, and what He truly is. And you will see and feel the foundation of God upon which the saints were raised up and built in the Spirit, and how all the chaff, hay, and stubble comes to be purged. Yes, His fan is in His hand, and the words of His mouth are a consuming fire to that chaffy nature, and it is He that refines the gold and quickens the soul, and divides the clean from the unclean. And the nearer you draw to God, the nearer He will draw to you in righteousness and judgment and truth, to make an end of sin and to bring in everlasting righteousness. For all who appear in His temple and are made His inheritance must pass through the refiner's fire, and know the fuller's soap, the end of all sufferings, and an entrance supplied into everlasting joy, purity, peace, and the weight of eternal glory, to which there is no other way but through affliction.

But as you come down to the foundation of God, watch with all fear and diligence, that nothing exalt you, or lift you up in mind, conceit, or comprehension, above that foundation which you are being built upon. For many temptations of haste will present themselves, with fears and distrust, to get you off the foundation of life. But if you keep lowly, steadfast and faithful to the measure of life, you shall be raised together with it out of the pit, and be set above the earth. For to this end the foundation of life is laid within you, that you may be built in Spirit upon it, and made like the cornerstone—not the same that goes down, but the new man rising up. But none knows the way of his rising, except as he keeps to the foundation and minds the cornerstone, which as you diligently mind you shall know the sure foundation of the holy city, even from the Word of the beginning of Christ, as you grow to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance, and of faith towards God, the doctrines of baptisms, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

And as you come to be edified upon the foundation of life and power, you will be led out of the dominions of death, and will learn where death has its power, and by what it reigns, and how it captivates the Seed, and how its bonds are broken, and how the one who has the power of death is overtaken and chained. So you will come to see what binds and what looses, what kills and makes alive. And you will come to know the life of the law, the life of the prophets, the life of the apostles, having fellowship with them in the same Spirit, and inheriting the same promise as you come to the Word of God (which endures from generation to generation) for the fulfilling of the promise.

Indeed, this is the end of all travail of soul in the righteous men and women here below, who return in peace to Him that made them, clothed with their heavenly house. For this prize they count all things here below as loss, casting off their earthly pleasures and mortifying every affection thereto, walking as strangers to these things while here, knowing that love of earthly things is an enemy to their spiritual

ascending, and that the earthly, adulterous spirit daily hunts to devour the precious life and to keep the soul in things below. Yes, this spirit daily presents its carnal delights, and opens the paths of the destroyer with pleasures to the carnal eye. Whoever joins with it cannot ascend into the heavenly inheritance, but instead goes daily downward with the dark world, who are degenerated from the life of God and estranged from it even from the womb. These are never able to attain the knowledge of God, nor in truth and righteousness to call Him Father. For of this they are willingly ignorant: that just as no man has ascended up to heaven but He that came down from heaven, so neither shall any man ascend, but he who is born not of the corruptible seed, but begotten by the Word of God which lives and abides forever.

But with you it is not so, who feel the heavenly motion drawing your minds out of all earthly delights, and who taste the heavenly life overcoming your earthly affections, so that you die daily to the world. And you feel something coming to life in you that cannot feed on earthly pleasures, but hungers after righteousness, and sees a beauty in holiness, and thirsts daily after heavenly virtue. You who have tasted these things, now sink down to their Source, to the Seed which yet lies in suffering; hunger with it, suffer with it, and join to it in all its counsel, so that with it you may be raised. For this is on the foundation of God, and coming to Him as a living stone, you will be built on the same foundation, the same Spirit being your head, by whose arising all the veils will be done away—the veil of death, the veil of the law, and the veil of the prophets. Thus the whole mystery of godliness will be unsealed, and the way to heaven opened by Him—even the slain Lamb—who gives power to you from the midst of the throne of God if you join to Him in both His sufferings and His ascendings. It is He who makes a way between heaven and earth, and keeps it open in all who mind Him and possess their vessels in holiness and fear towards God, so that nothing shall hinder their prayers from coming to the throne of God, nor the dew and blessing of heaven from falling upon the Seed. Here you will experience the heavens opened, and a way of grace and salvation for the wayfaring man to walk in. And if you wholly exercise your minds in this way, you shall not err, nor shall anything be able to hinder you from receiving gifts from the Father—so long as nothing of a contrary nature stops His own plant from arising to Him in praises, and you with it.

So let nothing cut off your communion with God in the measure you already have received; but let the breathings of your souls and your hearts be continually open towards Him. In this way you will not only receive from Him, but will become faithful improvers of what you have by the blessing that is in the covenant with all who love Him and dwell in the light. For where the citizenship is truly in heaven, there the earth becomes fruitful.

Therefore, give all diligence that nothing entangles your affections here below, or stops your heavenly mind from its constant ascending. For the spirit of bondage waits upon you continually to oppose the heavenly life, and to rise above it in your mind, and it gains power by letting in some carnal thing upon you to press you down and become a weight to beset you in your way, and stop up the way of life. For that which comes from heaven should find free passage through a clean vessel to water the heavenly seed—a vessel free from cares, encumbrances, and earthly pleasures, which has access from earth to the heavens.

For that which comes down from above is what shows to man his way and his needs, and teaches to pray, and receives an answer, and by this alone God works all His works in you and for you. But if you join to another, and give the strength of your heart and mind to His enemy, then the work of God ceases, for the way of life is stopped up. For the adulterer, the covetous, the idolater, the careless, the slothful, or whatever of that nature you join to, your consent gives it strength to stop the way of life, and this becomes your condemnation, witnessed in the light, for this is how death gained its power at first.

For the serpent cannot be head in man except where he is hearkened to, let in, or obeyed. Being resisted he flees, but being let in he seats himself in the heavenly place with much astuteness and power, and is not easily expelled, nor recognized for what he is. So when you feel your way darkened, or your affections grow cold towards heaven, then take heed with all diligence to search with the pure light; for your enemy has got some entrance. By faithful and patient waiting in the light, you will come to see your adversary, and through the power of the cross you will kill that life, and cast out the womb in which it was conceived—for the child of flesh must not abide in the house with Him that is heir of the heavenly inheritance, but is an enemy to His coming. This is “that which restrains, until it is taken out of the way,”⁷ which, while it is in the way, dulls the affections and clogs the heavenly mind so that it cannot ascend.

Therefore, that which you have received of the Holy One—His anointing—hold fast till He comes, and with it stand armed against whatever would enter to lead you out into any outward observations. With all diligence observe that which you have received of Him in Spirit, which the adversary seeks so much to draw you from, to prevent an increase of your Lord’s talent. In your measure maintain your daily watch, and make war using what you have of life and power, and not with what you do not have. In this way you will be accounted faithful stewards, and will be accepted in what you have, and not in what you do not have. For the world lies in darkness, and so they wait for what they do not know. They have no ground for their faith, nor power to prepare the way for His coming, but only words which they have heard from others, or from their own carnal conceivings. These are not in Him who is true; but you are in Him who is true, and have received His light, and walk in it so as to observe His appearance in all things. And you know the messenger of His covenant, “who goes before His face to prepare His way,”⁸ turning your hearts from every evil way, and out of the paths of the destroyer. Thus you will be fruitful upon earth, and He will receive you unto Himself when He comes to smite the earth with a curse—the earth which brings forth briars and thorns, whose seed is not of Him (His root and offspring), but is begotten in the adulterous mind.

For the mind feeding from without upon any religious knowledge, form, or observation (except what the life leads into in Spirit and power) is the ground of the mystery of iniquity, and the sin of witchcraft, which hunts for the precious life of the holy Child, seeking to draw your strength and affections from Him

⁷ 2 Thessalonians 2:7

⁸ Malachi 3:1

after the harlot, so that He may be daily buried and crucified in your hearts and affections. For whenever your lust goes out after another (though covered by a fair pretense), there the worldly spirit daily gathers strength, as all will feel who are watchful and diligent in the spiritual war. So shall your love wax cold, and iniquity will abound with irresistible power, regardless what you may think to the contrary, or believe without that faith which works by love towards the life of truth.

Therefore, let your wrestling be for the power and life of God, and feed thereupon, so that your life endures forever, and your strength and virtue are daily renewed. You have read of those who had the “form of knowledge” and the “form of truth,”⁹ but being out of the life of truth, they held the truth in unrighteousness. Though they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God in the life, and so were given up to their vain imaginations, and could not retain the life by their knowledge, but turned the truth of God into a lie. So we see that their knowledge could not keep them from being filled with unrighteousness, for they stood not in the life and power of righteousness, nor received the truth in that faith which loves to live the life of it.

Therefore, let your food be *the life* of what you know, and rejoice in *the power* of obedience, but do not rejoice in what you know but cannot live. For the life is your soul’s bread, which crucifies the flesh and confounds all that runs before the cross. So let your labor and diligence be in that which presses into the heavenly life, and seeks a conformity to Christ in obedience to what you believe. Do not listen to that mind which would save your life, and feed you as you are; but listen (in love) to that which separates you from self-life and changes you into the image of the One you wait for from above. Yes, receive His commands in that part which loves to be like Him, and so your faith will work by love, and His commands will be joyous through love. This faith works obedience, life, and willingness; it works out the old and works into the new. And through a hope fixed on the One you love, and through the obedience of faith, an entrance is made with the life into the holy kingdom, and the immortal glory is put on, which is seen in the light, and obtained in the life. And through the Word of faith a separation is made, and the first birth is put off, whose life is outside the veil and given over to death. But the other life makes an entrance through His blood, and through His flesh. This is the living way, or way of life, which is new to all who have been seeking the door in old ordinances and traditions and outward observations, feeding their minds with thinking or talking about what others experienced long ago, or what may take place in times to come. These weary themselves to find the door without the Light of life (which is not of this world), but they are outside of that life which has the promise of the Father, and power to access Him, remaining in the lusts of the flesh and in that nature which loves itself and works iniquity.

But as you are careful only to feed upon the plant of life, you will come to know the work of the Father in His vineyard, and you will see who the faithful laborer is, and what his work must be. And you will also see the slothful servant, and what his work brings forth, and the reason why the field of the lazy servant

⁹ Romans 2:20

is overgrown with evil fruits, and why his vine does not bring forth fruit to perfection. For you will find many plants besides the tree of life, all of which seek to be fed and strengthened in the mind and in the affections. Yes, you will find many tall and strong trees, which have got deep rooting, and which spread and bring forth abundantly after their various kinds. All of these present themselves to the eye of the mind, to be fed from there, which is like fetching food from afar, without which they cannot live long, but must pine away and fall. For these trees will die as the affections and mind are withdrawn from such objects as feed them.

So the work of him that is faithful is to deliver all these to the axe and to the fire, and not to allow them any place in the mind, however strongly they may tempt or spread their roots to stay alive. For it is through the death of these that the Lord's vine may grow alone, in clean affections and a holy mind, and in an honest, chaste heart, which is the good ground. Here the pure plant will bring forth its increase in all things, where it is not encumbered by that which is contrary to it. But the lazy servant condemns the fruit but is not diligent to dig up the root, and thus it keeps daily growing till the good ground is overspread. These are they who know what to do but are never able to abide therein, for their life has been lost in the midst of this wilderness, and overgrown with wild plants.

But you, being diligent in your watch, will see that there is a cause for all your troubles and confusion; for you will find many plants of various kinds in the heart (for the world is in the heart of man, and the heart of man is in the world, as he is driven out from God). Now every plant has its particular life, and every life has its particular feeding, all of which you may feel in the light by their different temptings to lead out your minds. And though they have various motions and live upon various objects, you will find that if even the least of them is fed by a consent in your mind, it will overrun the vine, and in time bury it, by growing up in your affections. Therefore all must come down, that truth alone may arise in your affections, and the Word of life have place in your hearts, who is too pure than to dwell in the adulterous mind. For His eye cannot behold iniquity, and has no communion with darkness, nor fellowship where any idol stands in His temple.

So then, labor in that faith which overcomes the world and allows nothing of it to take place in your minds. And with the Spirit of life, watch and wrestle against every lust, and kill every affection that would go out seeking its food; for when the affections run out, they betray the innocent One, and the pleasures of the flesh are like a canker that eat out the holy and just life. But by faith, the just One will live in you, and by faithfulness He will judge and make war against all of His enemies.

And in this work, be careful what you follow. Follow nothing rashly, but prove all things with fire. That which will not endure temptation or bear the cross is the nature of the adulteress, who will look outward in every direction for ease; and the serpent will present many plausible ways under fair pretenses, which she that desires to live at ease will hastily hearken to. But if you hearken to these you will betray the work of life (which is being brought forth in hard travail and labor), for where ease and sloth are consented to,

the life is slain in the birth, and it is by living at ease and in pleasure that the life has been slain and kept under from the beginning of the world. Yes, by the pursuit of pleasures the elect Seed has been lost in man, and covered over by the seed of wickedness which God hates, and which wars according to the flesh and lusts after the flesh in order to grow strong and arise above the holy, spiritual Seed.

But being careful to make sure to yourselves that which calls you, and being obedient thereto, it will lead you down by the power of the cross through all that has risen up above the pure life, until you feel the election, and a separation is made between that which God chooses and that which God condemns. In this way you will come to know to what you must join, and from what you must withdraw, in order to be workers together with Him, and not against Him. For the subtle one makes men work against their salvation until, by the light, a separation is made, and by joining in faith and obedience to the workings of God, the elect Seed arises and is known.

And once you feel the innocent life begin to move in you under its oppression, then give yourselves no rest until the strong man bows. For the Seed of promise must be redeemed out from under the enemy's power with great plagues upon that nature and will. And, like Pharaoh, if he is given some rest, he will not let Israel go from under his power. But if you keep with the Spirit, and bow very low, He will let you see what plagues must be poured out upon the enemy until he is brought down, so that a little child may lead him and reign over him, and he that was oppressed by the beast may ride him. For that nature gained strength and became head in you by having its lusts fulfilled, and so it must be subdued by having its lusts famished. But those who are unfaithful to the Seed of God in this work sell their birthright, betray their own redemption, and are found deceitful workers against God and against their own souls.

Therefore, do not run with that which is in haste, but lie down in that which is meek, lowly and patient, and is willing to wait the Father's time, and seeks to obtain by the obedience of faith, and not in the will that would have its own way. For there is a nature which runs out for help, and roams abroad in search of satisfaction; but God desires to famish it. This will seek to lead the mind, and if it is followed, will search about and murmur when it is not satisfied. So it must suffer hunger and feel the Lamb's wrath and all the plagues upon its head whichever way it turns, until it bows and comes under, which it will not do till it is weakened with famine and wearied upon the mountains of prey. But then the lion shall lie down with the lamb, and the little child shall lead to rest, and no ravenous beast shall take his food.

But in this work, take heed you are not deceived by that subtle spirit to run to the one hand or to the other—that is, either into eagerness and haste, (which is the first temptation after one is convinced of the truth), or else, when you do not achieve your end in this way, into laziness and idle carelessness—for both of these keep the wrong spirit alive and strong above the Seed. But there is a narrow way between these two errors, in which the Seed arises, and that is a diligent, watchful, patient meekness, feeling after the moving of the godly Seed of life, and following it in faith and obedience in all things without haste or goals, further than what is opened before you in the life of obedience. You must be constantly

diligent, lest anything slip out of your mind which has been freely given, either for practice or teaching; for only the diligent mind holds the true and living treasure, but the slothful and disobedient are like leaking vessels.

So be wise in the light, and prove your freedom from that nature which is high and fierce and hasty, and has risen above the meekness; for herein stands your perfect redemption: to know that you are no longer servants to that nature. For this is the nature that greedily seeks after worldly things, and fears and distrusts whenever it does not have in its sight and possession the thing it lusts after. And if it is convinced of an inheritance in heaven, it will seek that also in great haste by sight, but not through faith, patience and obedience. And when it is unable to bring the heavenly inheritance into its own sight, in its own way and time, then it is ready to faint and distrust, for it will never allow itself to be stripped of all things in the hope of an inheritance it has not seen. So those in this nature remain in bondage, and are not heirs of the promise. But the just live by faith, and their birth is free from this world, and their redemption is out from one nature into the leadings of the other, which will bring them to the inheritance of the purchased possession.

So prove your freedom in all things, that you may not glory in vain, but in the liberty of sons. Do not say, "All things are lawful, all things are pure," etc., and so sit down and say you are redeemed and have a right to all. Instead, first pass through all things, one after another, just as the light leads you, and according to your true measure see if you are still under the power of any. When you have proved this with all things, and found yourself to be free, then you may say, "All things are lawful,"¹⁰ and also know what is beneficial, and what truly edifies both yourselves and others, and the rest you can reign over without being in bondage to it. This is the liberty of the sons of the new creation, who are born again and are not in bondage; whose liberty is glorious above all visible things. These are the pure, to whom all things are pure, for they have proved all things with that which is pure, and hold fast only that which is good, and are free from the rest.

And be ever careful that, whatever freedom you obtain through the sufferings and patience of Christ in Spirit, you do not part with it to please the flesh, but hold it fast as your everlasting possession purchased for you. Yes, that which was dearly purchased, let it not lightly go; but remember Israel, who was redeemed out of Egypt with great hardship and many signs and sufferings, but soon something rose up in haste which said, "Let us return back again,"¹¹ which grieved God above all. This very thing you will find ready to rise up in you upon every hardship and sense of lack, as it was with them. Therefore stand fast in that which you have proved to be liberty indeed, and by no means look back nor lust for that which is behind, and so let it overtake you again. Remember Lot's wife! The wrath of God will ever be upon that mind which looks back into old things that were judged in the light, and led out of by the life. So stand

¹⁰ 1 Corinthians 6:12; 10:23

¹¹ Numbers 14:4

single in your minds to follow nothing new or old, but what the Holy Spirit leads into; for the work is a work you know not, and the way is a way you know not, except as these are learned in the obedience. For God's work is not seen in the first nature, but only as the soul is purified and cleared by purging out the old earthly leaven which has darkened the temple of God.

Therefore give all diligence to the Spirit's motion and leadings, what it moves against, and what it leads to. For now God will make all things new: a new creation, a new heavens and a new earth, a new heart and mind, a new law, and a new man to walk therein with his Maker in cheerfulness, as the old bonds are broken by the Spirit's leading, to serve in newness of Spirit. And as you mind the pure leadings of the Spirit, and willingly follow and obey, you will come to know your Creator in the days of your youth, and how He made the worlds by the Word of His holiness, and how He is your Father, and how He begets you again into heavenly joys, though you had gone out from Him into the earth with your heart and affections, and will be led out still further from God if you look to the earth. For man can never come unto God except he die and be changed by the Spirit, so that the new creature is accepted by God—the new heart and mind and spirit, which are renewed after the image of God, by the Spirit that creates them.

But this work will be darkened to your understanding unless your minds come clear out of the old, into the new. For wrath will arise, and confusion will abound in the mind that is double, where the eye is not kept single, looking only to the Spirit, but instead looks back into what is lost, dying, and condemned. There you will find nothing but smoke, darkness, torment, and temptations, enticing you back into the old. But if your eye is kept single, then the whole body is full of light, and true faith arises to endure to the end of the world, looking to the beginning and finishing of the work of regeneration. And standing single unto God in this way, though the world pass away with thundering, earthquakes, and a mighty noise, yet you will not fear or faint, abiding in the meek, patient, and suffering spirit, and in the leadings of that Spirit which endures all things to win Christ. And so coming out of Babylon, you shall not fall with her, nor be darkened with the smoke of her torments and plagues, as all that abide in her must be; but the pure mind rejoices over her in the midst of all.

Chapter VI

Love to the Lost

And a Hand held forth to the Helpless

to Lead out of the Dark

Wherein is plainly held out: Several particular things, as they are learned of Christ; and are most needful to be known by all who profess godliness; Set forth chiefly to direct the simple into the living way of Truth, as it is in Jesus Christ the Righteous, that therein they may come to the life and power of that which the world has only in words; which being received, satisfies the weary soul, and makes the creature well-pleasing to his Maker.

*We have found Him whom our soul loves;
And greater is He in us than he that is in the world.*

Let Him that Reads Understand

Friends, the following things which I have declared are not things of man, nor did I receive them by man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ, which is contrary to the wisdom and will of man. Nor do I commend them to be received by the wisdom and will of man, for the natural man's wisdom receives not the things of the Spirit of God, and would eagerly devour that which is born thereof. So to that wisdom I do not appeal, and it is a small thing to me to be judged thereby. But if anyone knows the gift of God, and a measure of that Spirit which opens the bosom of the Father and reveals His secrets to babes, the least measure of that (if not clouded with imaginations) will savor these things, and to such they may be profitable. So to the light of Christ in all (that which changes not, and is one in both male and female) I present this to be judged and discerned. For only in the light will both these things, and all others that proceed from the Root, work to gather together into that one Name and Seed wherein all the nations of the earth are blessed. Yes, it is by the light of Christ that men are gathered into the one Word of faith and power of life, to believe and speak the same things in godly conduct, which leads to the end of all schisms, heresies and errors, sects and divisions, and to be baptized into the one name, where the fullness of God is blessed forever.

So whoever you are who shall read the following particulars, and shall find anything therein which for the present you cannot receive; be not hasty in judging what you do not yet know, nor kick against that which seems contrary to your will, lest you put far from you (in your own will) that which you may not be able to call to you again, and lest the day of your visitation pass over unaware, and in the day of trial you are made to cry out, "How I have hated instruction, and resisted the day of healing!"

And know this: that no prophesy of old came by the will of man, nor could it be received by the will of man; but it was ever resisted by those who stood in their own wills, and so it will be in these things, unless you read them with the eye that never changes. And if you know such an eye in you, and stand single therein in the meek Spirit, not lifted up above your measure, you will come to feel how the gift of God in you answers to the things of God, as face answers to face in a mirror. And you will find them also

to agree with the life of the Scriptures, though for the present some things may appear darkly; for my service is unto that seed which is not of this world, which savors spiritually and judges not according to outward appearance.

Concerning the Fall of Man

In the beginning God made all things good. Man too was created good, in the image of God, who placed in him His own wisdom and power, whereby man was completely furnished with dominion, power and authority over the works of God's hands, knowing the nature and use of each creature because of that which God had placed in him of Himself. In this state, Adam was a son of God, whose seed was in himself.

God also placed the tree of life in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and both of these were good in their place, but the tree of knowledge was not good for food. Therefore, He that made it forewarned them of feeding upon it, as being that wherein they would find death, even as in the other tree there was life. Herein was the blessing and the curse, the life and the death, the obedience and the disobedience, the election and reprobation. All of this was good in its place, while man stood in his place, guided by Him who placed him in the good, and forewarned him of the knowledge, and gave him power against it. Yes, he was safe while he stood in that will which had set all these things in their place, which will was free for God, and free from sin; and here the will of God and the will of man were one, and so were at unity with all the creation.

But when man looked out of his domain (to where one ruled who abode not in the truth), then disobedience was received in, and that which was contrary to the will of God was fed upon, and so man joined to that which was contrary, wherein there is weakness, death, darkness and blindness with respect to the things of God and what he had received of Him. Then man grew subtle within himself, and wise to do evil. He lost the will that was free to wait upon God for wisdom and counsel to be freely carried forth by Him; and so fell from uprightness and innocence, and pure wisdom and spiritual power, which God had placed in his heart, into self-ends and inventions which he had chosen in the contrary will. Thus, entering into the forbidden thing, he became accursed, lost his measure of God's grace, lost God's honor and likeness in which he had stood above the creation, and so became brutish in his understanding, and as to the things of God, became as the beasts that perish. For indeed, he lost the Seed wherein the election, the wisdom, the authority, and all happiness (present and eternal) does consist, and so became led by another seed, which God had cut off from Himself, and permitted to rise up for dishonor.

Here it is that man lost his dominion over the devil, by letting him in, who otherwise never had power further than to offer and tempt. But now, having got into the temple of God, the principal part in man (by a show of God and godliness), man has joined with him and become his captive, in whom the devil makes havoc, beguiling him of the life of simplicity and godliness, and perverting the ways and ends for which

man was made. And sin now having risen above and become ruler in the heart, even the mercies of God given to the creature are used for the lust that is carnal and selfish, to which man has become a slave. Alas, man has so lost his dominion that he is made a slave to the creation over which he formerly was ruler.

So it is that men have become slaves and are captivated, some with covetousness, some with pride, some with lust and many other things. Yes, these become lords in the heart, whereby he hurries with all eagerness out of all moderation and hunts after vanity and folly. Oh, what vain toys and foolish trifles have led away the heart of man from the pure wisdom of his God, till he scarce knows any end of chasing after changeable things, gluttony and excess in diet (though he is never satisfied), foolery in apparel without check or restraint, being wholly fallen from that which is unchangeable, and from true satisfaction and honor. And the further a man goes into this state, the more emptiness and darkness comes in upon him; and being fallen under the earthly nature he is covered with thick darkness, so that he knows neither the mind of God nor his own woeful state, for the god of this world has blinded the eye which would show him his misery, and stopped the ear which would hear the voice of the soul's shepherd, whereby he would be quickened. Yes, his eye and his ear are led out into carnal things and there taken captive, so that the voice of the Spirit he knows not.

So then, having become blind of heart, such cannot receive the way of the Spirit, and whatsoever is spoken to a man in this state (in love to his soul which lies in death), the serpent (having risen above in the man) seeks to steal into the imaginations, whereby the creature is led to consult with him in the flesh. In this way, man is beguiled of the simplicity and kept in self, so that he regards not the Seed of God which is pressed down under all this death and darkness. And so long as the creature will hearken to the serpent and his lying promises, he will be led from one outward thing to another, but never to see that from which he has fallen.

Thus Christ and all His ministers preach repentance to those who are in this state, that all might turn their minds from these dead works to the living God, who is a Spirit, who is known and worshipped in Spirit, whose kingdom is within, and whose light is in the midst of all this darkness, though the darkness does not comprehend it. And as many as repent of following the way of self-wisdom and knowledge, and come to stand still, to such He shows His salvation and His kingdom near at hand (though the serpent tells his followers it is far off). And as the mind is stayed to wait for the kingdom of God in Spirit, the god of the world is thereby denied and resisted; and as the mind is stayed in the light, no longer hearkening to what is earthly, the soul which lies in death comes to hear the voice of the Son of God, and to receive life and strength from the Word, whereby it is raised out of the grave, above the earthly part, to receive from the Father the dew of heaven, whereby it is nourished and refreshed. And as man beholds the seed growing, so he comes to see the new creation and to understand what he lost in the fall, and so is restored by the power of the Word, the Son of God, into His dominion, power and purity, and made able to resist the devil, to choose the thing that is good and delight in it, even as before he delighted in the contrary. Thus man comes to be reconciled to his maker in the eternal unity beyond what words can express. For

the wisdom and power received from above sets the heart free from corruption, enabling it to escape the pollutions of the world, and to run in the pure path with delight, which is the glorious liberty of the sons of God, the resurrection in Christ from the death in Adam, and the entrance into the everlasting rest.

And now, all who find yourselves fallen from your dominion, from that measure of God's gift which He has placed in man, and now find yourselves led captive by the evil one into the ways of death, sin and evil, so that corruption has dominion in you and over you; never look to be restored by that which led you out, for that power which acts in the flesh is only evil continually. This will lead you from mountain to hill, in self, in emptiness, without life and power, seeking to heal yourselves in false persuasions, but will not stand in the day of trial, for all of this is found in the first man with his righteousness. But you must look to that from which you have fallen, and return into that from which you have gone out, that by the light that is in the midst of all this darkness and death you may be led up again by the blood of the cross, through the fire and the sword, into the garden of God, where He plants and feeds, and where the old man (with all his will and works) cannot enter, nor can he whose leader is any visible thing. For man has fallen and gone out from the Spirit, and so by the Spirit he must be led in again; and that Seed which man has sinned against must make the peace, which Seed is free, and sets all free, as they are born of it.

Concerning Light and Life

God is the life of every creature, though few there be that know it; for the darkness sees neither Him nor His life, though the children of darkness may speak His words from the Scriptures, which were given forth from the light. Yet such as these know not God to be present, for the first appearing of God in the world is by light: God said, "Let there be light," and it was so. And God saw that this light was good. This is that which was in the beginning with God, and was the Word, by which all things were made and seen, and without this nothing was made that was made, nor was anything seen to be good. Now darkness was over the face of all the waters until the light shone from the Word, who is life, which life is said to be "the light of men."¹ So that none can see the life except by the light which both comes from the life and leads back to it. This was the light in the beginning, given to keep in order all the creation. And though it shines in darkness, the darkness does not comprehend it; and all who abide in darkness (not discerning the life or being ordered and governed by light) are destroyed.

For all that go out of the light go into the darkness, where the life and image of God are lost. Here is the fall, and all who abide here are reserved in chains of darkness, not knowing the life which can break the bonds and chains of iniquity and open the grave and the prison door. Here the soul remains in death with darkness risen above in man; and in this darkness the creature is led into sects, opinions and errors, chasing imaginations and running in his sensual wisdom further into death and darkness, till he is so

¹ John 1:4

blinded in his understanding that he thinks he does God service when he is acting against the life of God, both in himself and others. Hereby the creature comes wholly to be lost, and the gospel which could recover him is hid from his eyes. For though God did furnish the soul with a measure of life whereby to do His will, yet now the god of this world has so blinded the mind, and so far alienated him from the life of God, that he has neither power nor life to do the will of God, nor light to know where to find it. But though he lacks life, the creature will continue in a profession of religion, or some other lofty notion, in order to keep a vain hope of salvation.

Here is the sole ground and cause why there are so many sorts of religious forms and opinions and ways to worship, but none that do good, or live in what they say, because all have lost the life of God, which alone is able to bring forth the righteousness of God. Self takes hold of the outward form of religion and holds it in the imagination above the life; and the life (which lies oppressed beneath) cannot unite with the form, but instead condemns it. So that all the world lies in darkness; yes, thick darkness is upon all the seas; and from here imaginations have spread over all, so that none can witness the work of God, neither do they know the beginning or end thereof. This is the cause of condemnation, and it rests upon all who have gone out of the life of God.

Now, there is no other way appointed of the Father to come out of this condition but by Christ Jesus, the light and life of men. He is the light that is in the world, though the world knows Him not; which light shines in darkness but cannot thereby be comprehended. This light is the revealer of darkness, and manifests the deeds thereof. Its very first appearance in the creature shows the darkness of his condition and the captivity that exists in the darkness; and without its shining, the creature can never see the wretched condition that man is in (without the life of God), nor be willing to stand still to see God's salvation, but instead is full of vain hopes, notions, and imaginations, the veil being over his heart, thinking himself to be whole, and not in need of the Physician. And with this blind heart the creature reads the Scriptures and steals the promises that are spoken to the children of light (who have the Seed to whom the promise was made), though they know neither the law nor the Gospel. No, they have not come so far as Moses, though they go on boasting of Christ.

But when the light is minded, the creature comes to see that death is yet reigning, and that self is alive without the law. And with this light, all that has risen up above the life in the creature, and defiled the soul, is seen and judged. And here, that which has brought the soul into bondage can be seen, and the hardness of heart can be felt, and the cause of it known—even the great transgression of God's pure law. Then the fear of God comes to take hold of the man that has lived outside the life of God and taken pleasure in unrighteousness, and the creature finds great trouble within, even where the strong man had formerly kept a sort of peace in his house. But abiding in the light, the cause and end of these things are seen; and dwelling in the fear, wisdom is received from above to depart from iniquity; and in departing from the iniquity, there is a drawing nearer to God, so that His light grows and springs, as there is a coming nearer to the just paths of life. And as light arises yet further, the state of the creation is discerned,

how enmity has spread over, how lust has defiled it, and how that which was planted a vineyard has become a wilderness for barrenness, grown over with thorns and briars, strong oaks and tall cedars, for lack of the Vine-dresser. Yes, where the lily should grow, the soul is overgrown with weeds, thistles, and nettles, so that God will not walk in the midst of so great an abomination. And this is the cause of all of your woes—even His absence.

And when you can see this, then lamentation begins in the house of laughter, even a mourning for Him from whom you have fallen. But as you follow the light, and come nearer to the Lord from which it comes, you will see that it has been your own wills and ways that have separated you from the Holy One. And with the light you will realize how often you have been checked by the Spirit of light in the course of your evil ways; and that the only cause why you have remained thus long in the fall is because of self-will and worldly pleasures, whereby the life of Christ within has suffered. Not before this can any man see the One whom they have pierced, nor lament over Him, nor see what it is that oppresses the Righteous One; nor can they hate what God hates and love what God loves in any degree. Instead, they join to that which destroys the soul and robs it of life, being high-minded and lofty, having mouths that speak great things, swelling words of vanity, empty brass, giving a pleasant sound to the carnal ear, but have no evidence of the life of God or its work.

Concerning Righteousness

The righteousness which God accepts is but one, which is His own, perfectly fulfilled and manifest in Christ Jesus, the light and Savior of the world. This righteousness is not of the world, nor can the world inherit it except as they believe in the light of Christ, which God has given to lead out of the world unto Christ, where God's righteousness is. Though there be many talkers of this righteousness, yet none inherit it further than they receive the Son of righteousness by faith, and with Him His righteousness is freely imputed, being put into the creature as a free gift from the Father. And with this righteousness the creature is truly made righteous, even as He is righteous, according as the measure of light from Christ is received, and no further—the light which condemns all self-acting regardless of pretense, so that “as He was so are we in this present world.”²

So he who abides in this righteousness, abides in that which denies self and the world, and lives in obedience to that which is contrary to man’s will, and so is everywhere spoken against. For the will of man works not the righteousness of God; but God’s righteousness is wrought in the creature in that obedience which is contrary to the will of the flesh. And in the faith which comes from the eternal Spirit there is a new begetting, both of the will and of the deed, so that what comes forth is Spirit and life. So

² 1 John 4:17

far as any have this righteousness, they do not lie under sin, nor give place to the devil, but know it to be a breastplate against all assaults on the right hand and on the left.

But you say your righteousness is as filthy rags. I grant it; but why do you abide in that? God's righteousness is not filthy rags. Therefore, cease from your own righteousness, and know that which is perfect, even the everlasting righteousness in which all His saints have been gathered into Himself. For God will receive nothing but what is His own, and it must be yours also, else you cannot be received into Him. It is in vain that you plow wickedness and sow iniquity, and still think to reap righteousness.

With the light you may see what it is that works in you, and to what you are yielding yourselves as servants. And as you obey this righteousness, you shall see the spiritual man raised and living, and the bonds of death broken, and that life which gives power over hell and death. Then may you say, "the Spirit is life because of righteousness."³

But many have made Christ's righteousness a cover for their abominations. What wickedness now exists among the nations for which Christ's righteousness has not been called a cover? Yes, men bless themselves with a notion of Christ's righteousness while they live in the greatest iniquity. But know this: it is to cover your wickedness, pride, and covetousness that your teachers invented this faith, saying it is sufficient to believe in a righteousness that you read about in the letter (though you are not obedient to it in spirit). But those who are not servants of righteousness are no servants of Christ's; and your faith, without His works, will be of little worth towards your salvation. And this your consciences will one day witness: You can no more inherit righteousness, or be made "the righteousness of God in Christ"⁴ further than you know the power of His righteousness working in you, and you acknowledging it by obedience and subjection, and joining to it against all unrighteousness.

And at that day when He comes to separate the precious from the vile, then you will see what worth your notions of righteousness have, when the worker of iniquity is found and judged who has boasted of Christ's righteousness in words, but known not its power. For by the power and purity of righteousness all the workers of iniquity shall be judged and condemned. So do not deceive yourselves: "he that works righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous,"⁵ but he that talks of righteousness and commits sin is of the devil,⁶ and will inherit the portion of the one by whom he is moved and guided. For God's righteousness will neither mix with nor cover deceit, nor was it ever given for that purpose; but as it is obeyed, it reveals and destroys both man's righteousness and unrighteousness, according as it is revealed from faith to faith. And all who have Christ's righteousness will witness its effect, to kill and make alive,

³ Romans 8:10

⁴ 2 Corinthians 5:21

⁵ 1 John 3:7

⁶ 1 John 3:8

even as it is received by faith. Yes, this is Zion's righteousness "that goes forth as a brightness, and its salvation is as a lamp that burns."⁷

Be ashamed you heathens, who lean upon the Lord, and say, "the righteousness of Christ, the righteousness of Christ;" for you have more dishonored His righteousness than any that came before you; and the name of a Christian has become a reproach in all the world because of your unfaithfulness to the righteousness of Christ.

Concerning the Word

The Word is that which was in the beginning, and which was the beginning of all visible things. By it all things were made, and though it is the upholder of all visible things, and reveals their true ground and use, yet it is invisible in itself, and no visible thing can reveal it. And as without it "was nothing made that was made,"⁸ so without it nothing can be seen according as it was made, nor can anything be used in its pure and proper place; but whatever man meddles with, not having the Word in him to guide, order, and sanctify, the same he defiles, and it becomes polluted as to him. Without this Word no holy Scripture can be read with profit, for it opens the Scriptures of truth. And though the Scriptures declare it, yet neither the Scriptures nor all the writings in the world are able to comprehend it or declare the depth and extent of it, which is beyond all descriptions. Nevertheless, it is the teacher and guide of those who are the Lord's in all generations; and the saints in all generations have known it in measure, more or less, though it has no place in the world's religious professions.

So hearing of a Word, but not knowing it, men say the written letter is it. But whoever has this Word has that which comprehends death and hell and the grave, that which binds and chains Satan, overcomes the world, issues forth life and light whereby the new creation is known in which righteousness dwells. These things are witnessed by those who have the Word abiding in them, but not by everyone who has the written letter. The will of man cannot change the Word, for it is contrary to the will of man; nor can man's wit open or expound it, for it confounds the wisdom of the wise and brings to naught the understanding of the prudent. Yes, this Word hides from the wise and prudent, but reveals itself to babes, and grows and increases within them, which the letter does not do. And as it grows, it sanctifies all that have it, and is a fire and a hammer to all who know it. Indeed, it is quick and powerful, dividing asunder the joints and marrow, the soul and spirit, wherever it is found; but the letter is not so. And this Word is a reproach to every carnal mind, even to many who profess the letter. Whosoever has the Word, with it they are washed and cleansed and translated from the world, and conformed to God, so far as they possess it. But

⁷ Isaiah 62:1

⁸ John 1:3

many have the letter who know not God, but are in the unclean customs, fashions and ways of the world, and are neither changed nor reconciled to Him.

No one can keep both this Word and his sins, but having only the written letter he may; for wherever the Word is known the new creature is witnessed, who is created to walk in righteousness. And he who has the Word, sees that all who claim to know the Word but walk not in righteousness, are liars and do not practice the truth. These indeed dishonor the Word, and speak as though it could dwell with pollution. But the Word is a fire to burn up all uncleanness wherever it is found; so that wherever sin stands, the Word is not known.

Carnal men may read of the Word of the Lord which came to the saints, in obedience to which the saints were washed, purified, and begotten again. But not knowing this Word in themselves, these say the Word is the written letter, which only declares it. Thus the word that they know has no power in them to overcome the devil and break the bonds of wickedness; whereas the Word of God is not bound but free, and sets free all that obey it and have it abiding in them. Yes, it breaks down the seat of sin, and raises up and quickens the Seed of God. Thus, the old life and the Word cannot stand together in one body; nor can the old man know any word but the letter. And in his imagination, he searches with fallen wisdom for that which God (in His wisdom) has hidden from the wise and learned, and so remains in darkness. To this man the Scriptures are as a parable and a mystery, which his disobedient wisdom cannot find out. So he brings meanings, interpretations, twistings, and additions, all of which arise from the man who cannot enter, and in whom the Word does not dwell.

So then, man having gone out into the world, the light of the gospel is preached in order to turn him again to the Word, so that coming to the knowledge of this Word in the heart, and having the mind stayed upon it in the light, he may come to see the power of the Word working out the unclean nature and the rebellious will, slaying the carnal man and all his affections by the cross, and working in the pure nature. And so, through the death of the old the new rises up, making a new creation in Christ Jesus with power to do good works that come from the eternal Word. Such good works are accepted by God, for He is their mover and worker, and the creature is only the servant therein, working together in the same power. This is not man taking performances upon himself from the written letter, but is the eternal counsel and strength of God, commanded, moved, and performed in God's will and time, and contrary to the will of the flesh, whereby the will of all flesh is subdued, so that God's own works do praise Him.

So then, because of the living Word, a living soul comes to be witnessed, the life of Christ is made manifest in the mortal body, and the creature comes to have fellowship in the life, being transformed thereinto and united in one. This is the "Word of reconciliation,"⁹ which unites God and the creature in Spirit. Whoever knows this, needs not go out looking for wisdom, counsel or strength against all the powers of

⁹ 2 Corinthians 5:18

darkness or the wiles of the enemy, but by diligently taking heed to the Word which is near in the heart, he finds issues of life, spiritual strength, and power against all spiritual wickedness.

Concerning Worship

The worship of the true and living God stands outside of man's natural will, knowledge, wisdom and prudence; for God is a Spirit, and in Spirit He is worshipped. He is not worshipped by men's hands or with bodily exercise (except so far as the eternal Spirit is the author and mover); nor does His worship stand in food and drink, nor various washings or other carnal ordinances taken on by tradition or imitation of others, but only as every creature is moved by the Spirit of the living God. God will be served and worshipped in His own Spirit, and not with anything else that man has offered since the fall. So the imaginations, thinkings, and conceivings of man are shut out; all of man's ways, man's times and forms, customs, orders, and ideas concerning decency, devised and added by men, are all shut out and condemned by that Spirit in which God alone is worshipped. God's people are taught His worship and the manner of it; and the times are in His hand whose worship it is.

Thus, before any can rightly worship God, they must wait to know His Spirit, who alone leads to true knowledge and worship (both the matter and the manner). All who desire to worship Him acceptably must know His light, and in it must wait to know what God calls for at your hands. For it is not what men appoint for you to do or not do that will acquit you before the Lord. For know this: God made man for Himself and for His service, and the living God is not a dumb idol, that people should imagine a way to serve Him as may best suit the fashion and custom of a nation or people. Rather, He that made man has given him a measure of life from Himself, to be increased in His service; and a light also He has given whereby man can see the moving of this Spirit of life. This life or Spirit always moves according to the will of God, because it is of Him, and so wherever it moves in the creature it ever draws towards God. The mind, will, affections, and love of God are in it, and he who walks in the light sees these things.

But the creature running out before this, or without this, runs into all manner of dead works and worships; and the ground of this arises from darkness and disobedience. For the creature who has been out in the world and its unrighteous ways, doing what is evil, is condemned by the light in his heart for evil and for neglecting what is good; but then the same corrupt mind runs to acts of worship in order to get peace, so that both his evil deeds and his worship are performed in the same nature. Thus his prayer becomes an abomination (as was said of others, Prov. 28:9); for he that regards iniquity in his heart, God will not hear his prayers nor accept his worship. Indeed, this is Cain's sacrifice, and these are Esau's prayers. But your worship must be performed in the One who never sinned, or it cannot be accepted by the pure God.

So that the way to be well-pleasing to the Father is to wait in the light until you feel something of the Spirit of life (which is in Christ Jesus) moving in you, and then, joining with that, in its power you may worship.

For this power comes from God, and He cannot forget Himself. What is done in His light and power and wisdom and strength is done in the name of Christ; and whatever is done in His name is not denied by the Father. So far as any are in Him, that far they are sons, and are accepted in Him, but without Him you can do nothing, nor be regarded by the Father. You who know not this power to lead and guide you in your worship, are “worshipping what you do not know,”¹⁰ neither do you know with what nature you worship (though you claim to be about His worship and work). Alas, false worshippers were always the greatest enemies to Christ and so to their own souls; and woe to him who thus hides his sin.

So all who desire to worship in truth, you must first know the truth, even the Spirit of truth who leads into all truth. This Spirit of truth takes of Christ and testifies of His life and power in the creature who is worshipping. These know they are in Him and that He is in them, and in Him they worship the Father of truth, so that God is served by what comes from Him. Only as far as this is known can any worship God in Spirit.

Therefore, you who have received light from Christ, wait in it, till therein you find the Spirit leading, acting, and ordering; and here the least worshipper in the light is found in God’s service, when you wait upon Him in Spirit. And such as abide in this light, waiting upon God in the light, are kept from serving the prince of darkness; for their loins are girded and their lamps are burning, and they are always ready to know His voice and answer it with obedience. But those whose fear and service towards God are taught by the precepts of men do worship in vain; for “all the children of the Lord are taught of the Lord,”¹¹ and, “They are the sons of God who are led by the Spirit of God.”¹² These hearken to the Lord and know His voice; and what they see and hear, that they do, and “do not offer the sacrifice of fools.”¹³

But do not you offer the sacrifice of fools, you who are fighting and contending for a manner of worship which Christ never ordained, nor His followers ever practiced, which you may clearly see if you but compare your established worship with the practice of the saints. For all has been changed by men and councils, under pretense of decency and conformity, or something else that stands in the will of man, but which God never commanded. Truly, Nebuchadnezzar was not more zealous for his image than you are for yours, and if you had his power, you too would force those who have found the everlasting way of Christ to bow to your imaginations. But you will never find God in a worship that does not come from Him, which men and councils have altered and added to, and changed from time to time according as it best suits their customs and countries, so that each nation has its different manner of worship. And though all be agreed upon by the councils of men, still it lies out of the counsel of God.

¹⁰ John 4:22

¹¹ Isaiah 54:13

¹² Romans 8:13

¹³ EcclesiastEst. 5:1

So all who have gone out in any way from Christ the true pattern and example, have gone into the imaginations of men and into “will-worship,”¹⁴ and there have become servants of men, and not of God. For it is not the name that makes it God’s worship, but the nature, which must be in Spirit and in the will of God. This nature is contrary to the will and wisdom of men, in which they have performed their idolatrous worship in all ages, and set up their likenesses and images instead of true worship, being blind of heart, and assuming that all were out of the right way but themselves.

And truly, this is what you have done, all you who at this day set up an imitation from the written letter of what other men have done and experienced, but have not received your command and power in Spirit from the Lord. To you it will be said, “Who has required these things from your hands?”¹⁵ For all the saints have their command in the Spirit, and know how the Spirit gives life to fulfill the command, and so their worship is spiritual, and the heart and mind and soul are united in it. Here there is no idol or likeness, but in one Spirit is found the command, the power, the life, the will, the way, and the worship. But all you who have sought to take on the saints’ practices without being called, commanded and furnished in Spirit, you lack power and life, and so even in the time of your worship your hearts run out after carnal things. This is spiritual idolatry, for whatever your minds are in, that is the god which you worship. But the pure God seeks truth in the inward parts.

Concerning Faith

He that has the living faith (which is in Christ) *lives* by it; and the life that he lives is above all the world and the powers of darkness. The least measure of this faith is perfect, and is a present power against all the assaults of Satan if the creature abides faithful in it, and does not run to other helps, and so expose himself to distrust. For true faith is the gift of God, and whosoever receives a measure of it, has a measure of the Son, against which the Father will not allow any temptation to prevail. This faith lays hold upon God’s righteousness, which righteousness is seen in the light and wrought in the Spirit, whereby the creature becomes “God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works,”¹⁶ and so becomes free from evil, dead to sin, but alive to God’s righteousness, waiting in faith to see righteousness revealed through obedience thereto, from faith to faith, as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”¹⁷

Now this is the living faith, which “purifies the heart”¹⁸ unto a life of godliness, and so reveals the righteousness of faith for an inheritance—everlasting righteousness, ever growing and springing—

¹⁴ Colossians 2:23 KJV

¹⁵ Isaiah 1:12

¹⁶ Ephesians 2:10

¹⁷ Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38

¹⁸ Acts 15:9

whereby the creature grows into the knowledge of God, and walks with Him by faith, out of the world with its pleasures and kingdoms, into the kingdom of the Son of God. Here the reproach of Christ is esteemed great riches, and men lay hold of invisible things—things which the world's faith cannot reach. For man's faith carries him no higher than visible reasoning and consulting with sensual wisdom and carnal help, and so brings nothing to perfection, because it sees not Him who is perfect. But the living faith sees Him who is invisible, and lays hold of the measure of God made manifest in Spirit, which works out the old, and works what is new (both the will and the deed), whose work is perfect both to kill and to make alive.

But the world's faith is not of this nature and power, for they hear a thing with the outward ear, and so set themselves to believe, or not to believe, according to their own will or imagination, or from outward persuasion. And as their imaginations, thoughts, and conceivings change, so their faith changes also; and thus it cannot be steadfast, because it does not stand in the measure of God's Spirit known in the heart. This faith does not serve God, nor can it please Him, nor does it "see Him that is invisible."¹⁹ And so, not standing in that power which is contrary to the will of man and the power of sin, the world's faith lies subject to the will of men, and the power of the prince of this world; and as the world and the times change, so does the faith, but it can never lead out of the world, and out of time, up to the Redeemer of the soul. And to all who remain in this nature, the living faith (which comes from God and stands in a pure conscience) is a mystery, neither known nor received.

So then, the faith of Christ and the faith of the world are distinct, and have their different effects and fruits. The one professes freedom and redemption in the imagination and comprehension, but remains a servant of sin; the other has the living faith which gives the life of freedom. And as their ground and root is different, so is their fruit and effect, the one being always against the other. For that faith which stands in Christ slays sin, and believes in purity, perfection, and holiness, and it is by this faith alone that the just shall live, bringing justice and righteousness to light in godly conduct. But the faith which stands in the imaginations and wisdom of man, which believes in salvation without holiness of life, this faith crucifies the Just One, and keeps the unjust alive. Indeed, this is the faith of those who believed the Scriptures and the words of the prophets, and that God was their Father, but not having the Word of faith in their hearts, slew the Son of God and set the murderer free.

So then, even as the faith which is dead works death, so the faith which is living works life. For a profession of faith without righteousness is like a body without life; and as a living man is known by his actions, so the living faith is known by its fruits. Just as man cannot live without action, so true faith in Christ cannot be without righteousness. These are inseparable, therefore it is called "the righteousness of faith;"²⁰ where "the heart believes unto righteousness, there the mouth confesses to salvation,"²¹

¹⁹ Hebrews 11:27

²⁰ Romans 4:11,13; 9:30; 10:6

without hypocrisy or self-righteousness. Therefore, God's righteousness is received in the heart by faith, and by obedience thereto it is brought forth into the world as a witness against all unrighteousness. But it is a dead faith that does not bring forth the life of Christ into the world.

Concerning Hope

Hope is a gift of God. It is pure, and stands in that which is pure, showing the soul the purity of God and the righteousness in Christ Jesus. Beholding this, the soul is kept from joining to the wicked one in all of his temptations, because it sees in the light a better expectation. For when the life of Christ is not known in full power, yet it is beheld in the hope, which is as an anchor to stay the mind from following the unclean one; so that hope keeps out of sin, and "makes not ashamed,"²² and even in the hour of distress it "hopes against hope."²³ This is the hope that enters within the veil into the holy place, where life and immortality are brought to light, which no mortal eye or carnal sense can approach. Yes, this is the living hope, which hopes to the end that Christ and His righteousness may be revealed to take away sin, and to save from it, and out of it. And in the hope of this, the children of God wait in the obedience of the Spirit, not conforming themselves to deceitful lusts; but as He who has called them to hope is holy, so "he that has this hope in him, purifies himself even as He is pure."²⁴

But the devil has begotten another sort of hope in his servants, who believe him and are acted upon by his spirit. This hope stands on another ground and brings forth another fruit, telling a man that though he be a servant of sin, yet there is hope of salvation. And though the witness of God in the conscience testifies to the contrary, yet the serpent teaches that this hope must not be judged false or questioned. So that where the devil has become the teacher in man, a tender conscience is resisted as the greatest error and foolishness in the world. And by him man is taught that to wait for a Christ within is to deny the Christ who died at Jerusalem; or that to seek the mystery that has been hidden from ages (namely, Christ within the hope of glory), is to deny the person of Christ and His blood and sufferings. And many such imaginations has Satan begotten in people's minds to scare them from minding the light of Christ within, that so he may keep the heart in darkness, and his seat there undiscovered.

So he sets men to look for an outward kingdom of Christ, and for an outward manifestation of the Spirit, and an outward light, an outward Word, and an outward righteousness, and to hope in these even while the serpent dwells in the heart, and there (in darkness) upholds his kingdom of sin and a seat of unrighteousness all their life, feeding them with a hope of what they will experience after they are dead,

²¹ Romans 10:10

²² Romans 5:5

²³ Romans 4:18

²⁴ 1 John 3:3

by a profession of words without the power and life and Spirit and truth in them. This is “the hope of the hypocrite that must perish”²⁵ in the end and come short of salvation.

For it is not the hope of Christ to live in sin and yet hope for salvation. No, Christ’s hope longs for freedom from sin as much as freedom from hell. And he who knows Christ and hopes in Him, hopes in righteousness, and desires as much to live in righteousness in the present evil world as to stand in righteousness in the day of judgment. But is there any reason why you should hope to be saved by Christ, who presently will be the devil’s servants, and yield your members as servants to him, delighting in his wickedness while you live, and yet desiring to be saved by Christ’s righteousness when you die?

Concerning Love

The love of God is pure and perfect, and cannot stand together with self, or with any changeable thing. God is love, and none can dwell in love except they dwell in God. And as the creature comes to live in God, he is changed into His image and likeness, and so God’s love is seen in pure light and shed abroad in the heart, whereby the power of faith works to the overcoming of all that is contrary to Him. Here the love of God abounds, and those who dwell in it work no evil, but through the work of love fulfill the law of God. But the world’s love arises from the spirit of the world, which (for selfish ends) sets the affections on changeable things, and so goes out into enmity against God. Thus it is that “whosoever will be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”²⁶ But the love of God is a fruit of God’s Spirit, which springs from the fountain and runs out to the whole creation of God. None have this love but those who have the Spirit from which it springs, which is eternal, unchangeable, and above all carnal things, nor can time or carnal things quench it.

God so loved the world that He gave His Son into the world as a light to condemn sin in the flesh, so that the righteousness of God might be fulfilled in the creature, in walking after the Spirit and denying the works of the flesh. And truly, this is the love of God to sinners: to condemn all sin and to take it away by the light and life of Jesus Christ. All who love with this love know that this is its aim and end. But with the love of God all man’s love is condemned, which stands in things that have come in through the fall, and have defiled both body and soul.

So then, this love of God consists of reproofs, judgment and condemnation against all that defiles the creation, and against the creature who yields to pollution. This is pure love to the soul, for it deals faithfully therewith in declaring its condition. And this was the great love which Christ showed the Jews, when he told them they were hypocrites, blind guides, liars, saying, “Woe to you, you serpents, you

25 Job 8:13

26 James 4:4

generation of vipers, how can you escape the damnation of hell?”²⁷ Many such plain and true words he spoke in love to them. So too it was the love of God in Paul which said to Elymas, “O full of all deceit and all fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease perverting the straight ways of the Lord?”²⁸ For all the love that can be shown to any creature is to deal faithfully and truly with them according as they are seen in the light; and he who does not love both God and man in this way (as will be seen in the day of judgment) are out of God’s love, and have imagined a love which is of another nature. These flatter one another in their evil ways and changeable opinions, and their love is grounded in carnal things and stands in their own wills. So they love when they will, and they hate when they will, but they know not love as it is in God, nor do they hate what God hates. And such is their blindness who say, “All must be won by love,” that they know not what they affirm. For God says, “I will redeem Zion with judgment,”²⁹ and “with the spirit of judgment and burning will I wash away her filth.”³⁰ But those who are still in their filth would have all others flattered therein.

So then, the love that spares filthiness is filthy, for it defiles the temple of God. But the love of the Spirit is pure, for it condemns the unclean and purges away the filth of all who love it. But woe to that love which gains friends by sparing God’s enemies. Therefore Paul says, “Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.”³¹ This is the love that uncovers sin, condemns sin to death, and covers it with righteousness. So James says, “He who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.”³² And Solomon says, “Open rebuke is better than love carefully concealed;”³³ for such wounds are precious to all who know what love is. But he that spares a man’s wickedness, hates God’s righteousness. And so, with the light, God’s love and the devil’s love are seen, and how each loves his own works, and so do their children in whom they reign. And whoever loves the one, hates the other; and he that serves the one, despises the other; and so the servant always contends for the master whom he loves.

Concerning Judgment

True judgment (as it is made known to men) is a gift from the Spirit of God, set in the heart of everyone who dwells in the light of Christ, which judgment passes upon all in the creature that is contrary to the life of God. And as it is received, it springs up with light and salvation, to the redeeming of the heart

²⁷ Matthew 23:33

²⁸ Acts 13:10

²⁹ Isaiah 1:27

³⁰ Isaiah 4:4

³¹ Romans 12:9

³² James 5:20

³³ Proverbs 27:5

from all uncleanness, condemning all that is contrary to purity, that God may be seen in His dwelling place with His righteousness. Thus He is said to “redeem Zion with judgment, and her converts with righteousness;”³⁴ and to “purge away the filth of the daughter of Zion with the Spirit of judgment and the Spirit of burning.”³⁵ And if there be a continual dwelling in the light, then this judgment ceases not till the throne of Christ is established in the heart in peace; for this is His judgment, and it is upon all that stands against His kingdom. And though the enemies of righteousness love it not, yet the righteous delight in and love the judgment of God, for by it they are redeemed and saved, and know it to be the first promise of God to be received. For the Lord says, “I will make My judgment rest as a light of the peoples;”³⁶ and when it is received, “His righteousness is near”³⁷ to be revealed.

Therefore His judgment must first pass upon all that is unrighteous, and none can have Christ’s righteousness but those who receive His judgment. For this reason the Lord says, “I have hewn them by the prophets, I have slain them by the words of My mouth; and My judgments are like light that goes forth.”³⁸ And for this end “judgment is given to the saints of the Most High.”³⁹ Ezekiel was often commanded to judge the people and cause them to know their abominations. And Jeremiah was full of the fury of the Lord, and was weary with holding it in. And Micah was full of power, by the Spirit of the Lord and of judgment, to declare to Jacob his transgression and to Israel his sin. And so in all ages the Lord has placed His judgments in His servants, and by it they have judged the heathen and those who know not God. And as many as believed and received God’s judgments and repented, these found mercy, but the rest were hardened.

Now this judgment is eternal, and stands firm in heaven as it is passed upon the earth. And this was committed to the apostles as a doctrine—that whoever they bound, were bound; and whoever they loosed, were loosed. Therefore did all the saints love judgment; for they knew it to be the ministration of Christ ministered out upon all that is against Christ, and whatever is against Christ is against the soul. So this “judgment must begin at the house of God;”⁴⁰ but where the devil keeps the house, there he rejects it. For Solomon says, “The ungodly scorn judgment,”⁴¹ and evil men do not understand it. For he that will not receive judgment is blind, and does not see that his enemy reigns, and will continue to reign until “judgment is brought into victory”⁴² and set up in the earth. For it is only when “judgment is laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet”⁴³ that the covenant with hell and death is annulled.

34 Isaiah 1:27

35 Isaiah 4:4

36 Isaiah 51:4

37 Isaiah 51:5

38 Hosea 6:5

39 Daniel 7:22

40 1 Peter 4:7

41 Proverbs 19:28

42 Matthew 12:20 KJV

But you who hate reproof, when you are told of your evil hearts (where sin abides), and of your crooked nature, you say, "Who made you a judge?" And so you seek to stop the ministry of Christ. But he who has the Spirit of Christ has the Spirit of judgment, and whoever serves that Spirit must allow it to speak and judge in them. Therefore David said, "The tongue of the righteous talks of judgment. The law of God is in his heart, his steps shall not slide; but the wicked watches the righteous and seeks to slay him."⁴⁴

Concerning Perfection^{footnote:}[Early Quakers are sometimes known for their teaching that

believers can become perfect even on this side of the grave. The word *perfect* is one that can invite a lot of misinterpretation and imagination, and so it is important to understand exactly what they believed in this regard. First of all, this is not an improvement or a perfection of the sinful, fleshly nature of man. This nature is not improved or repaired; it is experientially crucified through the inward cross (the power of God), so that the soul becomes progressively free from the law of sin and death, and governed by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Therefore, the progress and perfection of the soul arises from the birth and growth of the Seed of Christ within, and its victory (by degrees) over the body of death. Early Friends believed (and many experienced) that the heart could be united and subjected to the living Truth in such a way so as not to obey the suggestions and temptations of the evil one, to cease from actual sinning, and in this sense be perfect. However, they were always very careful to insist on the following two points: 1) that this kind of perfection always allows for continued spiritual growth. As Christ Himself is boundless and eternal, so our growth in Him knows no limits or restrictions. And 2) that there always remains the possibility of sinning wherever the heart and mind does not diligently look to and depend upon the Lord.]

God is perfect, and so are all His works and all His gifts. Whoever receives His gifts, receives what is perfect, and by receiving and joining to that which is perfect, the creature is gradually made perfect himself. No farther than a soul abides in this perfection, can it be united to God, or appear in His sight, or be blessed by Him; for going out from perfection he goes into the fall and into the curse. Man has no more of Christ, than what he has of perfection; for perfection is of Christ, and imperfection and sin are of the devil. These are two contraries, and come from contrary grounds, and bring forth contrary fruits. He that is of God is of perfection and believes in perfection; but he who is of the serpent cannot acknowledge or believe it, being blinded by the god of this world.

God sent his Son into the world to preach perfection, even a return to the perfect image of the Father, saying, "Be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect."⁴⁵ And when He had left an example of

43 Isaiah 28:17

44 Ps. 37:30

perfection in all things, He ascended and gave gifts to men “for the perfecting of the saints,”⁴⁶ that all might come up to the unity of the faith, “to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”⁴⁷ Thus He is an everlasting Redeemer, perfecting the work of God in every generation of those that believe in His work and follow Him. And all His true ministers have sought the same end, and have preached and prayed that “they might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus,”⁴⁸ from whom they had received the gift. And all who believed His ministers, believed in perfection, and pressed after it as the end of their faith; knowing that nothing less than perfection could give them perfect rest and redemption.

Now, since the mystery of iniquity has entered, another sort of ministry has gone forth into the world, which has taken up an imitation instead of a gift, and has begotten another kind of faith that is wholly opposed to perfection, preaching against it, holding it as blasphemy, and calling it a doctrine of devils and the like. These desire to be called the ministers of Christ, though they deceive all who receive their words. And any who look to the end of their work, may easily see as much difference as between Christ and Belial. For the work of Christ is (and ever has been) to renew man again to a perfect state; and the work of antichrist is to withstand this; and each has his ministers suitable to their intended ends. Christ’s end is to perfect, the devil’s is to keep in sin, and each sort of ministers have their corresponding faith, hope, and gifts—the one pure, and the other polluted. According to each sort of faith, so are they who believe and follow. The faith of Christ is a shield, and gives victory over uncleanness, sin, and evil. But the devil’s faith lets sin in, and believes it must be so. And had not the devil first brought man to believe him rather than God, he could never have polluted what God had perfected. But the way he first wrought upon man is the same way he keeps up his work.

So then, none come to know the new creature but those who believe in perfection in Christ. For all who are in the imperfect and polluted righteousness are in their own righteousness; but the least measure of God’s righteousness is perfect, and those who become servants of it are thereby made free from sin. So it is by your unbelief that you destroy your souls, and remain in your own works, which make nothing perfect. And then measuring yourselves with yourselves, you cut yourselves off from Christ. And measuring your faith by your own ability, you stand in that covenant which makes nothing perfect. But for this cause the first covenant was found faulty and annulled, because “it made not those who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience.”⁴⁹

45 Matthew 5:48

46 Ephesians 4:12

47 Ephesians 4:13

48 Colossians 1:28

49 Hebrews 9:9

Concerning Obedience

Spiritual and living obedience is not that obedience of man's way and will, wherein men and women (in the first birth and wisdom) read the Scriptures, find what the saints performed in the Spirit and power of the Lord Jesus, and then set themselves to do the like. This is to make an imitation instead of to obey, to set up self-works instead of Christ's works, to obey self-righteousness instead of God's righteousness, and so to cover themselves with filthy rags instead of everlasting righteousness. All who will know true obedience must first know a measure of God's Spirit in the light of Jesus Christ. Herein they will find movings and drawings towards Christ, and a faith that lays hold upon God's righteousness, and an obedience that is in Christ Jesus, the second Adam. And as the creature joins in the light to the Spirit of Christ, and believes in the life of Jesus made manifest, he is quickened unto the one obedience, which is contrary to the will of man. For there is but one true obedience which is in Christ Jesus, which He learned of the Father for us, that in this obedience many may be made righteous.⁵⁰ And all who learn Christ, learn His obedience, which was not what He saw or heard from men, but what He saw and heard of the Father; not in His own time or will, but in the Father's, nor did He do anything of His own accord, but only what he saw the Father do. In this obedience Christ was always found; not doing what the scribes and Pharisees did (though they sat in Moses' seat), nor what the world approved, but what was contrary to the world, and contrary to His own will; always and only submitting to the moving of the Spirit of the Father that dwelt in Him, by which alone He was guided and furnished for every good work.

And now all that believe in Him and follow His light, He leads them by degrees into the same knowledge and obedience, out of all carnal knowledge, power, and obedience; so that by faith the creature is made partaker of Christ's obedience and the power thereof from faith to faith. And all who have learned Him find that "as He is, so are they in this present world,"⁵¹ both in love and in life, in power and in Spirit, according to the measure that Christ is learned. And this is not an obedience from without, but an obedience to the truth, through the Spirit, which is in life and not in imitation, in the will of God and not in self-will. It does not stand in things seen by men, or done by men, by which men may imitate or do the like. Rather, it stands in Jesus Christ and in His own obedience to the Father, seen in the light by the measure of faith received, whereby the believer is made one in it, and it in him. Thus, as the same Father still calls for the same obedience in Spirit, so the believer now offers himself up, with all that he has, in the same Spirit and power and obedience which are in Christ Jesus. And so as the creature by faith partakes of that one obedience, in the second Adam, he is made righteous, and no further; even as all are made sinners as they partake of the disobedience of the first Adam, and no further.

Therefore, whoever knows how to partake of this obedience, also knows the eternal Spirit in which all the children of God have been taught and enabled to obey (in their various measures), ever since the

⁵⁰ Romans 5:19

⁵¹ 1 John 4:17

world began. And this obedience is not works done by them, but the everlasting righteousness of God obeyed in the Spirit, according to its own motions which are seen in the light of Christ. But none who are heart-blind can know this, who mind the motions of the flesh and obey them; for their minds have gone out into carnal pleasures, and the call to Christ's obedience is not heard by them. Nevertheless the carnal spirit that leads out into the world teaches men to make an imitation of this obedience, and so deceives the simple by setting up a likeness without life, and glorying in appearance but not in heart. And then, as the Witness of God in the heart or conscience testifies to such as these that their obedience is not perfect or accepted, they conclude that there can be no perfect obedience attained in this world; for they know not the powerful working of God's Spirit that perfectly works in those who believe and walk in the light, whereby they become His workmanship in Christ Jesus. These are brought into His obedience, and His obedience is wrought in them (in their measure), till they become of one heart, one mind, one soul, one Spirit, one flesh and bone and blood, one obedience, and one life, so that it is no more we who live, but Christ that lives in us; and the life that we now live is by faith in the Son of God. And though the fullness of this obedience is not attained at once, yet the least measure of it is perfect and accepted; for it is accepted in Him in whom it is wrought. And as the obedience of a child is as pure and willing as the obedience of a strong man, so it is with the babe in Christ Jesus, according to what the Father requires, who never requires anything but what He gives, and never gives anything but what is perfect and what He perfectly accepts.

Concerning Good Works

As there is but one true good, so there is but one true worker of good in heaven and in earth, who by the Word of His power made all things good in the beginning. By this good work and good will man was made in the image of God, and so stood in His goodness. But falling from that steadfastness which is in God, and looking to self to make himself wise, he became subtle and proud, and seeking to be like God, was cast out from God, from His power, love, and goodness, into the dark imagination of his own fallen heart. Thus finding himself under the curse (of which the light of Christ in the conscience bears witness) he quickly set himself to make likenesses of God and His worship, and of good works, of faith, hope, patience, love, etc. But being under the powers of darkness, and knowing neither God nor His work, he is deceived by the prince of darkness and pleases himself with an imitation of God's works (without power) and so he imagines he does good. But the testimony of God in his heart bears witness against him that his work is not perfect or accepted. He also imagines that he is redeemed, though he is still under the commanding power of Satan, led captive at his will. And in order to more strongly bind him, Satan leads him into an appearance of worship so that man will not suspect his slavery, nor be too much troubled at his other unrighteous practices. Thus it is that even the worst of men in this state have their worship, and each sort thinks they are right, and are not as bad as others, for they have their form of religion and their pretended good works, though they have gone far out from the one good work of God.

And it is no small work to undeceive even the least of these, though men of greater wits and learning may easily lead them from one deception to another. But all the world's wisdom cannot bring them into the one good work of God, nor teach them the way whereby it is wrought. Only those who mind the light of Christ in their dark hearts (which manifests evils and reproves them for it), who take heed to follow it out of the world and all carnal mindedness, and who wait in the light until the living Word is received in their hearts—only these, I say, come into the true good work and will of God. For without the Word nothing was made, and without it nothing can be redeemed. For it is the Word of the Lord, heard and received, that quickens the dead and raises to life that which is dead in trespasses and sins. And it is the power of this same Word that brings forth the work of God's righteousness in the spiritual man. Thus the creature is renewed in the spirit of his mind and receives wisdom and power to escape evil and resist it, and to bring to light all that God begets in the heart.

And as the believer diligently continues waiting in the light, and is obedient to this work in the Spirit, so he comes still more and more to learn God's power and teaching, as well as Christ's obedience. And so the wisdom and care of God are over him, leading him into sufferings and tribulations, trials and temptations, and the faith and fellowship with Christ therein. And if the creature stands firm, not a hair of his head can fall to the ground, but he is sure to come out more pure than gold. So he grows in the knowledge of Christ and His sonship, toward the measure and stature and fullness of the perfect man, into the likeness of God. It is in this way that all the saints were made conformable to God by His mighty working, whereby He wrought powerfully in them according to His good pleasure, and contrary to their fleshly pleasures. And what is wrought in this way is good, because it comes from the fountain of all good.

Now, this is not a new work, but the everlasting good work of God, manifest to the creature, and through the creature to the world. And by it God is glorified, who is its Father and author and finisher in everyone that truly believes. This is no self-work, nor can it be wrought in any except where self is denied and where a cross to self is taken up. So all boasting is excluded, for the creature has nothing but what he has received, and not by his own will or deed, but by believing in the light, and through the obedience of faith. And though there may be a variety of works, according to the soul's obedience and measure, yet all bring about the one work of the creature's redemption, and God's praise therein.

The world is ignorant of the true work of God, though they are preaching, pressing, and performing their good works (as they call them); but all their works do not manifest the power that brings out of sin and the world, and conformity to its ways and worship. But the good work of God in His saints (as they become obedient to His working and subject to His will) always begets the creature nearer to God, and into His likeness and nature, until they suffer all manner of evil for the name of God that is in them, and are hated by the world. Yet the reproach of the world becomes great riches to all who love God and are obedient to His work.

So then, self-works and God's works are made manifest in the light. The one is that which men see, hear, or imagine, and so set themselves to imitate in their own wills and ways, according to what they have conceived in their fallen wisdom and earthly minds, not in the Spirit, but in the oldness of the letter or the traditions of men. But everyone who will come into the work of God will be taught to deny the world and their own wills, so that all that is within them may bow and conform to the motion and workings of the Spirit, which are seen by all who dwell in the light. These, in the way and time of the Spirit, bring forth the fruits of the Spirit in the sight of God.

Concerning Election and Reprobation

This is a doctrine which is sealed from the world; nor can any truly know it or receive it who are still in the reprobate state. And though many are disputing about it in the dark, none truly know it but the children of light. For there is a spirit who would foolishly charge God with having determined the condemnation of many persons before they even come into the world; and though they seek after God, yet they cannot be saved, because God has purposed the contrary. In the same way, these say that some are concluded unto salvation, though they live and die in their sins. Truly, this doctrine is of the spirit of the world, which knows not the secrets of God revealed in the Spirit, and therefore judges carnally from the letter and from figures and shadows. And those who are of this spirit know not the truth which lies in a mystery; and being without light, they can only imagine. For no one knows the purpose of God but he who comes back to the beginning; for in the beginning the election and reprobation were established by an eternal and unalterable decree *in the two seeds*—the seed according to the flesh, and the seed according to the Spirit. And he who can judge concerning these two seeds, can also understand the two vessels ordained, one to honor and the other to dishonor; and as every man is found in one of these, so is God's purpose with respect to him.

Now in the fall, all are in the dishonor, and so are children of wrath, under the curse, and so without God and without the promise; and not having God dwelling in them, they are no vessels of honor, but are reprobate concerning Him. But in Christ Jesus the election is known, for He is the elect Seed in whom the election is obtained and established. And in the midst of all darkness His light is offered to lead men out of the dishonor, out of the curse and the fall; and whosoever believes in His light (without respect of persons), He leads out of the world, to the cleansing and purging of the body, soul, and mind, till the vessel is changed from the oldness of the will, affections, and lusts of the flesh, to the newness of the Spirit. Thus, in heart and mind the creature is brought out of the flesh (which is prepared for dishonor, and where the dishonor lodges) and is brought to live in the Spirit, where the lusts of the flesh are not fulfilled, and so the vessel of honor is witnessed which is prepared for the Master's use. But while men remain in the flesh, they are prepared for dishonor and fitted for destruction, not knowing the Master nor their proper use. And though God endures such vessels with much long-suffering, who will

not acknowledge the mercy shown to them in His Son, He may at His pleasure display His wrath upon them. And for this same purpose He long endured Pharaoh, and allowed his oppression, till He saw fit to show His power upon him who had long been raising himself above the seed of God. In the same way He endured the Amorites, “until their iniquities were full;”⁵² and so He does with many at this day, who proceed from one wickedness to another until they fill up their measure, that He may make known His wrath upon those that will not acknowledge His Seed.

So shall it be with all who will not acknowledge the light of Christ, whose day of visitation has past. Such have a measure of sin to fill up in the other seed, which they shall not pass by. And for this purpose that evil seed was raised up and prepared, that God may show His power upon all who “do not like to retain God in their knowledge,”⁵³ that they all might be condemned who take pleasure in unrighteousness, serving the creature more than the Creator, whose hearts are filled with all immorality and fleshly lusts. These are indeed the vessels of dishonor. Yet “if a man purge himself from these things, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and fit for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work.”⁵⁴ But those who live in these things are indeed reprobate with respect to God and His work.

So then, here is the election and reprobation: those who are after the Spirit, and those who are after the flesh. Those who are after the flesh are not the seed; but those who live by the Spirit are accounted for the Seed. These have obtained the promise, but the rest are hardened. And so there is no unrighteousness with God, but the unrighteousness is with men who reject the counsel of the Lord against themselves and choose to abide in that which God has cursed. And here, all that continue will be hardened to their own destruction, notwithstanding all their endeavors and labors, prayers and tears that are in this nature; for these are not accepted, being of that seed which is enmity against the Seed of God. Against this seed God has decreed His displeasure, but in the other He has established His mercy forever. Therefore, “it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy.”⁵⁵ And this mercy He has set above all His works, so that he who stays in the world cannot obtain it. But the light which leads out of the world leads up to it, and whosoever comes unto Him, He will in no way cast off. But he who does not come to Him is cast off already, because he will not come to the light of life.

So now hearken, all you vain babblers, who spend your time disputing about election with your reprobate minds. When you find that the light of Christ condemns you for your lusts and earthly delights, and the Spirit of God moves in you against your evil deeds, but you will not be obedient, and still harden your hearts against the light—know then, that *this* is the reprobate state. And know also that it is the Spirit of God that strives in you against it, who does not desire that you die in it. And let that measure of light

⁵² Genesis 15:16

⁵³ Romans 1:28

⁵⁴ 2 Timothy 2:21

⁵⁵ Romans 9:16

in your conscience judge if your destruction be not of yourself, you whose way is reprobate from God. And let it also be a witness against you that God delights not in your destruction, but rather that you should turn and be saved, and for this end He has given you His light to reprove you and to lead you to repentance, showing that He has not determined your condemnation before you were born. And let the same light which checks you for your sin, and lets you see in your heart that the righteous God has appointed a day wherein all shall receive according to their doings, let it, I say, be a witness against the vain idea that God has concluded beforehand to leave you in your wickedness.

So then, the righteous Judge of all the earth will go on doing righteousness. And to make way for the same, He has placed His pure light in the heart of everyone that will mind it, which will clearly show all whether they be in the elect Seed or in the seed of evildoers; for it is this light, being believed and followed, that does reveal the mystery of election and reprobation. And without this light none can know who is elected or reprobated, nor can they judge of this matter.

Concerning the New Birth

There is an old man, and a new man, which are known in the light, with births, natures, and kindreds that differ according to that of which they are born. That which is of the earth is earthly, fleshly, carnal, and corrupt; and this is the state of the old man. All that are in this state are fallen from God and His covenant, and are in the curse, wholly blind in heart with regard to the mysteries of God. And though in the sensual wisdom of the flesh they make profession of God and His gospel, they neither know Him nor His power, but are alienated from His life and led captive in the dark at the will of him who is the prince of darkness. Whatever a man does in this state is cursed. In this state Cain offered his sacrifice but could not be accepted, for he was out of the state of well-doing or well-being, though he anxiously desired acceptance. In this state Esau sought the blessing and wept for it, but could not obtain it. And in this state Nicodemus came to Christ, and though he loved Him and believed Him to be sent of God, could not enter the kingdom in that state, nor know the new birth. And this is the state which David speaks of, when he says, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear me."⁵⁶ And in this state are all who now worship in the flesh, and in their carnal minds and the sensual wisdom.

But that which is born of heaven is heavenly, spiritual, eternal, and incorruptible; and this is the state of the new man, which is begotten of the divine nature of God. And as is his nature, so are his works, and his delights are spiritual. For indeed, as is the tree, so are its fruits; and as is the man, so are his works. So he that is born of this Seed is born of God; and "Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in Him."⁵⁷ And all who remain in this Seed, and it in them, have the promise and power

56 Psalms 66:18

57 1 John 3:9

that puts off the old man with his deeds, lusts, and affections; thus the body of sin is put off through the power of the body of Christ, and redemption is witnessed. And as the creature passes from the old to the new, so they pass from death to life; for life is in the new, and there the victory is received over sin, the grave, and hell. Now the first birth talks of these things in the fallen nature, but cannot receive the power and victory by which to enter the kingdom, nor see its glory, and so these take up their rest and delight in visible things, and so entangle themselves in things whose end is destruction. But those who are born of the Spirit tread upon such things, and cannot set their minds upon, nor bow unto, nor be conformable to such vanities. And so those who are heavenly have no communion with the earthly, their minds being contrary to each other in all things. For that which is wisdom to the one is foolishness to the other, and so it has always been.

Now, the Seed which is of God leads the heart up to God, but the seed which is of the earth leads into earthly things. Those who are the children of God are led by His Spirit (of which they are born), but the children of this world are led by the spirit of this world, and are captivated in the ways, fashions, and love of the world, wherein the serpent has his seat and kingdom, and wherein his power is seen in all who are disobedient to the light of Christ. And so, in those who have given up to his power (because of the blindness of their hearts), he brings forth his enmity against the children of God born after the Spirit, children of the light and of the immortal Seed, who bear the image of the invisible God, and worship in the Spirit, being led and guided by that Spirit of which they are born.

Now those who are born of the Spirit can stay no longer in any form of worship than God stays, but by His Spirit are led to follow Him wherever He goes, and out of whatever He departs. But those who are born after the flesh, see only the outside and the form,⁵⁸ and so abide in the form long after God has departed. These then become the seat of Satan, where he sits and persecutes those who follow the Spirit. In this way the serpent has often beguiled the creature, by getting into something of the form that was once used by the saints (while God dwelt therein) and to this he adds inventions of his own, calling them decency and order and the like. With this he has deceived the creature so as to serve his ends, even to shed the blood of their brethren under a pretense of error and blasphemy, and denying ordinances and forms of worship, and as being leaders of dangerous sects and heresies, etc. Thus the children of light have ever been numbered amongst transgressors, but were never truly so, except that they transgressed the wills of men to observe the will of God. Yet all of these suffered as evil-doers in the account of the world, as not worthy to live in the world, for they were born of a Seed that is above the world, which the natural man does not know. So then, "He that is born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now,"⁵⁹ and these think they do service to God, because they know not the Father nor the Son, but live in darkness, not acknowledging that Seed whereof the children of light are born.

⁵⁸ With the word *form*, Nayler is referring to any outward practice, formality, tradition, manner or method of performing religious service or worship.

⁵⁹ Galatians 4:29

Concerning the Baptism of Christ

In the world there are many sorts and forms of baptisms, but in Christ there is but one, which is that of the Spirit. This is Christ's baptism, and all who are baptized with it are baptized into His death, buried with Him to the world, to its ways and worships, loves and friendships, and to all that is in man that would conform or bow thereto. And it is through this baptism into death that the Seed of God is raised up out of the grave, quickened by the same Spirit which raised Jesus from the dead. And all that are baptized with this Spirit (knowing the old man to be dead and buried), are raised a spiritual seed unto God, holy and zealous for good works, being begotten again of another nature from above, which is but one. And as they are baptized into this, all grow into one, in God the Father and the Son Jesus Christ. And so the saints were "all baptized by one Spirit into one body,"⁶⁰ out of that nature in which are all differences, sects, and opinions, and so come to put on Christ, who is but one. "For as many as are baptized into Christ have put on Christ,"⁶¹ with His love, His mind, affections, etc. And these know a greater prize than contending about the basic elements of the world, outward washings, and things that stand in times, seasons, customs, and persons. For we find some are for sprinkling infants, others for dipping them, some for this fashion and some for that, all disputing and jangling from the written letter in imitation of John's ministry, calling it the baptism of Christ.

And what is the effect of all these imitations and imaginations, but a multitude of baptisms, religions and sects, with every sect-master and his followers setting themselves against all others in the way they conceive to be right. So that now all must bow to their interpretations (which are all different from each other) or else they are said to be in error. Thus the form is set above the power, and not the true form either, but only as men have conceived from the letter, or by the counsels of their own brain; and thus are all scattered and divided in their various imaginations and diverse baptisms.

And this was what Paul saw creeping in among the churches in his time, setting up sects according to the person by whom they were baptized, being puffed up for them, and against the other apostles, some of Paul, some of Peter, some of Apollos, etc. And Paul seeing this, thanked God he baptized no more than a few, plainly saying, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel,"⁶² though he could make use of it until he saw them make an idol of it, and by it to make divisions and parties, and to puff up one above another, as it is now used today. No, it is far worse today, for now baptism with water is considered the key to let in and shut out of what men call a church, and some say none can be saved without it.

But if you knew the right end of John's ministration of water, you would know that it was a forerunner of Christ's baptism and kingdom, and a witness to all men that the Jews' ceremonies, ordinances, and

60 1 Corinthians 12:13

61 Galatians 3:27

62 1 Corinthians 1:17

worship (wherein they had grown into divisions), was to have an end, and the spiritual ministration and baptism was to be set up in the downfall of carnal ordinances and elements. Indeed, from all of this they were to repent, for the kingdom of God was at hand—even *within* all that would believe. And those who believed came to deny all the Jews' worship, with their outward circumcision and ordinances in the letter, and instead preached the mystery and end of these things in Spirit.

But your baptisms now we are constrained to deny, for they do not bring you to the end of tithes and offerings and other Jewish ceremonies. And though we know that if we would but bow to your various forms of baptism and worship, and to men's wills therein, we would not suffer by you. Yet then the offense of the cross would cease (as it has ceased to all who preach baptisms, carnal ordinances, respect of persons, conformity to men's wills, the world's customs and manners, and the doctrine of imperfection and sin for term of life). But for this same reason the first Christians suffered all the envy that the Jews could heap unto them, who upheld the form in the letter but denied the power and Spirit.

And so I say to all who can conform to the ways of men and please them: The cross of Christ has ceased in you, and so has the power. For this reason you are ever preaching against the world's ways and wickedness, but never able to lead out of them. You are like those who mind earthly things, who are enemies to the cross of Christ, ever learning and teaching but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth that makes free. And in whomever the cross (with its sufferings) has ceased, these, together with the powers of the earth, are united against all who take up the cross to follow Christ in the way of the Spirit.

Therefore I say to all concerning baptisms just what the apostle has said of circumcision: 'We are the baptism, who worship God in the Spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, though we might have confidence in the outward washing, as we have formerly received it from such as gathered it from tradition.'⁶³ But this we have learned, 'that it is not the baptism which is outward in the flesh, but the baptism which is in the Spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God.'⁶⁴ By this baptism we are "baptized by one Spirit into one body;"⁶⁵ and "as many as are baptized into Christ, are baptized into His death,"⁶⁶ and have put Him on, and are become new creatures. And this is the baptism which avails to save us—"not the washing the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."⁶⁷

And with regard to *this* baptism we witness the truth that, "Whosoever believes and is baptized will be saved."⁶⁸ But as for other baptisms, about which men are contending from the letter, we see their end

63 See Philippians 3:3-4

64 See Romans 2:28-29

65 1 Corinthians 12:13

66 Romans 6:3

67 1 Peter 3:21

68 Mark 16:16

and what they bring forth. Now if any should come forth in the power and Spirit of John's baptism, or have a call from God thereto, such we will not judge or oppose. But that any has power from the written letter to take up John's water baptism and impose it upon others, that I deny. Or to say that leaving the outward shadow and going on to the spiritual baptism, is a slighting or contemning of an ordinance of God, that I also deny; for this might have been charged against Paul as well, who ceased to baptize with water in his time, and preached a baptism in Spirit in its stead. And it is for this same thing that we are persecuted today, who are not sent to dip or sprinkle with water but to preach the gospel of light and life, and the spiritual baptism of Christ Jesus, for the bringing in of all who receive our testimony into one body, by one Spirit, not making divisions about carnal things. Indeed, for us the day has come, and the shadows have flown away.

And this I say to those who seek to know the truth of the matter: We do not despise any ordinance of God into which He has called any of His people in any generation; but neither dare we take a tradition upon us which God has not required at our hands, lest we keep people in that from which God has departed, and it be said to us, "Who has required it at your hands?"⁶⁹ And indeed, God has shown us a more excellent way: The light has come, and therein we have found Christ Jesus, the guide of His people, and the leader of ages. Yes, we have found the Spirit of truth, who leads into all truth and into all that God requires, the obedience to which is better than sacrifice. And it is to this Spirit that we are sent to direct the people, that Christ may be all in all, who gives power in the creature to perform all that He leads into. Hereby all who believe in the light may learn Him, who begets both the will and the deed, and who is the author and finisher of faith in those who look to Him alone. And it is by a measure of His Spirit which we have received that we can also see you, who read what the saints did by a call from God, and then set yourselves to do the like in imitation, in self-righteousness and will-worship, both in baptism and in all other things into which you have not been led by the Lord. But this I say, that the Father has given His Son for a leader and guide to all ages, both into and out of all forms as He pleases, in His way and time, in every generation.

It is for this reason that all who know God's will in this matter, cannot endure to see any visible thing set up which limits His leading in Spirit, or His people from following in Spirit. Therefore, we deny no outward forms into which Christ leads by His Spirit; but we deny all forms that are imposed by men to keep people from following the Spirit. For the children of God are those who are led by the Spirit of God; but those who are led by the letter alone have ever been their enemies. It is the spiritual (and not the written) ministration that gives the knowledge of God, and His glory and power. He that is born after the flesh has his way in visible things, but he that is born after the Spirit has food that the world does not know. And what state are you in, you who set up the shadow to oppose the substance (which is the end of the shadow), and take hold of the letter to oppose the Spirit, which writings were given to declare

69 Isaiah 1:12

the sufficiency of the Spirit? So you pervert the Scriptures out of their place and end (which are given to testify of Christ, their life and their end), and set them in the place of Christ and think to have life in them. And in this state, both Scriptures and ordinances and all the other gifts of God, are abused, wrested out of their places, and made unprofitable.

Concerning the Lord's Supper

This is the thing that the professors of religion are contending about in all the world; and indeed, it is a great mystery to those who have not yet seen the Lord. But since the mystery of iniquity began to work, the world's teachers and professors (having lost their dwelling in the body of Christ) have run out into imaginations, and are so far from the life of this supper that they have lost the form and the first institution of the shadow as it was performed by Christ. And truly, they are now so far from being made one in the blood of Christ through the Lord's supper (so-called), that they are shedding one another's blood in their contentions about the form.

Now this was done by Christ as they sat at a meal and ate the Passover, and drank the cup that He gave them, and so often as they did eat and drink thereof they were to do it in remembrance of Him, "showing His death till He came."⁷⁰ And this mystery is what the apostles received of the Lord, and was so practiced in the purity of the church (before they ran into confusion) by those who continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, "daily breaking bread from house to house, and eating their food with gladness and singleness of heart,"⁷¹ in the fear and favor of God. And this was to be done at all seasons, whenever they ate and drank; for in their eating and drinking they were to do it unto the Lord, and therein to have communion with His body and His blood, and to keep themselves pure from all pollution, not eating at the table of the heathen, whose feasting is in their lusts.

And so to keep from indulgence and feasting in lust, they were to eat in remembrance of Christ's death till He came; who, when He comes, takes the ordering and government of the creature upon His shoulders, and so ever keeps them out of lust and excess in all that they do. And so the creation is restored and reconciled to God at the coming or appearing of Jesus Christ. So the disciples were charged to wait for His coming at Jerusalem, and did show forth His death as often as they broke bread, till He came. And after He had come to the apostles, they continued in condescension for the sake of those who were weak in the faith, to whom Christ had not yet appeared, breaking bread from house to house, and eating with singleness of heart.

⁷⁰ 1 Corinthians 11:26

⁷¹ Acts 2:46

For this reason Paul exhorted that both in their eating and drinking, they should do all to the glory of God, and warned of the contrary. And Jude saw how some had crept in among the churches, and “turned the grace of God into lewdness”⁷² walking after their own hearts’ lusts, whereby they defiled the flesh and lived in sensuality. These, not having the Spirit to govern them, “fed themselves without fear,” and were “spots in their love feasts,” who being once enlightened and again giving way to lust and excess, “became twice dead, plucked up by the roots,”⁷³ though they had “great swelling words.”⁷⁴

And of such there are many examples at this day, who have known something quickened in them to hope for the appearance of the Lord, but then fullness and excess having overtaken them for lack of eating always in fear and in the remembrance of His coming. And so these become dead again to any hope of His appearance at present, and so put His coming afar off into another world; yet they continue contending about the shadows or figures of His coming, according as they have imagined. But to avoid this the Lord Jesus commanded His disciples in a figure, that in eating and drinking they should show forth His death till He came. And these gave example and warning to those who were convinced, that in all fear and moderation they might wait for His appearances, telling them “to let their moderation be known to all men, for the Lord is at hand.”⁷⁵

But now those who live in the liberty of the flesh and in outward observations put this coming afar off, though they have a day every year to go into their building and eat bread and wine in self-made solemnity; or perhaps once a month, or three times a year, some affirming the body and blood of Christ to be in the creature after the supper is consecrated (as they say); some saying, no! but it is spiritual before consecration; others saying, no! it is natural and not changed because of words, etc. So that one imagines the body of Christ to be real in it, and another says it is only real by faith (as they call it), but all agree in this: that after their eating and drinking they return to their pleasures in the flesh and fashions of the world, there to eat and drink to their delight and spend themselves on their lusts.

So it is with all who do not discern His body in their eatings, who cling to their observations, and say He is always to come, or is past. But the carnal eye, that sticks in visible things, can never see Him who is present to lead the creation out from lust. And so their eating is not the supper of the Lord, nor does He sup with them in the new kingdom; but in the old lustful spirit such become a table of the devil, where the creation is sacrificed to his use. So he keeps them in the observation of a day or a form, which they think is worship, but he continues to bear rule in their whole lives by his spirit. And from here come all manner of lewdness and lightness, strife, fighting, lawsuits, and violence, sports, and vanities, too many here to mention, all of which the creation spends itself upon, and for which they shall give an account.

72 Jude 1:4

73 Jude 1:12

74 Jude 1:16

75 Philippians 4:5

Therefore, for the sake of those who are lost in this thing, and troubled in mind concerning it, what I have received I shall declare unto you: If you intend to sup with the Lord, or show forth the Lord's death till He come, let your eating and drinking of all things, as often as you do it, be in the remembrance of Him, and in His fear, that you may witness a death to all lust and excess, which indeed is that which has slain the Lamb from the foundation of the world, and is the great enemy of His appearance, and is that by which He is spiritually crucified in the "great city which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt."⁷⁶ For all you that "live in pleasure on the earth and are wanton; you that nourish your hearts as in the day of slaughter; you have condemned and murdered the Just One, and He does not resist you."⁷⁷ And so you must know a death to all this before you can sup with the Lord, or He with you. But if you eat in remembrance of Him, and so come to die to that which slew Him, then you do show forth the Lord's death till He come; and when He comes He shall not find you "eating and drinking with the drunken, nor beating your fellow-servants."⁷⁸

And this is known from the Lord in the eternal light to be the true end of the supper of the Lord, that at His coming all may be found fit to receive Him; which appearance they who feed without fear do deny, and crucify afresh to themselves. And therefore in another place, speaking of His coming, He warns them to "take heed, lest at any time their hearts be weighed down with carousing and drunkenness and the cares of this life, and so that Day come upon them unaware, and so become a snare to them."⁷⁹ For so it is to all who are in this state when He appears to them, and so they cannot receive the day of His visitation, for their hearts have gone out into carnal things.

Concerning Redemption

There are many who boast and glory in redemption, who know nothing more than words and imaginations. Indeed, few have come so far as to know what it is that needs redemption, and what the promise is to, and in what Seed⁸⁰ it is seen and received. For there is a Seed in which the promise of redemption is made to the soul, but all who take delight in sin and in fleshly liberty are of a contrary seed. These see no need of redemption, but are at ease in their sin; they need no physician for they say they are not sick, but their talk of redemption little changes their true state.

But if you find something in you that, in the midst of all worldly delights, cries 'vanity and emptiness!' and can find no satisfaction therein, nor conform to this world or take pleasure in wickedness; if there is

⁷⁶ Revelation 11:8

⁷⁷ James 5:5

⁷⁸ Matthew 24:49

⁷⁹ Luke 21:34

⁸⁰ Footnote by George Whitehead: "The seed is mentioned in a twofold sense: the seed which is Christ who redeems, and the seed of Abraham, i.e. believers, whom He redeems. The children of the promise are counted for the seed."

something that dares not contend for sin but instead cries ‘woe to you!’ because of your wickedness, and mourns because of the abominations of your times; and if you find something that breathes towards God for life and strength against all vanity and evil, and desires to follow Christ out of the world; I say, if such a Seed you find in yourself, though it be the least of all seeds, yet this is the Seed of the kingdom, to which the promise is made. And no further than this Seed is raised up to reign in you above all that is contrary, are you redeemed by Christ Jesus. For this is the plant of God’s renown, the lily among the thorns, which is choked by the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches and pleasures, that it may not bring forth fruit to God. But God has placed this Seed in you for Himself, that therein He might teach you to profit, and that from it you might receive wisdom and strength, yes, all that is needful for you in the measure to which you are called.

And this Seed lying oppressed and veiled under your lusts and pleasures is the reason you know not the Father or the Son, for to the spiritual birth He is revealed. And though you talk of redemption, yet you know not God, nor His power, life, or presence to guide you out of evil, and to give you victory over the prince of this world, but are captivated at his will, to do his works, and so are under the condemnation that he is in. And all your talk of redemption does not deliver you from his baits, but into temptation you continually fall, committing the sin that he leads you into, and so remain sons of the devil.

But the Seed that is of God lies under all of this, and suffers below in death and captivity, when the bonds of iniquity are over you. And for this reason you cannot receive His power, His promise, or His salvation, which are all placed in the Seed; for while you remain in your delights, the Seed is not of you or with you, but rather against you. Indeed, in this state you are not of the promised Seed, but an enemy to it, and are sinning against it by your lusts and pleasures and self-will. Thus you are in Pharaoh’s nature and state, who keeps the Seed of God in the house of bondage, and does not pity or regard its cries. For truly, it cries against your pride and excess, your envy and wrath, and all the wickedness by which you oppress the Seed in that state where death reigns. And for this reason the wrath of God comes upon the world of iniquity, who are enemies to the Seed of the covenant, not being joined to it, but are joined to a seed of a contrary nature.

But all who are joined in the light to the Seed of God partake of the love and life that are in Christ Jesus. And all who know this Seed quickened and raised in the heart by the Spirit of Jesus, know “the plant of God’s renown,”⁸¹ the plant of God’s own planting, in which the fruit of the Spirit is found. Such as these know where to wait for the supply of all needs, and for counsel in all difficulties; where the law that is spiritual and the righteousness of faith are received. Yes, it is in this Seed that men are redeemed, and the saints have fellowship in light with the Father and the Son, and find all the gifts and graces whereby the creature becomes free from the law of sin that they may be married to Christ. And having been set free from the service of sin and Satan they are free to serve the living God. And this is their freedom: even

81 Ezekiel 34:29

the righteousness that is eternal, which is known as the soul is redeemed out of the pit of corruption. For where this Seed has risen up, there the creature receives from God of His fullness; but where the Seed is in the tomb, there the curse remains and sin and trespasses reign. Yes, when the Seed has arisen within and the immortal birth is born, then the creature is blessed of God for the Seed's sake, and it is in this Seed that God is truly worshiped. But wherever death still reigns, there the sacrifice of man is an abomination, for they that are dead cannot praise God.

Therefore, this I say to all who find this holy thing moving in you against your lusts and worldly pleasures: take heed, and do not deceive yourselves with a talk of redemption while this Seed lies in prison and has not risen above all your lusts. But wait in the light of Christ which lets you see this, so that you may witness His power to raise His Seed above everything in you that is contrary, and so you shall reign with Him over all the world and its wicked ways. But if you have found this breathing towards God in your soul, and yet pay it no regard, take heed lest He that gave it for your salvation take it from you again⁸² and leave you to your lusts without reproof, for His Spirit will not always strive with you.⁸³ And then it would be better had you never been born. Alas, this has been the lot of many who, after receiving many reproofs and stirrings towards good, are now left to fill up their measure of sin with greediness, who now glory in their shame and boast of their filthiness. And oh, His day is coming upon many more who now little mind the measure of God's grace moving in them, but live in their lusts, sinning against their conscience for selfish ends, and yet please themselves with a talk of redemption. For the common profession now taken up by many is to make the redemption of Christ a cover for immorality and fleshly liberty; but all who know the redemption of Christ by His precious blood are redeemed out from all vain conduct, and into the holy conduct of Him that has called them to be holy. For the redemption which is in Christ Jesus is "to purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God."⁸⁴ For this end "He gave Himself for us, to redeem us from all iniquity, and to purify unto Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works."⁸⁵ And He has "redeemed us to God by His blood, out of kindreds, tongues,"⁸⁶ and out of every sinful nation, to follow the Lamb, and not to follow worldly lusts.

So then, with the light of Christ which lets you see your transgressions, search your hearts, that you may see if the righteous Seed that moves you to righteousness is not oppressed and burdened by the seed of the evildoer, and by that nature which loves carnal delights. For if you are still led captive to do the works of Satan, what redemption do you have more than a talk? It is like a man that has an imagination of eating, but still is hungry; so you imagine freedom, but still serve sin. And while you remain servants of

⁸² "So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents.' For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away." (Matt. 25:28-29)

⁸³ Genesis 6:3

⁸⁴ Hebrews 9:14

⁸⁵ Titus 2:14

⁸⁶ Revelation 5:9

sin you are free from righteousness, just as he that is a servant of righteousness is free from sin. It is an easy thing to imagine righteousness and redemption, but “he that does righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous.”⁸⁷ And this is not known while the Seed of God lies oppressed beneath your lusts and not regarded.

Concerning Justification, Sanctification and Mortification

The wisdom of men in the fall, having found these three words in Scripture, has in the imagination divided and separated that which is one, and which cannot be divided in man’s possession; for it is one Spirit that works all of these wherever He is present, according to the measure received. And this is the Righteous One, who by faith lives in the creature, and the creature lives in Him, and so becomes the justifier and sanctifier of all that believe, and the mortifier of that nature which is outside of the faith, so that one of these things cannot be found without the rest. For the power which sanctifies also mortifies, and the same justifies; and all who know what it is to possess these in life know these things.

Now there is a people whose desire for heaven is more than their desire for holiness, and lest they should spoil their carnal delights, they have conceived (in the imagination of their brains) a justification without sanctification or mortification, wresting those scriptures which condemn the works of the law, and by them seeking also to exclude the righteousness of faith. And because the Scripture says God justifies or pardons the ungodly through faith, they therefore conclude themselves justified in their ungodliness by a belief which they call faith (though they are without the true faith in Christ). For that faith which does not lay hold of God’s righteousness is not the faith of Christ, but rather a dead thing; for the true faith of Christ reveals a righteousness apart from the law, from faith to faith, and also lives in it. So men are justified as they are sanctified and mortified, and no further. And where there is no righteousness, there is no true faith in Christ; but where God’s righteousness is working in the creature, there a true belief is witnessed and faith is shown by works. But the “faith without works is dead,”⁸⁸ being alone, for “as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also,”⁸⁹ and so is your justification dead without holiness and mortification of sin. And you will find in the end that that in you which justifies the wicked is the same that condemns the just, and both are an abomination to the Lord.⁹⁰ But this is your state, you who contend for sin and live in pleasure and carelessness on the earth; yes, you crucify the just and holy One and save the unjust from death. Thus you prove you know not Him who is just, who also justifies, mortifies, sanctifies, and redeems.

87 1 John 3:7

88 James 2:20

89 James 2:26

90 Proverbs 17:15

And although the Scriptures mention these three, this is not so that men will divide them and make people believe they may have one and not all, but to show the various effects of the one work of man's redemption, which are all wrought by one power in the creature. For it is the blood and Spirit of Christ that washes away the filth, and so puts off the old man, and mortifies the deeds of the body, and so sanctifies and justifies, yet none of these without man's obedience, being works of faith and not of self. For by the law of faith all self-sanctification, self-mortification, and self-justification are excluded, these being the work of God wrought by Christ in the believer, who must also join to it in faith and obedience. For God will work in all who believe in the light that they may receive His Son, in whom is the promise and the power unto mortification, sanctification, and justification. But such who would share in His justification without obedience and fellowship in His sufferings, are such as are justified in a dream, while sin still reigns, and the unrighteous one lives and acts in them. Indeed, this is but self seeking to justify self, though man remains dead in trespasses and sins, and not just before God.

But the saints suffered the loss of all things, counting them as dross and dung that they "might know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable to His death."⁹¹ Through death, these came to the power and fellowship of His resurrection, whereby they were justified, being raised with Him to newness of life; and by faith they received the gift of God's righteousness and became servants thereto, and thereby free from sin. This is the true justification, where there is no condemnation, where the deeds of the flesh are mortified, and the creature walks no more after the flesh but after the Spirit. For the condemnation is to all who walk after the flesh; but he that walks in the Spirit is justified, for he no longer fulfills the lusts of the flesh. And in these a mortification is witnessed to the nature which breaks the law, and the Righteous One is known who fulfills the law in such as walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. So, "it is not the hearers of the law that are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified."⁹²

Now in the first or earthly man's state, the law is broken, and mortification and sanctification are denied. Here men would be justified from the guilt of sin but not from the love and power of sin. Yes, they would have their carnal delights both in the world and in heaven also; but this vain hope will perish. But in the second man's state the law is fulfilled through mortification, sanctification, and justification of the Spirit. And no man can be justified where the Righteous One does not live; for that by which the just shall live is that by which the creature is justified.

91 Philippians 3:10

92 Romans 2:13

Concerning the Law

All who know not the ministration of the Spirit are confounded concerning the law. For going to the Scriptures and finding there mentioned a ministration of the letter and a ministration of the Spirit, and they themselves being under neither of these (except in their imaginations, or in notions they have received, but not from the mouth of the Lord), some say they are under the law and that it continues still; others say only the part that is moral continues; others say, no, but it is all done away, and they are not under any ministration of law but under grace; and so by their pretended faith they make void the law, not knowing what they say herein. And truly, this is all that they know, either of the law or the gospel, who read the letter in their carnal wisdom, and imagine what is law and what is grace, not knowing the Spirit by which these were ministered to the saints, who had the law written in their hearts, and grace there also. Such do know that the one does not make void the other, but rather establishes the other; for the coming of Christ was not to nullify the law but to fulfill it. Yes, He did not come to put the law afar off, but to bring it near, that with His light all may see it as it is written in the heart by the living God. And so far is He from destroying or taking away the law, that He establishes it in its force and purity, saying, that “one jot or tittle should not pass away till it be fulfilled.”⁹³

And whereas it was said in the letter, “You shall not commit adultery,” He says, “You shall not lust.” In the letter it was said, “You shall not swear falsely;” but in the Spirit, He says, “Swear not at all.” In the letter, “You shall not kill;” but in the Spirit, “You shall not be angry;” and whosoever does any of these things is guilty before God. Now, far from making void the law, the Spirit declares it in its purity, so that even those who might seem to be clear in the letter, may be found guilty according to the law of the Spirit. Thus by Christ Jesus (who is the end of that law) all may see their condemnation, and by faith in Him come to be set free, not by the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of a heifer, and outward sacrifices, temples, altars, days, or Sabbaths in the letter, but by all of these in Spirit, which are in Christ Jesus ministered to the soul and conscience, to wash away sin, and “purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God,”⁹⁴ which the ministration of the letter and carnal ordinances could not do.

And this is the reason why the ministration of the letter was done away: because it could not make perfect the ones drawing near, as pertaining to the conscience.⁹⁵ So the ministration of the Spirit is preached in its stead, which gives perfect knowledge of sin and perfect redemption from it, and from all things from which the outward law could not deliver. For though the letter may show a man his condemnation, yet it cannot give life;⁹⁶ it can show the duty, but does not give power to perform it, for “the letter kills, but the Spirit giveth life.”⁹⁷

⁹³ Matthew 5:18

⁹⁴ Hebrews 9:14

⁹⁵ Hebrews 9:9; 10:1

⁹⁶ Galatians 3:21

So it is that many read their duty in the letter but lack power to perform what they read, and so set up imaginations instead of performance; some saying the law is done away, and now none are condemned by it; others saying Christ fulfilled it in His own person, and we need only to believe what He did sixteen-hundred years ago; others say, no, but we must do all that we can of what the Scriptures command, and He will do the rest; and still others that whatever we do He makes it accepted with the Father, for Christ performed all that is required. But none of these know God's command in Spirit, which gives both life and power to perform all that is required. And this cannot be known by reading of what others did while you still lack the Spirit and power by which they acted. For when you take the law upon yourself without the Spirit of life, a self-righteousness is begotten by the letter. In this sense the "law was weak through the flesh,"⁹⁸ but the power of the law is known by all who receive it in Spirit and life. For the law is fulfilled in Spirit and not in letter; in Christ and not in self; by faith and not by works; in the everlasting righteousness of God, freely given and received by faith, and revealed in the creature from faith to faith. The law in the letter gives a knowledge of sin; but the law in the Spirit gives not only the knowledge of sin, but the knowledge of God and His righteousness in Christ Jesus for the fulfilling of the law, which is life eternal, according to His promise: "I will write My law in your hearts and put it in your inward parts, and you shall all know Me, from the greatest to the least."⁹⁹

So then, all you who know only commands in the written letter, from there you may fetch your own condemnation, but from there you cannot fetch power for obedience and justification of life. For from within flows life in the Spirit, and not from without in the letter. And here is "the change of the law"¹⁰⁰ to that which is spiritual—to a spiritual priesthood, a spiritual temple, a spiritual altar, circumcision, offering, blood, oracle, anointing, washings, etc. Yes, all of their worship which was outward and could make nothing perfect, has changed and become spiritual and inward; which "brings in a better hope,"¹⁰¹ being more pure and perfect than anything outward could be, even as He is perfect. Now "the law was added because of transgression till the promised Seed should come,"¹⁰² of whom it is prophesied in types and figures. This Seed is Christ, the end of the law to everyone that believes, without respect of persons. So that now God has written in the heart a law in Spirit, whereby the transgressor is condemned in his own conscience. Yes, this law is upon and against the first man, who is the transgressor, and "has dominion over that man as long as he lives,"¹⁰³ both judging, reproofing, and condemning, as well as prophesying of One who will come to fulfill the law in everyone who obeys the light. Thus the "law is a schoolmaster to bring unto Christ;"¹⁰⁴ but until He comes to fulfill it (who is the end of it), there is condemnation upon

97 2 Corinthians 3:6

98 Romans 8:3

99 Jeremiah 31:33-34

100 Hebrews 7:12

101 Hebrews 7:19

102 Galatians 3:19

103 Romans 7:1

the creature, because the pure law of God has been broken. And all this is testified by the light in the conscience, as a witness against the old man and his deeds which are contrary to the perfect law of God. And so by that which is perfect he is condemned who is imperfect, wherever the image of God is lost, and death reigns because of trespasses and sins.

For God did not give a law to condemn His own work, but rather the work of the devil. And wherever the transgressor is, there is the work of the devil. All his works are condemned by the law, until the resurrection of the Seed and the image of God is witnessed, when all things are subdued under Him who is the end of the law, by whom the fruits of the Spirit are also brought forth, “against which there is no law.”¹⁰⁵ And so by the Seed’s resurrection and the virtue thereof, the requirement of God in the conscience is answered, and the creature is saved from the condemnation of the law of God. But condemnation remains upon all where the Seed lies in the tomb, and death reigns in the creature.

Therefore, the law that lays hold upon all transgressors, we witness to continue, and to be spiritual, just, and good, given forth against the first man and his works, whether good or bad (according as men call them). Yes, though a man set himself to do the works of the law ever so zealously, yet the pure law of God is a witness of condemnation against him in his conscience, until the promised Seed has its birth and rise in him. And this is not of the will of the first man, nor after the flesh, but after the Spirit, which is one with the law, and according to the will and grace of God.

Now Israel according to the flesh received the law in the literal ministration of carnal ordinances, and from them Christ was to come, who was “born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law,”¹⁰⁶ if they did believe. Even so now, Israel according to the Spirit, who receive the spiritual law that is written in the heart, shall witness the Child born of the royal Seed, even the Heir of the promise, for the fulfilling of the pure law of God. And indeed there are many witnesses at this day who have patiently waited in that which God has written in their hearts, which is seen with the light of Christ. These have received the faith of the gospel and the end of that faith, even God’s righteousness revealed from faith to faith, whereby the pure law of God is fulfilled in many, and is being fulfilled in others, who abide in their measure of faith which God has dealt to them, walking in the light, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. And so by the law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, these see themselves set free from the law of sin and death, and so witness the power of the gospel. But this you will never do, you who cast the law of God behind your backs and in your vain mind say you are not under it. Truly, in the day of trial you will be found to be under its condemnation.

104 Galatians 3:24

105 Galatians 5:23

106 Galatians 4:4-5

Concerning Christ Jesus

This is He of whom the world talks much, but few there are that know Him. By Him all things were made, and He is the life of all creatures, and was before all creatures, without beginning of days or end of life, a priest forever, and a king whose dominion knows no end. By Him kings reign, and dominions are cast down, though they know Him not wherever self is standing. He is hidden from the world's wisdom, and the depth of man's prudence cannot find Him out, but He reveals Himself to such as walk in His light, which is contrary to all the dark paths of the world. Yes, those who deny themselves may learn the way of the Lord, for to these He freely reveals the way for their return, that He may bring them down from the seat of exaltation and make known to them the beginning from which they were dug.

He is the eternal Word, who was glorified in the heavens with the Father before all time, and then in time was made manifest. For "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,"¹⁰⁷ and "took upon Himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death,"¹⁰⁸ that He might become a living example to all generations. And having finished the work and offered Himself for man's redemption (for which purpose He was begotten), He ascended far above the heavens, to prepare a place for all that follow Him by faith in His light; and from there He appears as a Savior to all who eagerly wait for Him. And truly, only those who know Him for their judge and lawgiver, and who love Him and keep His commands, can know Him for their redeemer; to such He comes, and the Father also, to "make their abode with him."¹⁰⁹

And this is He who is "the light of the world,"¹¹⁰ and "enlightens every man that comes into the world;"¹¹¹ who "stands at the door and knocks; and if any hear His voice and open He will come in and sup with him."¹¹² Such as these know Him, and He knows those who hear His voice. And these are quickened out of trespasses and sins, and the Seed of God rises up over death in them. But where Christ is rejected, death still reigns, and the wisdom by which He is known is thought foolishness.

So if you desire to know Him who is not of this world, but who was before the world was, and is a witness against all the world's ways and wickedness, then mind that light in you which shows you these things. For just as Christ is, so is His light that leads to Him. Yes, that which bears testimony against the world is not of the world, even as He is not of the world, and so it leads out of the world unto Him; but the world by its wisdom knows Him not. And as any follow the light out of the world, you will come to discern that Seed which is crucified by the world's wisdom and glory, to which Seed are all the promises, and in which

¹⁰⁷ John 1:14

¹⁰⁸ Philippians 2:7-8

¹⁰⁹ John 14:23

¹¹⁰ John 8:12

¹¹¹ John 1:9

¹¹² Revelation 3:20

are hidden the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And as this Seed is raised up within by the same Spirit that raised Jesus Christ from the dead, so you shall see Him to whom all power and judgment is committed in heaven and earth, whose flesh is the life of men, and His light is as a law that goes forth, whereby man is led to his spiritual food, and the sons of men see the way out of darkness.

And this is He who cannot be limited or restrained to one place, but fills heaven and earth with His presence, and appears at His pleasure to His own, and dwells in His saints, though the wise of the world know Him not, and imagine His dwelling to be high above the stars. These know Him not, and hating reproof they have put His day afar off, that they may spend their days in folly, feed themselves with the wind, and fill their hearts with carnal delights. And even as the hearts of the children of light become established in grace, these go on disputing about the body of Christ, while the body of sin keeps its rule in them, whereby they are darkened and heart-blind, past feeling the measure of God's grace, with hearts weighed down by dissipation and cares of the world, and minds corrupted with earthly things.

To such as these I say, cease from your imaginations, for Christ only reveals Himself in Spirit to such as wait in the light and love what is pure. To these His appearance is like the sun, whose rising is not by the will of man. Indeed, all must wait for His appearing, if they desire to be saved and refreshed with the beams of His glory. And to all who are still in the night I say this: He shall appear, if you look towards the place of His rising, which is not, "Lo here," and "Lo there;" but within, in your hearts. And all who have come to the "sure Word of prophecy, as to a light that shines in a dark place, to which you do well to take heed till the day dawn and the day-star arise in your hearts,"¹¹³ you will indeed see this sun arise where the day-star appears in your hearts, if you will but wait in the light that shines in the darkness. And you will feel His virtue and life, and receive of the same. Yes, you will see Him as He is, and know Him to be the "Sun of Righteousness, whose arising is with healing in His wings,"¹¹⁴ and whose breaking forth is upon all His enemies which have reigned over the Seed. And truly His spiritual "weapons are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Himself, and having in readiness to revenge all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled."¹¹⁵

And thus the saints know the Son of God with His light, power, and dominion over all things in heaven and in earth, for He rules in righteousness in the hearts of His people, trampling down Satan under their feet. And though hypocrites call Him "Lord, Lord," still they serve and obey the devil, having the words of Christ but not knowing His light, His power, His kingdom and dominion. These have made the name of Christ a reproach among the nations, who call Him a redeemer but still live in their sins. But none know

¹¹³ 2 Peter 1:19

¹¹⁴ Malachi 4:2

¹¹⁵ 2 Corinthians 10:4-6

Jesus further than they know a savior from sin, and not a cover for sins; for the promise of the Father is, "He shall save His people *from* their sins."¹¹⁶

Concerning the Ministry of Christ

The true ministers of Christ are called out of the world and are contrary to the world, being contrary to their own wills and to the wills of all flesh. For such who preach the Word are first begotten of the Word, and so have been begotten contrary to the will of man. And this is evident in all of the Scriptures, and in the history of persecution in all ages to this day: that whenever the mystery of iniquity had spread over the land, and darkness passed over the Seed, and God's people had broken His covenant and lost His Word, then God (in love to His people) sent out those who had His Word in them to bear witness for the Lord against all of their backsliding, their self-ways and their formal worship. And to such as these, the world's ministers have always been enemies, and have sought to stir up the powers of men to devour them, calling them blasphemers and heretics, destroyers of worship, peace-breakers, and enemies to authority, though indeed they were sent of God to testify against false worship and to break the peace of the wicked one, who keeps his house in peace till a stronger Man comes. And you shall never find that any of God's ministers could join with the world's worship, but instead cried against their priests, their prophets, their days, their times, their places, etc., which had gone out from the Word and Spirit into the world.

And as the true ministers of Christ are called out of the world and the things thereof, so they are not concerned for the things of the world; for He who is their master is also their maintainer. Surely none of Christ's ministers ever preached for hire, nor prophesied for money, nor lived upon tithes. Nor were they called masters but rather servants and bond-slaves of Christ, not commissioned by men but sent of God, proving themselves to be ministers indeed in much patience, in affliction, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by love unfeigned, by the Word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left; in honor and dishonor, in evil report and good report; as deceivers and yet true, as unknown and yet well-known, as dying and yet living; chastened, sorrowful, poor, having nothing, wandering up and down, having no certain dwelling-place.

And these, having that Word in them in which is all fullness, need not study what to preach, or steal words from another, like those who speak words in their own will and time, who talk against pride and yet live in it; who preach against sin but cannot cease from it. Yes, the ministers of the world who are commissioned by men confess Christ in words, but in works deny Him. And because of their pride, pleasures, and carnal ends, they have changed the Lord's worship from what it once was, both in matter and manner, means and maintenance, and so have scattered the Lord's people into sects and opinions,

¹¹⁶ Matthew 1:21

forms, customs and traditions in every nation according as best suits their wills. To these I say: your own ways testify to your face, and before all men, that you are no more like the ministers of Christ than those who walked in the same steps before you. So search the Scriptures, and search your hearts with the light of Christ, and count me not your enemy for telling you the truth. I have only cleared my conscience in love to your souls, though such as are deceived through blind zeal and envy cannot receive it.

Appendix: A Brief Biography of James Nayler

Relating His Early Piety and Eminence in the Society of Friends, His Tragic Fall Evinced in the Bristol Incident, His Open Acknowledgement of Error and Sincere Repentance, and His Subsequent Restoration to Fellowship and Usefulness in the Body of Christ.

Chiefly Compiled from: The History of the Rise, Increase, and Progress of the Christian People Called Quakers—by William Sewel; The Life of James Nayler—by Joseph Bevan Gurney; and The Memoirs of John Whiting.

James Nayler was born of honest parents, in the parish of Ardesley, near Wakefield in Yorkshire, about the year 1618. His father was a husbandman of good repute, having a competent estate to live on for the country in which he dwelt. James was educated in English to some degree, and is acknowledged (even by his enemies) to have been an eloquent speaker, though this skill was probably not much more than a natural eloquence, improved by the limited learning which a husbandman might be able to provide for his son in that day.

There is very little account of James Nayler before he became a Friend, but it appears that he was married about 1640, and then removed to Wakefield. The civil war breaking out the following year, he became a soldier in the army of Fairfax, and afterwards a quarter-master under Major General Lambert, serving in the army a total of eight or nine years, before being disabled in Scotland by sickness and returning home in 1649. During all this time, his religious profession was among the Independents.

In the year 1651, George Fox (having now fully entered upon his public ministry) came to Wakefield, where James Nayler appears to have heartily consented to the doctrines which he heard Fox proclaim. Fox's journal informs us that at this time, "James Nayler and Thomas Goodyear came to me, and were both convinced, and received the truth."

Nayler appears to have been a person of a tender conscience from his youth, seeking to keep himself in a

posture of attentiveness to the Lord. In the year following his convincement, he believed himself bound in religious duty to leave his family, and to travel in the Lord's service according as his way would, from time to time, be made known to him. He is said to have received this commission while following behind his plow in the field, meditating upon the things of God. He then heard a voice, bidding him go out from his kindred and from his father's house, with a promise that the Lord would be with him. He exceedingly rejoiced to hear the voice of the Lord, whom he had professed from a child, and had endeavored to serve, but after making some initial preparation for his journey, he did not readily give up to go, but was disobedient to the voice, for which he said he felt the wrath of God upon him, and even thought himself in danger of losing his life. At length, going a little way from home with a friend, not then thinking of a long journey (nor having provided for one), he was commanded to go into the west. He knew not the purpose of this mission, but upon his arrival it was given him what to declare; and so he continued, not knowing one day what he was to do the next.

It is not clear whether this journey was to the west of England, or only westward of his habitation, Wakefield. The latter is most probable, for in the year 1652 we find him suffering much personal abuse at Walney Island, in Lancashire, and disputing with priests in Westmoreland. In the Eleventh month of the same year, Nayler was indicted at the quarter sessions at Appleby for what was termed "blasphemy;" that is (according to his indictment), for having said that "Christ was in him," and that "there was but one Word of God." The same year that Nayler was released from Appleby jail, if not during his confinement, he wrote a paper, entitled, *Truth Cleared from Scandal, Being James Nayler's Answer and Declaration Respecting Some Things That Were Charged Upon Him*. And as this document contains James Nayler's belief concerning Christ (which, a few years after, became a point of much controversy), the following excerpt is thought worthy of notice.

Concerning Jesus Christ: [says Nayler] He is the eternal Word of God, by whom all things were made and are upheld, who was before all time, but was manifested in time for the recovery of lost man. This Word became flesh, and dwelt among the saints, who is the same yesterday, and today, and forever; who did and does dwell in the saints; who suffered and rose again, and ascended into heaven, and is set on the right hand of God. To Him all power is given, in heaven and in earth. And though He fills all places, and is the light of the world, yet He is known to none but those who receive and follow Him. These He leads up to God, out of all the ways, works, and worships of the world, by His pure light in them, whereby He reveals the man of sin, and by His power casts him out, and so prepares the bodies of the saints as a fit temple for the pure God to dwell in, with whom dwells no unclean thing. Thus He reconciles God and man, and renews the image of God in purity and holiness; and hereby the image of Satan (which is all sin and uncleanness) is defaced. And none can witness redemption further than Christ is thus revealed in them to set them free from sin; which Christ I witness to be revealed in me in measure (Gal. 1:16. 1 Cor. 8:5. Col. 1:27).

After the termination of his confinement, Nayler continued traveling in the service of the gospel in the

north of England. For several years, he was an eminent member of the Society of Friends, acquitting himself well, both in word and writing, so that many came to receive the Truth by his ministry. He was sound in doctrine, wise in deportment, and known by all to be a man of great discernment; and many, even among those who were not called Quakers, were made to confess that he preached as one having authority, and not as the scribes, “in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.”¹ The following anecdote is indicative of the ministry of Nayler at this time. It is taken from the journal of James Gough, and relates an event that was influential in the convincement of the honorable minister and elder, James Wilson.

In [James Wilson's] young years, having been educated in the established religion or church of England (so called), he had conceived a very contemptible opinion of the people called Quakers and their principles, and at a public house falling into company with some others of like sentiments, this people became the subject of their discourse. As they were expressing their sentiments of contempt and dislike of them pretty freely, a person of some note, who had been an officer under Oliver Cromwell, came into the room, and overhearing their discourse, observed to them in substance: “That he apprehended their prejudice towards this people arose from their lack of knowing them; for my part, he continued, I entertain very different sentiments of them.” And perceiving them struck with admiration to hear him, whom they looked upon as a man of sense as well as consequence, express himself after this manner, he proceeded to the following purpose: “You seem to wonder that I express a favorable opinion of the Quakers; I will inform you the reason.

After the battle of Dunbar, as I was riding in Scotland at the head of my troop, I observed at some distance from the road, a crowd of people, and one higher than the rest. Upon seeing this I sent one of my men to see and bring me word what was the meaning of this gathering; and seeing him ride up and stay there, without returning according to my order, I sent a second, who stayed in like manner; and then I determined to go myself. When I came there, I found it was James Nayler preaching to the people; and with such power and reaching energy, as I had not till then been witness of. I could not help staying a little, although I was afraid to stay; for I was made a Quaker, being forced to tremble at the sight of myself. I was struck with more terror by the preaching of James Nayler, than I was at the battle of Dunbar, when we had nothing else to expect but to fall a prey to the swords of our enemies, without being able to help ourselves. I clearly saw that the cross must be submitted to, so I dared stay no longer, but got off, and carried condemnation for it in my own breast. The people there, in the clear and powerful opening of their states, cried out against themselves, imploring mercy, a thorough change, and the whole work of salvation to be effected in them. Ever since I have thought myself obliged to acknowledge on their behalf, as I have now done.”

This, James Wilson said, proved the first step towards his convincement of our principles, inclining him to go to our meetings, which, before he had an aversion to the thoughts of, from the prejudice above hinted. In those days the meetings of friends were more eminently favored with divine power, as they lived more devoted to Christ; and consequently more abounding with his love flowing in their hearts.

We have another short account of Nayler, taken from the journal of Thomas Ellwood, who, before he became a member of the society of Friends, had met with him while visiting Isaac Penington’s home at Chalfont in Buckinghamshire. Ellwood writes:

¹ 1 Corinthians 2:4

After supper, the evenings being long, the servants of the family (who were Quakers) were called in, and we all sat down in silence. We had not sat long before Edward Burrough began to speak among us. And although he spoke not long, yet what he said did touch, as I suppose, my father's religious nerve, as the phrase goes. For my father having been from his youth a professor of religion (though not joined in close communion with any one sort) and valuing himself upon the knowledge he esteemed himself to have of the various notions of each profession, thought he had now a fair opportunity to display his knowledge, and thereupon began to make objections against what had been delivered. The subject of Burrough's discourse was the universal free grace of God extended to all mankind; to which my father opposed in support of the Calvinistic tenet of particular and personal predestination. But in his defense of this indefensible notion, he found himself more at a loss than he expected. Edward Burrough said not much to him upon it, though what he said was close and cogent. But James Nayler interposing, handled the subject with so much perspicuity and clear demonstration, that his reasoning seemed to be irresistible; and so I suppose my father found it, which made him willing to drop the discourse. As for Edward Burrough, he was a brisk young man of a ready tongue, and might have been, for aught I then knew, a scholar, which made me less to admire his way of reasoning. But what dropped from James Nayler had the greater force upon me, because he looked but like a plain simple country-man, having the appearance of a husbandman or a shepherd.

Towards the latter end of the year 1654, or the beginning of 1655, James Nayler came to London, and found there a meeting of Friends which had already been gathered through the service of Edward Burrough and Francis Howgill. There he preached in such an eminent manner that many admired his great gift and began to esteem him much above his brethren, which, as it brought him no benefit, so it gave occasion for some disparity in the society. This continued to such a degree, that some forward and inconsiderate women (of whom Martha Simmons was the chief) assumed the boldness to openly dispute with Francis Howgill and Edward Burrough during their preaching, and thus to disturb the meetings:² whereupon these two men, who were truly excellent ministers, did not fail, according to their duty, to reprove this indiscretion. But these women were so disgusted, that Martha and another woman went and complained to James Nayler, seeking to incense him against Francis Howgill and Edward Burrough; but this did not succeed, for Nayler showed himself afraid to pass judgment upon his brethren. Hereupon Martha fell into a passion, and in a kind of moaning or weeping, she bitterly cried out with a mournful shrill, saying, "I looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry!"³ Thus she continued to cry aloud in a passionate, lamenting manner, which so entered and pierced James Nayler, that it brought him to great sorrow and sadness, and left him in a dejected and disconsolate spirit. Fear and doubting then entered him, so that he came to be clouded in his understanding, bewildered, and at a loss in his discernment. The piercing lamentations of this woman are thought to have had a great share in the overturning of his judgment; and regrettably he became not only the dupe of her (and

² These women's practice we may suppose to be somewhat like that which gave occasion for the apostle Paul to say, "Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak." 1 Cor. 14:34. This prohibition of "speaking," must refer to voluntary discourse, by way of reasoning or disputing, and not such speaking as springs from the leading of the Spirit, or from a true concern to prophesy; for the apostle in the same epistle has defined prophesy to be speaking unto men "for edification, exhortation, and comfort." chap. 14:3; and has also (in Chap. 11) made express mention of women's praying and prophesying together with the men.—William Sewel

³ Isaiah 5:7

her associates) violent grief, but was then led further aside by their flattery. Thus, by giving ear to the fawning praise of a few whimsical people (which he ought to have abhorred and reproved), he found himself increasingly estranged from the leading members of the Society of Friends, who now could not unite with his conduct. But his sorrowful fall ought to stand as a warning to all, even to those that are endued with great gifts, that they do not presume to be exalted, lest they also fall. And may all endeavor to continue in true humility, in which alone a Christian can be kept safe.

Hannah Stranger, whom I [William Sewel] know very well, and have reason to believe to be a woman of high imaginations, at this time wrote several very extravagant letters to James Nayler; calling him the everlasting Son of Righteousness, Prince of Peace, the only begotten Son of God, the fairest of ten thousands, etc. In the letters of Jane Woodcock, John Stranger, and some others, were expressions of similar extravagance; and the said Hannah Stranger, Martha Simmons, and Dorcas Erbury, arrived at such a height in their folly, that they even kneeled before Nayler in the prison at Exeter and kissed his feet.

Near this time, George Fox, being recently released from Launceston Jail, came to Exeter prison and attempted to speak to Nayler, whom he acknowledges in his journal to have “run out into imaginations.” At the time of this encounter, Nayler appears to have slighted Fox’s advice, and yet he offered him an affectionate salutation, which Fox in turn rejected, saying, that since Nayler had turned against the power of God, he would not receive his show of kindness.

Being now thoroughly beguiled, Nayler grew yet more exorbitant. Upon being released from that prison, he rode to Bristol in the beginning of November, attended by his aforementioned flattering companions. Passing through the suburbs of Bristol, one Thomas Woodcock went bareheaded before him,⁴ while one of the women led his horse. Dorcas, Martha, and Hannah, spread their scarfs and handkerchiefs before him, and the company sang, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God of hosts, Hosannah in the highest: holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God of Israel.” Thus these mad people carried on, while they walked through the mire and dirt until they came into Bristol, where they were examined by the magistrates and committed to prison. Not long after, Nayler was carried to London to be examined by the parliament, and how it went there may be seen in the printed trial which the parliament was pleased to publish.⁵ I believe that James Nayler was clouded in his understanding throughout this entire affair; but howsoever grievous was his fall, yet it pleased God, in His infinite mercy, to raise him up again, and to bring him to such a sincere repentance (as we may see in what follows), that he abhorred not only this whole business, but

4 i.e. without his hat, a gesture used by Friends only when addressing the Lord in prayer.—Editor

5 But the extravagance of the sentence which parliament passed upon him, gives great reason to suspect that this published account was far from impartial, and that it was chiefly published to justify their cruelty. According to John Whiting, some of Nayler’s answers before parliament were innocent enough, some were not clear, and some were aggravated by his adversaries; some accusations he denied, some he owned; they reported the worst, and more than was true in some things, adding and diminishing as they saw fit. Much is lacking in the printed report of what he spoke to the committee. But they wrested and perverted his words where they could, endeavoring to draw out words to ensnare him, and to take away his life. And to further manifest their confusion, they sought to make him kneel when he was before them, and to put off his hat to them, though a part of the charge against him was that some had kneeled to him.—William Sewel

also manifested his heavy sorrow in heart-rending expressions, which were published and will be shown in their proper place.

What has been said of the odd doings in Exeter prison, and of his riding into Bristol, was not denied by him, nor by the rest of the company when they were examined by a committee of parliament, who made their report on the 5th of December. On the 17th of the same month (after much debate and contradiction in the parliament, many not approving the severity used against him), they came to the following resolution:

That James Nayler be set in the stocks, with his head in the stocks, in the Palace-yard, Westminster, during the space of two hours, on Thursday next, and then be whipped by the hangman as he is conveyed through the streets of London, from Westminster to the Old Exchange. There he is likewise to be set in the stocks, with his head in the stocks for the space of two hours, between the hours of eleven and one, on Saturday next, in each place wearing a paper containing an inscription of his crimes. Then, at the Old Exchange his tongue is to be bored through with a hot iron, and his forehead is to be stigmatized with the letter B. Afterwards he is to be sent to Bristol, and be conveyed into and through the said city on horseback, with his face backward, and there also be publicly whipped the next market-day. From there he is to be committed to prison in Bridewell, London, and kept from the society of all people, and put to hard labor till he shall be released by parliament; during which time he is to be debarred the use of pen, ink, and paper, and shall have no relief but what he earns by his daily labor.

It was long before parliament could agree upon this sentence; for though blasphemy was supposed to be committed, yet Nayler's tongue seemed not properly guilty of it, since it was never shown that any blasphemous words had been spoken by him.⁶ Many indeed thought it a very severe judgment to be executed upon one whose crime seemed more to proceed from a clouded understanding, than from any willful intention of evil. And though several persons of different religious persuasions, being moved with compassion towards Nayler (as a man carried away by foolish imaginations), offered petitions to the parliament on his behalf, yet it was resolved not to read them until the sentence was pronounced against him.

After judgment was concluded by parliament, James Nayler was brought up to the bar; and when the speaker, sir Thomas Widdrington, was about to pronounce the aforementioned sentence, Nayler insisted that he did not know his offense. To this the speaker replied, "You shall know your offense by your punishment." Nayler then bore the reading of his sentence with patience, and afterwards appeared desirous to speak something, but liberty was denied him. Nevertheless he was heard to say, with a composed mind, "I pray God will not lay it to your charge."

6 If we suppose it was the honor of the Christian religion [which the parliament had in view], and the abhorrence of blasphemy which it felt, why then did it not pursue the companions of Nayler with equal severity, from whose mouths proceeded the expressions which were termed blasphemous; and whose hearts, hands, and knees, had been the means of erecting him into an object of worship? For my part, I have long suspected the selection of the victim to have arisen from a desire to crush the rising Society of Friends, in the person of a fallen brother. Nayler had been truly eminent and esteemed. The others owed their notoriety only to the injurious part which they were acting towards him.—Joseph Gurney Bevan

On the 18th of December, James Nayler suffered the first part of the sentence. After having stood a full two hours with his head in the stocks, he was stripped, tied to a cart, and whipped from the Palace-yard to the Old Exchange, receiving three-hundred and ten stripes. The executioner would have given him one more (as he confessed to the sheriff), there being three-hundred and eleven kennels, but his foot slipping, the stroke fell upon his own hand, which caused him much pain. All this Nayler bore with so much patience and quietness that it astonished many of the beholders, though his body was in a most pitiful condition. He was also much hurt with horses treading upon his feet, whereon the print of the nails could be seen. Rebecca Travers, a sober and honest woman (not one of his followers), who washed his wounds, in a certificate which was presented to the parliament and afterwards printed, says:

“There was not the space of a man’s fingernail free from stripes and blood, from his shoulders near to his waist. His right arm was sorely striped, his hands much hurt by the cords, so that they bled and swelled; and the blood and wounds on his back did very little appear at first sight, by reason of the abundance of dirt that covered them, till it was washed off.”

His punishment was so severe, that some judged his sentence would have been more mild if it had been immediate execution. Indeed it seemed that there was a party who, not being able to prevail in parliament so as to have him sentenced to death, yet strove to the utmost of their power to make him sink under the weight of his punishment. The 20th of December was the time appointed for executing the second part of the sentence, that is, the boring through his tongue and the stigmatizing of his forehead; but by reason of the most cruel whipping, he was brought to such a low state that many persons of note, moved with compassion, presented petitions to the parliament on his behalf, who postponed further punishment for one week.

During this seven-day interval, several persons presented another petition to parliament, in which are these words:

Your moderation and clemency in postponing the punishment of James Nayler, in consideration of his illness of body, has refreshed the hearts of many thousands in these cities, who are altogether uninvolved in his practice; wherefore we most humbly beg your pardon that we are constrained to appear before you again (not daring to do otherwise), requesting now that you would revoke the remaining part of your sentence against the said James Nayler, leaving him to the Lord, and to such gospel remedies as the Lord has sanctified. We are persuaded you will find such a course of love and forbearance more effectual to reclaim him; and this will leave a seal of your love and tenderness upon our spirits.

This petition, being presented at the bar of the house by about one hundred persons on the behalf of the whole, was accordingly read and debated by them; but seeing that it was not likely to produce the desired effect, the petitioners thought themselves bound in duty and conscience to address the Lord Protector⁷ for the revoking of the remaining part of the sentence. The Protector, thereupon, sent a letter to the

⁷ Oliver Cromwell

parliament, which occasioned some debate in the house. And as the day for executing the remaining part of the sentence drew near, the petitioners made yet a second address to Cromwell. Indeed it was very remarkable that so many inhabitants of London who were not of the society of those called Quakers, showed themselves so much concerned in this business. To me this seems to have proceeded from compassion towards the person of James Nayler; whom they regarded as one who had fallen into error more through unwatchfulness, than to have been guilty of willful blasphemy. However, notwithstanding all these humble petitions, it seems that the public preachers prevailed so much with Cromwell that he could not resolve to put a stop to the intended execution.

Five of these ministers, whose names were Caryl, Manton, Nye, Griffith, and Reynolds, came on the 24th of December, by order from the parliament (as it was said,) to speak with Nayler concerning the things for which he was detained, and would not permit either a friend or any other to be present in the room with them. A certain impartial or neutral person requested this earnestly, but was denied. However, this same person, coming into the prison after Nayler's conference with these ministers, asked him what had taken place. Nayler told him, that he saw the priests had an intent to make him suffer as an evil-doer, and had therefore denied any to be present who might serve as an unbiased judge between them and him. Nayler therefore told them he would not say anything, unless what passed between them was written down, and a copy was given him to keep, or left with the jailer, signed by them. This was at first consented to, and the ministers propounded several questions to him, and took his answers in writing. They first asked him if he was sorry for the blasphemies of which he was guilty, and whether he did recant and renounce the same. To this his answer was, "What blasphemies, name them?" But they not being able to instance any particular, he continued, "Would you have me recant and renounce, you know not what?" Then they asked him whether he did believe there was a Jesus Christ, to which he answered, he did believe there was, and that Jesus had taken up His dwelling in his heart and spirit, and for the testimony of Him he now suffered. Then one of the preachers said, "But I believe in a Jesus that never was in any man's heart;" to which Nayler replied, he knew no such Christ, for the Christ he knew filled heaven and earth, and dwelt in the hearts of believers. Next they demanded of him why he allowed those women to worship and adore him? To which he replied, "Bowing to the creature I deny; but if they beheld the power of Christ, wherever it is, and bowed to it, he had nothing by which he might oppose it."⁸ He then said to the ministers, "Have you thus long professed the Scriptures, and do you now stumble at what they hold forth?" Whereupon they desired him to show one instance in Scripture wherein such a practice was held forth. He answered, "What do you think of the Shunammite's falling down at the feet of Elisha and bowing before him? As

8 The most that I find in his examination, either in Bristol or London, before the committee of parliament, as published from their report, was that Nayler acknowledged Christ in him, but never that he was Christ; and that he took the honor given him by these people, not as to himself, but as to Christ in him; which yet is more than any man ought to receive. For when the beloved disciple, John, fell at the angel's feet to worship him, he, (though an angel,) said unto him, 'See you do it not, I am your fellow-servant, and of your brethren that have the testimony of Jesus, worship God.' Rev. 19:10. And if an angel ought not, surely no mortal man ought to receive or accept it. But that J. Nayler received it to himself, as a creature, he utterly denied, stating that there could not be a more abominable thing than to take from the Creator, and give to the creature, etc.—John Whiting

also several others in Scripture spoken of, as Abigail to David, and Nebuchadnezzar to Daniel." Upon hearing this, they paused awhile, and said at length, "That was but a civil act or acknowledgement." To this Nayler replied, "So also you might interpret the act of those women, if your eye was not evil, seeing that the outward action is one and the same." And perceiving that they were seeking to twist words from him to their own purpose, he said, "How soon have you forgot the works of the former bishops, for you are now found in the same business, seeking to ensnare the innocent." Whereupon the ministers rose up, and with bitterness of spirit, burned what they had written, and left him with some harsh expressions. And when they were departing, he requested that the parliament send him such questions in writing as they desired to have answered, and give him freedom to return his reply in writing also.

By this account, it seems that Nayler, though still under a cloud, was yet a little more clear in his understanding than before. Nevertheless, being pursued by fierce enemies, the execution of his sentence was not stopped, but performed on the 27th of December. Robert Rich, a brash and disorderly man, and one of Nayler's followers, was this day at the parliament door, from eight in the morning till about eleven, crying out to the parliament men as they passed by. To one whom he judged to be innocent in this affair, he said, "He that dwells in love, dwells in God, for God is love;" and to another, whom he believed to be swayed by envy, he said, "He that hates his brother is a man-slayer, and he that hates his brother is a murderer." Some then supposed that Nayler would not have to suffer any further punishment, seeing how many honorable persons had approached the parliament and the Protector on his behalf. But Rich, knowing how the case stood, told the people that the "innocent was about to suffer," and then cried out to some of the parliament men that he was clear from the blood of all men, and desired them to be as well. He then went towards the Exchange, got onto the stocks, and held Nayler by the hand while he was burnt in the forehead, and bored through the tongue with a hot iron. And being more than a little affected with Nayler's suffering, Rich licked his wounds, seeking thereby (it seems) to alleviate the pain; and then led him by the hand from the stocks.

A few particulars respecting the execution of this part of the sentence are noteworthy. Both the boring iron and the branding mark were red hot. The former was held for a short time in the tongue, that the bystanders might clearly witness the execution, and the letter B was held to the forehead until smoke arose. During all this time Nayler did not flinch, but when he was unbound, he embraced the executioner. It was also very remarkable that, notwithstanding there must have been many thousands of people present, yet they were very quiet, and few were heard to revile him, or seen to throw anything at him. And when he was burning, the people both in front and behind him, and on both sides, with one consent removed their hats, as seeming generally moved with compassion and goodwill towards him.

About three weeks after his suffering the second part of the sentence at London, the third part (namely, his exposure in the stocks, and the second whipping) was inflicted at Bristol. According to an eye-witness, he was there bound to the back of a horse cart, and whipped from the middle of Thomas street, over the bridge, up High street, to the middle of Broad street, all of which he bore with wonderful patience.⁹ I am

also informed, by a letter of one Richard Snead, an ancient man of about eighty years, that Nayler had written a letter to the magistrates of Bristol, wherein he had disapproved, and penitently condemned his previous behavior there.

Many now rejoiced, hoping to see the downfall of the Quakers, and expecting that Friends were now divided amongst themselves. But whatever disharmony existed among a few, it quickly came to an end, for the Quakers openly spoke against Nayler and his doings, and though they sought to restore him, they never sought to defend him.¹⁰

After this he was brought back to Bridewell, London, (as sentenced), where he continued a prisoner about two years. During this confinement he came to a true and full repentance of his transgression; and having at some point been granted the use of pen and ink, wrote several books and papers condemning his error, which were published in print. On the 8th of September, 1659, he was liberated by parliament, and went directly to Bristol, the chief scene of his offense. There, in a public meeting, he made an open confession of his fault in so affecting a manner, as to draw tears from most of those who were present, and to occasion his reconciliation with many who had been estranged from him.¹¹ There is no doubt that he had made good use of the solitude which his confinement afforded, and the alteration effected in his conduct towards his friends, the Quakers, quickly produced a return of their friendship and fellowship.

After his release, he published several more statements of recantation. One of which is as follows:

Glory to God Almighty, who rules in the heavens, and in whose hands are all the kingdoms of the earth; who raises up, and casts down at His will; who has ways to confound the exaltation of men, to chastise His children, and to make men know they are as grass before Him. Indeed, His judgments are above the highest of men, His pity reaches the deepest misery, and the arm of His mercy is underneath, to lift up the prisoner out of the pit, and to save those who trust in Him from the great destruction which vain man, through his folly, brings upon himself. For He has delivered my soul from darkness, and made way for my freedom out of the prison-house,

9 While Nayler was dragging after a cart horse, and followed by the scourge, Robert Rich rode before him bare-headed, and sung, 'Holy, Holy.' Rich, however, does not seem to have been eminent enough among the Quakers for parliamentary censure, and remained without punishment.—Joseph Gurney Bevan.

10 Robert Barclay, in his piece called, *William Mitchell Unmasked*, has the following expressions concerning James Nayler. (See p. 84) "The story of James Nayler, which Mitchell subjoins, any may observe to be merely brought in to render us odious, though indeed it tends no way to our disadvantage, Nayler being in that thing, and at that time, altogether denied by us; and has since in print freely acknowledged his fall in that hour of temptation; of whose sincere repentance and true return to the fellowship of the truth we have had many evident tokens." And in p. 876, *Apology Vindicated*, in answer to an examination by John Brown, he writes: "But the poor man thinks (it is likely) he has hit the nail on the head, when he says, p. 54, upon this subject, 'One thing I would ask, what he thinks of that honor and worship that was given to James Nayler, as he rode into Bristol, Oct. 24, 1656?' I answer, I think it was both wicked and abominable, and so do the people called Quakers; who thereupon disavowed him, along with all those that had a hand in it."—Joseph Gurney Bevan.

11 After he was set at liberty, he went to Bristol, where in a public meeting, he made confession of his offense, as to his former fall, and declared in so powerful a manner, as tendered and broke the meeting into tears, so that there were few dry eyes, (as related by some then present,) and many were bowed in their minds and reconciled to him.—John Whiting

and ransomed me from the great captivity; He who divides the sea before Him, and removes the mountains out of His way, in the day when He takes upon Himself to deliver the oppressed out of the hand of him that is too mighty for him in the earth. Let His name be exalted forever, and let all flesh fear before Him, whose breath is life to His own, but a consuming fire to the adversary.

And as for the Lord Jesus Christ, His everlasting dominion is upon earth, and His kingdom is above all the power of darkness; even that Christ of whom the Scriptures declare, who was, and is, and is to come, the light of the world to all generations. Of His coming I testify with the rest of the children of light, who are begotten of the immortal seed; for His truth and virtue now shine in the world, being the Savior of all who believe therein unto righteousness and eternal life. He has been the rock of my salvation, and His Spirit has given quietness and patience to my soul in deep affliction for His name's sake. May He be praised forever.

But condemned forever be all false worship with which any have idolized my person in the night of my temptation, when the power of darkness had risen above in me. All the casting of their clothes in the way, their bowing and singing, and all the rest of those wild actions which did in any way tend to dishonor the Lord, or draw the minds of any from the measure of Christ Jesus in themselves, to look at flesh (which is as grass), or to ascribe to something visible that which belongs to Christ Jesus. All of that I condemn, by which the pure name of the Lord has been in any way blasphemed through me in the time of my temptation, or by which the spirits of any have been grieved who truly love the Lord Jesus throughout the whole world, in whatsoever profession. This offense I confess, which has been sorrow of heart, that the enemy of man's peace in Christ should get this advantage in the night of my trial, to stir up wrath and offenses in the creation of God—a thing the simplicity of my heart did not intend, the Lord knows; who in His endless love has given me power over it now, to condemn it.

And also that letter which was sent to me in Exeter, by John Stranger, when I was in prison, with these words, "Your name shall be no more James Nayler, but Jesus;" this I judge to be written from the imagination; and a fear struck me when I first saw it, so I put it close into my pocket, not intending that any should see it. But they finding it on me, spread it abroad, which the simplicity of my heart never approved. So this I deny also, that the name of Christ Jesus was received instead of James Nayler, or ascribed to me; for that name is to the promised Seed to all generations; and he that has the Son, has the name, which is His life and power, the salvation and the unction, into which name all the children of light are baptized. So the name of Christ I confess before men, which name to me has been a strong tower in the night and in the day. This is the name of Christ Jesus, which I confess, the Son and the Lamb, the promised Seed, wherever He speaks in male and female. But whoever does not have the Son in himself, does not have the life, neither can they have it by idolizing my person, or the person of any flesh.

And all those ranting, wild spirits, who then gathered around me in that time of darkness, and all their wild actions and wicked words against the honor of God, and His pure Spirit and people—I deny that bad spirit,

together with its power and works. And as far as I gave advantage, through lack of judgment, for that evil spirit to arise in any, I justly take shame to myself, having formerly had power over that spirit in judgment and discerning, wherever it was. This darkness came over me through lack of watchfulness and obedience to the pure eye of God, and through not diligently minding the reproof of life, which condemns the adulterous spirit. So the adversary got advantage, who always seeks to devour; and being taken captive from the true light, I was walking in the night where none can work, as a wandering bird fit for a prey. And truly, if the Lord of all my mercies had not rescued me, I would have perished; for I was as one appointed to death and destruction, and there was none that could deliver me. All of this I confess, that God may be justified in His judgment, and magnified in His endless mercies, who did not forsake His captive in the night, even when His Spirit was daily provoked and grieved; but has brought me forth to give glory to His name forever.

It is in my heart to confess to God, and before men, my folly and offense in that day. Yet there were also many things formed against me in that day (to take away my life and bring scandal upon the Truth) of which I am not guilty at all; such as the accusation that I committed adultery with some of those women who came with us from Exeter prison, and also those who were with me at Bristol the night before I suffered there. With regard to both of these accusations I am clear before God, who kept me in that day both in thought and deed, as to all women, like a child; God is my witness. This I mention in particular (hearing of some who still do not cease to reproach God's Truth and people therewith) that the mouth of enmity might be shut from evil speaking; though this touches not my conscience.

And concerning the report that I raised Dorcas Erbury from the dead physically, this I also deny, and I condemn this testimony to be out of the Truth; though that power which quickens the dead I do not deny, which is the Word of eternal life. This I give forth, that it may go as far as the offense against the Spirit of Truth has gone abroad, that all burdens may be taken off of the Truth, and that the Truth, the true light, and all that walk therein may be cleared, and the deeds of darkness be condemned; and also that all who are yet in darkness may not act in the night, but stay their minds upon God, who dwells in the light, and has no fellowship with the workers of iniquity. For had I done this when darkness first came upon me, and not been led by others, I would not have run myself against the Rock to be broken (which Rock had so long borne me, and of whom I had so largely drank, and of which I now drink in measure). To Him be the glory of all, and to Him every tongue must confess, as Judge and Savior, God over all, blessed forever.

Nayler added to this an exhortation to the reader how to behave if, at any time, he comes to be tempted to sin, and also a warning not to rely too much upon gifts, wisdom, and knowledge, and then concluded with these words:

These things I have learned in the depths and in secret, when I was alone, and now declare openly in the day of Your mercy, O Lord. Glory to the Highest forevermore, who has thus far set me free to praise His righteousness and His mercy; and to the eternal, invisible, pure God, over all, be fear, obedience, and glory

forevermore. Amen.

—JAMES NAYLER

He wrote another paper wherein he related at large, how it was by unwatchfulness that he came to fall, after having once obtained much victory over the power of Satan, by the grace of God, when he daily walked humbly in his fear; for he had formerly labored faithfully in the ministry of the gospel for some years. But what is remarkable is that, though he used to pass with great boldness through all opposition, yet coming to the city of London (just prior to his fall) he entered it with the greatest fear that ever he knew in any place, foreseeing in spirit (as he relates) something to befall him there, but not knowing what it might be:

Yet I had at that time (he continues) the same presence and power I had known before, in whatever place or service I was led of the Spirit; for keeping in that life I never returned without victory in the Lord Jesus Christ. But not minding in all things to stand single and low to the motions of that endless life, by Him to be led in all things within and without, but giving way to the reasoning part with respect to some things which in themselves had no seeming evil, little by little my mind was drawn out after trifles, vanities, and persons, which took hold in the affectionate part. By this my mind was drawn out from the constant watch and pure fear, into which I was once begotten. Thus, having in a great measure lost my own guide, and darkness having come upon me, I sought a place where I might be alone to weep and cry before the Lord, that I might find His face and recover my condition.

But by then my adversary, who had long waited his opportunity, had got in, and bestirred himself every way, so that I could not be hidden; and several messages came to me, some true, and some false, as I have seen since. So, knowing some to be true (namely, how I had lost my condition), with this I let in the false messages also; and so letting go of what little remained of the true light in myself, I gave myself up wholly to be led by others, whose work was then to divide me from the children of light,¹² which was done, though much was done by several of them to prevent it, and in tender love many labored to help me. And after I was led out from them, the Lord God of my life sent several of His servants with His word after me, calling for my return, all of which was rejected. Yes, my provocation in that time of temptation was exceedingly great against the pure love of God; yet He left me not. And after I had given myself under the power of my adversary, and darkness had risen above in me, then he so prevailed that all things were turned and perverted against my right seeing, hearing, or understanding; only I had a secret hope and faith in my God, whom I had formerly served, that He would bring me through it, and to the end of it, and that I should again see the day of my redemption from under it all. And this quieted my soul in my greatest tribulation.

12 i.e. The Society of Friends

The author then, seriously exhorting others who might also fall into great temptation, concludes with these words:

He who has saved my soul from death thus far, and has lifted my feet up out of the pit, even to Him be glory forever. Let every troubled soul trust in Him, for His mercy endures forever.

—JAMES NAYLER

That he came to a perfect recovery out from having been so deceived, seems to appear plainly by the following thanksgiving to God for His mercies, which he also published after his fall:

It is in my heart to praise You, O my God. Let me never forget You, what You have been to me in the night, by Your presence in the day of trial, when I was beset in darkness, when I was cast out as a wandering bird, when I was assaulted with strong temptations; then Your presence in secret did preserve me, and in a low state I felt You near me. When the floods sought to sweep me away, You set a boundary for them how far they should pass over. When my way was through the sea, and when I passed under the mountains, there You were present with me. When the weight of the hills was upon me, You upheld me, else I would have sunk under the earth. When I was as one altogether helpless; when tribulation and anguish was upon me day and night, and the earth was without foundation; when I went on in the way of wrath, and passed by the gates of hell; when all comforts stood afar off, and he that is my enemy had dominion; when I was cast into the pit, and was as one appointed to death; when I was between the millstones, and as one crushed with the weight of his adversary; as a father, You were with me, yes, the rock of Your presence. When the mouths of lions roared against me, and fear took hold of my soul in the pit, then I called upon You in the night, and my cries were strong before You daily. You answered me from Your habitation, and delivered me from Your dwelling-place; saying, “I will set you above all your fears, and lift up your feet above the head of oppression.” I believed, and was strengthened, and Your word was my salvation.

You did fight on my behalf when I wrestled with death; and when darkness would have shut me up, then Your light shone about me, and Your banner was over my head. When my work was in the furnace, and as I passed through the fire, I was not consumed by You, though the flames ascended above my head. When I beheld the dreadful visions and was amongst the fiery spirits, Your faith stayed me, else through fear I had fallen. I saw You and believed, so the enemy could not prevail.

When I look back into Your works I am astonished, and see no end of Your praises. Glory, glory to You, says my soul, and let my heart be ever filled with thanksgiving. While Your works remain, they shall show forth Your power. Then did You lay the foundation of the earth, and lead me under the waters, and in the deep did You show me wonders, and Your forming of the world. By Your hand You led me in safety, till You showed me the pillars of the earth. Then did the heavens shower down, they were covered with darkness, and the powers

thereof were shaken, and Your glory descended. Yes, You filled the lower parts of the earth with gladness, and the springs of the valleys were opened, and Your showers descended abundantly, so that the earth was filled with virtue. You made Your plant to spring, and the thirsty soul became as a watered garden. Then did You lift me out of the pit, and set me forth in the sight of my enemies. You proclaimed liberty to the captive, and called my acquaintances near me. They to whom I had been a wonder, looked upon me, and in Your love I obtained favor from those who had forsaken me. Then did gladness swallow up sorrow, and I forsook all my troubles; and I said, "How good is it that man be proved in the night, that he may know his folly; so that every mouth may become silent in Your hand until You make man known to himself, and have slain the boaster, and showed him the vanity that vexes Your spirit."

—JAMES NAYLER

This plainly appears to be a poetical piece, as the author makes use of allegorical sayings throughout to signify the great anguish and tribulation he had been under, expressing how the powers of darkness had so prevailed in him as to grieve the Spirit of God, to put a stumbling block in the way of the simple, and to cause the way of Truth to be evilly spoken of. For, by the wiles of Satan, he had accepted the idolatrous honor of those whom he should have swiftly reproved; and so stupefied was he in his understanding, that he imagined that the bowing and kneeling before him was not done on account of his person, but for Christ. With this false opinion he blinded himself for a time, till it pleased God to pity him, and to give him light again, after he had suffered such an unheard of punishment for his transgression, as has already been related. And because his preaching against unrighteousness in former times had fallen so sharply on all classes of people, undisguisedly and clearly demonstrating the Christian duty of rulers, preachers, and lawyers, so the hatred of his enemies was the fiercer. Indeed, several had long been angry with him, and took occasion from his crime to revenge themselves barbarously upon him, making him suffer a cruel punishment which was in no way proportionable to his transgression.

But while he lay in the house of correction, he wrote several papers to manifest his regret and repentance for his crime; some of which have already been inserted, but the following letter has since come to my hand. It is a letter to his friends, written with his own hand:

Dear brethren,

My heart is broken this day for the offense that I have occasioned God's truth and people, and especially you, who in dear love followed me, seeking me in faithfulness to God, which love I rejected. For I was bound in that from which I could not come forth, till God's hand brought me, to whose love I now confess. I beseech you to forgive wherein I evilly repaid your love in that day. God knows my sorrow for it (since I have been enabled to see it), that ever I should offend the Spirit of God in any, or reject His counsel. And now that paper you have seen lies much upon me, and I greatly fear to offend further, or to do something amiss whereby the innocent

Truth or the people of God should suffer, or that I should disobey therein.

Unless the Lord Himself keeps you from me, I beseech you let nothing else hinder your coming to me, that I might have your help in the Lord. In the mercies of Christ Jesus I beg this of you, as if it were your own case; let me not be forgotten by you.

And I entreat you, speak to Henry Clarke, or whoever else I have most offended; and by the power of God, and in the Spirit of Christ Jesus, I am willing to confess my offense, that God's love may arise in all hearts as before, if it be His will, who alone can remove what stands in the way. I do not intend to cover anything; God is my witness herein.

He also wrote several other confessions of his faults about this time, in one of which, amongst others, I find these words:

And concerning you, the tender plants of my Father, who have suffered because of me, or with me, in what the Lord has allowed to be done with me, in this time of great trial and temptation: May the Almighty God of love, who has numbered every sigh, and put every tear in His bottle, reward it a thousand fold into your bosoms, in the day of your need, when you shall come to be tried and tempted. And in the meantime, may He fulfill our joy with His love, which you seek after. The Lord knows, it was never in my heart to cause you to mourn, whose suffering is my greatest sorrow that ever yet came upon me, for you are innocent herein.

When he had finished this letter, and set his name, he then wrote the following postscript:

I beseech you (all that can), to receive this even as you would desire to be received of the Lord; and as for the rest, may the Lord give me patience to suffer till He makes up the breach.

While he was in Bridewell, he wrote to the parliament, who had punished him as a blasphemer, to let them know his true opinion concerning Jesus Christ.

Christ Jesus (the Immanuel, of whose sufferings the Scriptures declare), Him alone I confess before men. For His sake I have denied whatever was dear to me in this world, that I might win Him, and be found in Him, and not in myself. I seek to serve Him alone, in spirit, soul and body, night and day, according to the measure of grace working in me, that in me He may be glorified, whether by life or death.

But to ascribe this name, power, and virtue, to James Nayler, or to that which had a beginning, and must return to dust, or for that to be exalted, or worshipped, to me is great idolatry, and with the Spirit of Christ Jesus in me it is condemned; which Spirit leads to lowliness, meekness, and long-suffering.

So having an opportunity given, I am willing with readiness, in the fear of God the Father, in honor to Christ

Jesus, and in order to take off all offenses from every simple heart, to declare this to all the world, without guile or deceit, daily finding it to be my work to seek peace in truth with all men in that Spirit.

—JAMES NAYLER

After this, hearing that some had wronged him concerning something he had spoken to the committee of the parliament, and understanding how men had perverted his words, he wrote a paper, declaring himself further concerning his belief of Christ, and His sufferings, and death, etc. He also denounced a paper which someone had published anonymously, under the title of *James Nayler's Recantation*, wherein they had much perverted his words.

And with regard [he writes] to the printing of that paper called *James Nayler's Recantation*, it was not done by me, nor with my knowledge in the least, nor do I yet at all know the man that has done it. But I know it was done out of the Truth, and against the Truth, and for evil towards me, whoever it was. May the Lord God of my life, who has kept me alive in all distress, turn it for good, and forgive the evil. Nevertheless, what measure of truth there is in the paper, I shall acknowledge: for thus it was, that after I was put into the hole at Bridewell, I heard of many wild actions done by a sort of people who pretended to take my side. These were busily stirred up in that day, and with much violence, and many unseemly actions, went into the meetings of the people of the Lord called Quakers, on purpose to hinder their peaceable meetings. And yet these would take the holy and pure name of God and Christ frequently in their mouths, whereby the name of the Lord was much dishonored, and His pure Spirit grieved, for they caused much disorder in many places of the nation to the dishonor of Christ Jesus, for which I felt wrath from God. But when I understood that they had any influence through me, I used all means I could to declare against that evil spirit, which under the name of God and Christ, was against God and Christ, and against His Truth and people. I wrote something about a year and a half ago in denial of these spirits, which it seems to me the author of this paper has seen, and to it has added the thoughts of his own heart, and so has published his work of darkness, and people know not what to make of it.

Therefore, so far as this paper testifies against those unclean, ranting spirits, and all the actions wherein the holy name of God has been dishonored, and His Spirit grieved, that far I acknowledge it. But in that it suggests that I denied the Lord Jesus Christ, and His Truth which has called me out of the world, or His people whom He has called into light—in these things I deny it. For in the patience and tribulation of Christ Jesus, and with those who have the power this day to testify therein against all the evils of this present world, I am one in heart and soul to the utmost of my strength, till the coming of the Lord Jesus over all. May the throne of meekness and truth be set on the top of all enmity and deceit. And now, in the faith and power of Christ, I am given up to live or die, to suffer or rejoice, as God wills, even so be it, without murmuring.

—JAMES NAYLER

This is certain, that James Nayler came to very great sorrow and deep humiliation of mind; and therefore, because God forgives the transgressions of the penitent, and blots them out, and remembers them no more, so James Nayler's friends could do no other than forgive his crime, and thus take back the lost sheep into their society. And having afterwards obtained his liberty, he behaved himself as became a Christian—honest and blameless in conduct, and patiently bearing the reproach of his former offenses.

When King Charles the Second had ascended the throne, a man by the name of Richard Blome published a book entitled, *The Fanatic History*, which was said to be published with the approbation of orthodox theologians (so called), and dedicated by him to the king. This book struck chiefly against the Quakers, and was stuffed with a multitude of lying stories, along with a greatly exaggerated account of the fall of James Nayler. He being then alive, took up the pen and answered the falsities contained in it that were related to himself. And because Richard Blome, in his dedication to the king, said, "That if his majesty does not put forth his royal hand of power quickly to restrain them, they are so numerous and seducing that they will, in a little time, diffuse their poison over the better part of his kingdom, which none but a royal authority can stifle," so Nayler responded in the following words:

What has happened to your spiritual weapons? Have not your teachers told people of the strength of Truth, and the power of godliness? Have you lost both, and do you now run to the arm of flesh, to get errors (as you call them) stifled, or else your hope is lost, and your faith fails you? Did ever any of Christ's ministers take off their spiritual weapons and run to the arm of flesh, or to a carnal weapon to stop seducers? I say, no. This they never did; but with spiritual weapons they wrestled and overcame spiritual wickedness, and with spiritual weapons they cut down heresies, blasphemies, and false worship, cleared the churches of Christ of them, and brought them down before them in the world; for indeed, none could resist the Spirit by which they spoke. But the false priests and false worshippers cried out to rulers and people (as you do now), 'Help us, or all will be overrun: for they that turn the world upside down are come here!'¹³ And then the rude multitude ran upon them, and fell upon them with rods and fists, and assaulted the houses that entertained them, even as you do, and so hauled them before rulers, and put them in prison, and often whipped them. Is this your cry for help against so contemptible a people (as you count them)? What! Have you preached and wrestled yourselves out of all hope and faith, so that now you must either have sudden help from the king or all is lost and overrun? Surely then it may be said, you have been bad watchmen, and idle shepherds.

And whereas you say your book is of great importance, and so you presume to make King Charles the patron of it, and then ask pardon for your presumption: I say, you indeed have need of his pardon. For the substance of your book is made up of false accusations, gathered up out of books formerly written against us, all of which have been disproved by clear answers, and printed several times over. And to these old accusations you have added a few new ones, as false as the old, and have spied out the failings of a few, who have mourned before

13 Acts 17:6; 21:28

God that ever they should sin and give occasion to the enemies of God so to blaspheme. And to all of this you have included many things which were done and spoken by others, who are not of our society, nor ever were.

And as for the charges you have against James Nayler, through the everlasting mercy of my God, I have yet a being amongst the living, and breath to answer for myself, despite the intentions of many cruel and bloodthirsty spirits, who pursued my soul unto death (as much as in their power lay) in that day of my calamity when my adversary had risen above, and wherein I was made a sign to a backsliding generation. These rejoiced against this piece of dust, and had little pity towards him that had fallen into their hands; at which time God was just in giving me up for my disobedience, for a moment, as a father to correct me. Yet these should not have sought to aggravate things against me, as you do now; for it was a day of deep distress, and it lay sore upon my soul, and the merciful God saw it, who, though He was displeased with me for a time, yet His thoughts were not to cast me off forever, but to extend mercy, as it is at this day. Eternal glory be to His name from my delivered soul.

But, O man, or men, whoever you are, whose work it is to gather the failings of God's people in the time of their temptation, or in the night of their trial, and aggravate them, adding thereto the wickedness and mischievous lies of your own heart, as you have done in your book, and then thereby to reproach God's everlasting holy Truth—I say, you are put to work by an evil spirit, and you do but show yourselves enemies to God and His children. For it is our great sorrow, that any of us should have given occasion for Truth to be spoken against; and it has been trouble of soul to all the people of God who have ever loved righteousness, when they have thus occasioned the joy of the wicked, or fed the man that watches for iniquity and feeds on mischief. Yet know this, you that are of that brood, God will not cast off His people, though He is sometimes provoked to correct them, even before their adversaries (which is a sign to them), yet His anger is but for a moment, and His favor shall return as streams of life.

But that which was, and is the sorrow of my heart, is the advantage which the enemy then took against the name of Christ, His Truth, and His despised people, in that time of my temptation, which is what you are now pursuing with hatred and with lies, saying that I was suspected to have a woman in bed with me the night before I suffered at Bristol. But as to this, and several other false things you have written in your book, I am clear before the Lord, so that they touch me not at all. And it is to God alone I look, in His time, to be cleared from all offenses in His sight, who alone knows my heart in this thing, and in whose presence I can say, that nothing is more odious and burdensome to my soul than that any of the glory or worship which belongs to God or to Christ, should be given to flesh and blood, either in myself or others. And as for how it was with me in that day, there are many who talk, but few who know; so the judgment of such I bear, desiring that none, in their judging of me, condemn themselves in the sight of God; for His counsels are great and deep, and the end of His work is past finding out, till He Himself reveals them.

And however myself or any others may yet be left alone to be tried in the night, or should any of us utterly fall, or whatever else may be acted by any man or woman that is not right in God's sight, yet in vain do you gather up sin and watch for iniquity, in order to cast it upon the light of Christ. For it is the light of Christ that

condemns sin in every enlightened mind. And this I know by the Spirit of Jesus, which I have received, and which works in me, that this work of yours is not His work, nor is it His seed. You are not in Him that loves His enemies, but the old accuser of the brethren is he that works strongly in you. And in that light which you reproach, you are seen to be the man that makes lies, and “carries tales to shed blood.” Ezek. 22:9.

This and much more did James Nayler write to answer the falsehoods of which he was accused, and to show that the fault of his crime must in no way be attributed to the doctrine which he had professed, as many envious persons in those times asserted; namely, that his fall was a consequence of the doctrine that men must take heed to the saving grace of God, the inward anointing, or the light wherewith every man coming into the world is enlightened from God.

After his fall and recovery, James Nayler wrote many papers and edifying letters, and ever after manifested himself to be a man of great self-denial, being very careful of his steppings. George Whitehead, who lodged with him at a house in London in 1659 and 1660, bears this testimony of him, “that he was revived by the Lord’s power, and in measure restored to his ancient testimony, which he bore publicly in various parts of the nation as the Lord enabled him, both in his ministry and writings. And,” adds Whitehead, “he walked in much brotherly love and simplicity among us, until his end came.”

At last, departing from the city of London, about the latter end of the Eighth month 1660, he headed North, intending to go home to his wife and children at Wakefield, in Yorkshire. On the way he was seen by a Friend of Hertford, sitting by the road in a very serious and weighty frame of mind, who invited him to his house, but Nayler refused, signifying that it was his mind to press forward. He went on foot as far as Huntingdonshire where he was observed by another Friend passing through the town in such a heavenly frame, that he looked as if he had been redeemed from the earth, and was a stranger on it, seeking a better country and inheritance. But going some miles beyond Huntingdon, he was taken ill, having been, as it was said, robbed along the way and left bound. Whether he received any personal injury is not certainly known, but being found in a field by a countryman toward evening, he was taken or went to a Friend’s house at Holm, not far from King’s Rippon, where Thomas Parnel, a doctor of medicine, came to visit him. Being asked if any friends at London should be sent for to come and see him; he said “No,” but expressed his care and love to them. Being shifted on the bed he said, “You have refreshed my body, may the Lord refresh your souls.” About two hours before his death, he spoke the following words in the presence of several witnesses:

There is a spirit which I feel, that delights to do no evil, nor to revenge any wrong, but delights to endure all things, in hope to enjoy its own in the end. Its hope is to outlive all wrath and contention, and to weary out all exaltation and cruelty, or whatever is of a nature contrary to itself. It sees to the end of all temptations. As it bears no evil in itself, so it conceives none in thought to any other. If it is betrayed, it bears it; for its ground and spring is the mercies and forgiveness of God. Its crown is meekness, its life is everlasting love unfeigned. It takes its kingdom with entreaty, and not with contention, and keeps it by lowliness of mind. In God alone it can

rejoice, though none else regard it or acknowledge its life. It is conceived in sorrow, and brought forth without any to pity it; nor does it murmur at grief and oppression. It never rejoices but through sufferings, for with the world's joy it is murdered. I found it alone, being forsaken. I have fellowship therein with those who lived in dens and in desolate places of the earth, who through death obtained this resurrection, and eternal holy life.

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Thus he departed this life, in peace with the Lord, about the Ninth month, 1660, in the 44th year of his age, and was buried in Thomas Parnel's burying ground at King's Rippon.

In conclusion, I borrow the words of Joseph Wyeth, from whose writings the following is taken:

James Nayler was a man who had been highly favored of God with a good degree of grace, which was sufficient for him, had he kept to its teachings; for while he did so, he was exemplary in godliness and great humility, was powerful in word and doctrine, and thereby instrumental in the hand of God for turning many from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to the power of God. But he, poor man, became exalted above measure, through the abundance of revelation, and in that exaltation did depart from the grace and Holy Spirit of God, which had been his sufficient teacher. Then blindness came over him, and he allowed himself to be accounted above what he ought. Here he slipped and fell, but not irrecoverably; for it did please God, in His infinite mercy, in the day of his affliction, to give him a sight and sense of his outgoings and fall, and also a place for repentance. And with the prodigal, James Nayler humbled himself for his transgression, and besought God with true contrition of soul to pardon his offenses through Jesus Christ. God, I firmly believe, forgave him, for He pardons the truly penitent. Then did his people receive him with great joy, for he who had gone astray from God was now returned to the Father's house, and he who had separated himself from them through his iniquity, was now, through repentance and forsaking it, returned into the unity of the faith, and their holy fellowship in the gospel of Christ. And I do hereby testify, that I esteem it a particular mark of God's acknowledging His people, in bringing back into unity with them a man who had so dangerously fallen, as did James Nayler. And here let none revile, but take heed lest they also, in the hour of their temptation, do fall away. Nor let any boastingly say, "Where is your God?" or blasphemously suppose that His grace is not sufficient for man in temptation because the tempted may go from and neglect the teaching of it. For we see with David and Peter that, as their transgression came by their departing from this infallible guide, the Holy Spirit, so their recovery was only by it.