

SOME ACCOUNT
OF
THE LIFE OF JOSEPH PIKE

OF CORK, IN IRELAND, (1657 – 1729)

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF

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BY WILLIAM EVANS AND THOMAS EVANS*

*EDITED BY
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By humility and the fear of the Lord, are riches, honor, and life. —Prov. 22:4

It is upon me to give some account of my spiritual travels, and the various exercises of soul I have passed through and experienced in the way of regeneration from my youth upward. Though these experiences were so imprinted in my mind by deep affliction that I cannot forget them while memory lasts; yet they have often been livingly revived in my remembrance (by the same Spirit which brought me through them) along with a sense of pressure to commit some of them to writing. I therefore waited the Lord's time in order to be assisted therein by the Holy Remembrancer, so that what I write may be in a living and divine sense of what I experienced in former times. In so waiting, I found a sweet openness to proceed, and was drawn into a divine commemoration of the Lord's wonderful mercies, deliverances, and inexpressible goodness towards me from my childhood up to this day. So it is with great reverence that my soul does humbly bow before Him, as with my mouth in the dust, giving praise to His holy and eternal Name, and beseeching that He would be graciously pleased to keep and preserve me to the end of my days, and give me an eternal inheritance among the sanctified in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen, says my soul.

Before I was seven years of age, the Spirit of the Lord began to work in my mind, and strove with me to bring me off from childish playfulness and vanities. His holy light in my soul (as I

soon after found it to be) convinced me that I ought not to give way to, or to do this or that thing which presented itself. And when, at any time, I did what I should not have done, it brought trouble and condemnation upon me, even in those early days (as it has always done since) when I did anything that offended the Lord. If this were a proper place for it, I could enlarge abundantly upon the divine nature of this holy principle of the Light and Spirit of Jesus Christ in the soul, of which the Holy Scriptures so largely testify. However, I shall be led to do it in the process of this history, knowing from my own certain experience that this light is nothing of our nature, nor any innate notion of our minds, for nothing of or from our own fallen nature can show or convince us of sin.

Though I did not presently know that it was the Lord's Spirit which I felt working in me, (even as Samuel knew not the Lord's voice when a child) yet I was convinced in myself by its holy convictions that I ought not do those things which brought trouble upon me. And when at any time I refrained from doing what caused this trouble, I had sweet peace and satisfaction of mind, which made me all the more to attend to its dictates, and drew me off from many childish actions which youth are prone to. In this way, I grew into sobriety beyond many of my age, until I came to be about nine years old.

But in a little time after, I began, by degrees, to lose this condition. I well remember how the enemy of my soul worked in a mystery, insinuating to my mind, "What harm or evil is there in things which are accounted innocent diversions?" And being of a lively, active temper, this bait took with me, so that my mind was drawn off from attending to the convictions of the Lord's Holy Spirit in my heart, which often brought trouble and condemnation upon me. Beginning to love playful pastimes, I lost that inward sweetness and peace which I had before enjoyed, and by endeavoring to stifle these secret reproofs, I grew harder, until, from a desire to keep company with other wild boys, I took delight in getting out into the streets to play with them. Thus I grew very wanton, although my dear parents endeavored to restrain me. After spending time with such companions, when I came to be a little still, the Lord's judgments would seize me, and bring me under great trouble of soul. Then I would resolve to refrain, and do so no more. Yet perhaps the very next temptation that presented itself, I could not withstand, but fell into the same snare again.

Thus it was with me, until I came to be about twelve years of age. And though, to the praise of the Lord, I was preserved from any very wicked or gross actions, or even very bad words, yet my mind was drawn away into vanity and wildness, and I was far from being as sober as I ought to have been.

And here, I may be allowed to make a cautionary digression concerning parents: If they have any regard to the good of their children, they should keep a very strict hand over them,

especially when they are prone to wildness, as I was; for had my parents not been careful over me, I would have been much worse than I was. And although my dear mother would never indulge me in any evil practice (being a prudent, discreet woman), yet she loved me exceedingly, which I well knew, and I therefore presumed upon it in some measure and ventured abroad sometimes, which I would not have done, had she corrected me more often. I would advise and caution all parents to take particular care of their children in going to and returning from school, lest they fall into company that would certainly corrupt them. From my own experience, I can say that by giving way at first to small hurtful things, the enemy gets advantage, gradually stealing in, and drawing away the mind into greater evils. It is for this reason we are commanded to abstain from every appearance of evil, which we certainly cannot do, except by the assistance of the Lord's Holy Spirit. But taking up the cross of Christ to every such appearance, we indeed witness an overcoming of the assaults and temptations of Satan.

I now saw in the light that if I persisted in vanity and wildness, I was in the way of destruction. Whenever the terrors of the Lord were upon me, I would take up fresh resolutions to refrain from and avoid such conduct. But these resolutions were made in my own strength, and so they came to nothing, and often the very next temptation would prevail over me. Then, once again, the Lord's righteous judgments laid hold upon me, and so I repeatedly made work for repentance.

At this time, in 1669, we had no afternoon meetings in the room where meetings for public worship were held, but we had evening meetings, which were held at Friends' houses alternately. William Edmundson¹ of Rosenallis, that worthy and honorable Friend and father in Israel, was concerned at this time to visit Friends of this province. While he was in Cork, the evening meeting fell in course at the house of the widow Bridget Denis (who later became a faithful Friend, and towards her latter end had a testimony for Truth, and I doubt not died in the Lord). I went to this meeting, with great heaviness and sorrow upon my soul, under a mournful sense of my repeated transgressions against the Lord, and also with earnest cries that He would be pleased to forgive me, and grant me power and strength over the temptations of the enemy; for I clearly saw that I was not capable, by any ability of my own, to preserve myself from the least evil, in agreement with the saying of our blessed Lord, "Without me you can do nothing."

I sat down in this meeting full of sorrow, and William Edmundson's testimony so reached my inward state and condition, and pierced my very soul, that I could not refrain from crying out in the meeting under a sense of my sins, and of the Lord's terrors and judgments, which I then felt beyond what I had ever before experienced. At that time, I was as truly baptized by the powerful preaching of the Word of life by Him, as those were to whom the apostle Peter

¹ William Edmundson (1627–1712) is generally considered the founder of the Society of Friends in Ireland. He was convinced of the truth as a young man, and spent over 50 years traveling and suffering for it.

preached in Acts 2:37. Then, oh then, were my sins (and the true sinfulness of them) set before me, and in the agony and bitterness of my soul, I secretly cried unto the Lord for the pardon and remission of them, with humble prayers unto Him that He would be pleased to enable me by His Holy Spirit to walk more circumspectly for the time to come, and do His holy will, and that I might truly serve and worship Him in spirit and in truth.

The Lord's heavy judgments continued upon me for a considerable time, how long I cannot exactly remember, but I believe for some months, until I became obedient to His divine light and good Spirit in my soul, without which I could not perform anything that was acceptable to God. And I have since found by living experience, that although our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, by His sufferings and death, placed me and all mankind in a condition capable of salvation, yet the completion thereof is experienced in our obedience to His Holy Spirit. A measure of this Spirit, according to Scripture, He has given to each of us, "to profit withal," that we may thereby "work out our own salvation."

After the baptizing power of the Lord had thus seized upon me, I had dominion given me over those temptations which had before so often prevailed upon me, and I grew easier in spirit, and had great sweetness and comfort. My companions wondered at this alteration, and when I passed them in the street, I have overheard them say to one another, "What's the matter with Joe Pike? He won't speak to us!" Hearing this I rejoiced greatly in my heart, with humble thanks to the Lord that He had given me so much power and victory over the temptations into which I had so often fallen before. Then did I begin to love the Lord, and I delighted to turn my mind inward, and to diligently wait upon Him by the help of His Holy Spirit, by which I gradually grew in experience and knowledge of the things of God.

Oh how I did love to go to meetings! Indeed I longed for the meeting days, and when there, I endeavored to have my mind inwardly exercised towards the Lord, whom I loved with all the powers of my soul. And oh how near and dear to me were the faithful ministering servants of the Lord, and also other faithful Friends, in whose company I greatly delighted, and loved to hear them speak of the things of God! Truly my mind was wholly taken off from the vanities, plays, and pastimes of the world; all was nothing to me! Whenever I could, I went into some secret place to wait upon the Lord, and there I poured out my soul unto Him, with overflowing tears of joy that He had so mercifully wrought this great change in me. Indeed I may say, with humble thanksgiving and praise to His holy name, that He was pleased to accept of my tender offering of a broken heart, in returning upon my soul at times the sweet incomes of His divine power and living presence, to the overcoming of my spirit with unutterable joy.

I have gone to meetings, and while there, a living faith has attended me, and a full assurance has arisen in my soul that if I diligently waited, with my mind inwardly exercised towards the

Lord, then I would feel His life giving presence; and truly, according to my faith, the Lord has broken in upon my spirit with unspeakable comfort. The remembrance of such seasons is renewed within me at this time, for which my soul is melted into tenderness, with humble thanksgiving and praise to His holy and divine majesty. Indeed He has kept me alive in spirit now to an old age, to bear this testimony for Him from my own experience, that His holy Truth waxes not old, as does a garment. For although I am now decayed in body, and because of great weakness seem to be near the brink of the grave, yet to the praise of the Lord, I can say, I am as strong in Him and in the power of His might, and feel my spirit as zealous for His holy name and testimony, as at any time of my life. For this, all that is within me magnifies and extols (even with my mouth in the dust) the holy and eternal name of the Lord of heaven and earth, who lives forever and ever!

Before I had reached my fourteenth year, by the Lord's Holy Spirit working in me, I came to witness a state of purity, holiness, and innocency, in which not so much as a vain or foolish thought could arise in my mind without the holy light of Christ presently letting me see it and judge it, so that I abhorred all evil thoughts, words, and actions, and loved truth and righteousness with all my soul. I dearly loved all faithful Friends, and felt them as dear to me as my own life; and indeed they loved me, being sensible that I loved the Lord.

And here, let me add a caution to all ministers and elders, to take great care of any undue liberty in words or behavior before those who are young and tender in the Truth, whether in youth or old age. For the newly convinced are very sharp in their observation, and if they observe anything—whether it be in using more words than are necessary, or in behavior, etc.—which they think not agreeable to that solidity which the Truth leads into, it is apt to stumble or confuse them. We find that the great apostle Paul was very tender over those who were young and weak, and denied himself of lawful things, lest he should offend them, saying “though all things were lawful, yet all things were not beneficial.”

Notwithstanding I had, by the power and Spirit of the Lord, attained to a state of purity, yet, alas, I lost it again for lack of true and diligent watchfulness to the light, and closely following the leadings of it, and not through any gross evil I had committed. Between the age of fourteen and fifteen, I began to grow more negligent in waiting upon the Lord, and from there into greater coldness in my love to Him, and so by degrees I lost that tender frame of spirit I had formerly witnessed. And then the enemy of my soul tempted me with the pleasures and vanities of the world, so that my mind was allured and drawn towards them, and I did love and delight in them.

Among other things, I was inclined to take pleasure in fine apparel as I could get it, of which I remember a particular instance. Having got a pretty fine new coat, the spirit of pride arose in

me, and passing along the street, (I still remember the place) I thought myself somebody (as the saying goes). But in the midst of these vain and foolish thoughts, I was in an instant struck as with an arrow from the Lord, and it swiftly passed through my mind after this manner: "Poor wretch! Was not Jesus Christ, the Lord of heaven and earth, meek and low of heart, and His appearance humble on earth! He was not proud and high. And will you, poor worm, be high and proud of yourself or your clothes?" These thoughts so wounded my spirit, that I went home very sorrowful and dejected. But this feeling went off in a little time, for the delights of the world began to take root in me, and my mind went after them, by which I was drawn away from the Lord.

And I bear this testimony, that the adorning of the body with fine apparel, and with fashionable cuts, as well as extravagance in household furniture, is utterly inconsistent with the plainness which the holy Truth leads into. Indeed, Truth led our ancient Friends out of such things, and to testify against them. For though it is most certain that pride first springs in the heart, yet, by taking delight in outward things, the mind becomes captivated by them, and the root of vanity grows inwardly stronger and stronger.

My mind having thus gone astray from the Lord, it displeased Him, and caused Him to withdraw from me, so that I did not enjoy the sweetness and comfort of His Holy Spirit as I had done before. Yet He took not His Spirit from me, but it became my judge and condemner for loving those things that offended Him. So the terrors of the Lord often seized me, and I could well remember (from the strength of my natural memory) how it had been with me before, when I was in favor with the Lord. Yes, by His holy Light I saw how I had lost the living sense of the sweetness I had formerly enjoyed, which made me sorely to lament my present condition.

From this experience, I have learned to understand the vast difference that exists between natural comprehension or memory, and the present, living, experiential witnessing of the life and power of Truth upon the soul, by which the soul is kept alive to God. Solomon, from the strength of His memory, could not forget how excellently he had prayed to the Lord by the Holy Spirit at the dedication of the temple, and yet he lost that living and divine sense when he afterwards went into idolatry. The world has the former capacity, and by the strength of their natural reason, comprehension, and memory, they read, they study the learned languages, and acquire knowledge (or rather gather notions), being thus furnished and equipped for what they call divinity. But, alas, true divinity is quite another thing, and learned quite another way, even by the Lord's Holy Spirit, and which consists in the enjoyment of His sweet presence in our soul. I say this in measure from my own experience, for when I was obedient to His holy Light and Spirit in my heart, and was taught by it, it led me, though but childish in my natural understanding, to the holy hill of spiritual Zion, even to the enjoyment of His living

comfortable presence. But when I declined from it, though I grew in natural knowledge and understanding, yet I lost my innocent condition, and the spiritual communion I once had; so that, instead of His Holy Spirit being my comforter, it became my judge and condemner. These things now livingly flow into my mind, and I give them forth as a testimony for the Lord, and to the operation of His Holy Spirit.

Thus stood my inward condition, from about the age of fifteen to eighteen, during which time I maintained a pretty good character amongst Friends and others. For, through the Lord's great mercy, I never fell into any gross or scandalous evils, nor did I keep bad company, but was generally beloved (as far as I knew) by all that were acquainted with me. Nevertheless, I had gone from, and had lost my inward communion and fellowship with the Lord that I had formerly witnessed.

This leads me to caution all, whether young or old, against valuing or justifying themselves based upon the morality of their conduct, and depending upon it, as I have known some to do. For though a man cannot be a right Christian without being a moral person, yet he may sustain a moral character and still be very far from being a true Christian, and acceptable to God. This I can speak from my own experience.

When about eighteen years old, the Lord was graciously pleased to grant me a renewed visitation—not in that sudden and extraordinary manner as before, but in a more gradual way. He began to arise, and to give me a full and clear sight of my condition, and how I was estranged from Him in spirit. And I saw plainly that if I continued in this way, I would grow harder and harder, and in the end be undone forever. The sense of this brought me into great horror and distress, with bitter lamentation, under which I lay some time, until the Lord was mercifully pleased to tender my spirit a little, and assist me to pray unto Him for a repentant heart. Indeed my past disobedience (in so ungratefully departing from Him) lay as a mill-stone upon my soul, and brought me into sore agony and distress of spirit.

I then sought to be alone, in unseen places, where I often poured out my soul unto the Lord, with many tears, begging for mercy and forgiveness. I saw that I had come to a great loss, and that I must unlearn many things that I had learned in the night of my apostasy in spirit (though not in principle or profession) from Him, during which time the evil root and nature had grown strong in me. I also saw that nothing could destroy this but the axe, the sword, the hammer, and the fire of His Holy Spirit, and that I must be regenerated and born again before I could ever attain to the condition I had lost. All of this the light of Jesus let me see very clearly.

Then, oh then, the agony, the horror that seized my soul! I am not able to express it! I often thought no one's condition was ever like mine. When I turned my mind inward, my soul

seemed like a habitation of dragons which were ready to devour me. Evil thoughts of many kinds presented themselves, with temptations from the wicked one that I was never inclined to before. When I went to meetings, I had no rest there, for I could not stay my mind upon the Lord. Indeed the enemy seemed to roar upon me, as if to destroy my soul, so that I was almost ready to run out of meetings. It appeared to me that the Lord had wholly withdrawn Himself from me, and was far from my help. When night came, I wished for the morning, and when the morning came, I wished for the evening. In the night season, I often lay mourning and bitterly weeping, making my pillow wet with tears. My distress was such that if the Lord (in mercy) had not pitied me, and by granting a little hope and ease of spirit, helped me, I believe I should have sunk under it, my misery was so great. I was at times so overwhelmed with sorrow that I was almost in despair of ever getting through my afflictions, fearing that I was utterly forsaken.

When I had continued in this state a considerable season, ready to faint in spirit, the Lord at last (in His own time, not in mine, nor in so powerful a manner as I desired) began again to arise with a little of the light of His countenance for the ease of my distressed soul. But this peace continued not long with me before I fell again into the same misery. Thus was I afflicted and tossed as with a tempest, until I was almost worn out with sorrow. I was plunged into spiritual Jordan (or judgment) again and again, not only seven times, but more than seventy times seven. Oh, “the wormwood and the gall” that I was made to drink of in that day! “My soul has them still in remembrance, and is humbled within me.” Yet, with thanksgiving and praise to the holy name of the Lord, He brought me through at last, and set my feet upon His rock.

During this time of sore affliction, I read the Holy Scriptures, particularly the book of Psalms, and that evangelical prophet Isaiah, wherein I found an abundance of experiences that suited my condition. And when, in reading them, the Lord was pleased to influence my mind by His Spirit, how comfortable were they to me! Oh how would my heart be even melted into tenderness, in finding that some of the experiences of holy men corresponded to mine, as face reflects face in a glass, whereby a hope was raised in me that I should get through my exercises, even as they did through theirs. But at other times, when the Lord's Spirit seemed to be withdrawn from me, though I read the Scriptures and understood the words, yet my mind not being influenced and opened by the Lord's Spirit, I did not receive the same benefit or comfort. From this I learned, by living experience, that it is by and through the openings of His Spirit that we receive the true comfort or profit in reading the Holy Scriptures.

I was in this condition, more or less, for about two or three years. At times, when the Lord enabled me to pray to Him, oh the strong cries that would ascend! Indeed, with the most fervent beseeching of soul I did pray, with overflowing tears, and said in my heart, “Oh Lord, depart not from me! Keep me in this praying condition; let me not depart out of it! Keep me from evil! Make me as You would have me to be, for You know I desire to love You better than the whole

world, and I will, with Your assistance, serve You all the days of my life.” But here I was not to stay, not being sufficiently purged, and again I had to go down into judgment and lie under His spiritual baptism. Then did misery, sorrow, and lamentation again take hold of me.

Thus it was with me, from season to season, in my progress heavenwards—yet with this difference, that the intervals of ease grew longer, during which I was ready to say in my heart, “I hope I shall never again be moved!” But again the Lord withdrew and hid His face from me for a season, so that my soul was troubled thereby. Yet His grace was always with me, as an anchor at bottom, and as a monitor, guide, and director to preserve me from running into any gross evil. But though I was thus preserved, still, for lack of keeping close to the guidance of His light, I often offended the Lord in lesser matters. When I did so in thought, word, or deed, His divine judgments seized my soul, and therein I rejoiced, and the cry arose within me, “Oh, let not Your eye pity, nor Your hand spare, until judgment be brought forth unto victory, over this evil nature of mine!” In the evening, I would call to mind my actions during the day, and when I saw I had spoken more than I ought, or used unnecessary words, or did anything that grieved the Lord's Spirit (although such words or actions were not condemned by others), oh how would I be bowed, and would mourn under the consideration of these things, with humble prayers to Him that He would enable me to do so no more.

I remember, at one time, after a degree of ease, that the Lord was pleased to withdraw the light of His countenance, and seemed to desert me for about three months, which plunged me into inexpressible sorrow. When I turned my mind inward, I found no comfort, but my heaven was as iron, and my earth as brass for hardness and sterility. Indeed I was seized with such agony of spirit that my flesh seemed to tremble upon my bones! Then I would examine myself and say, “What evil have I committed? How have I so greatly offended, that the Lord should utterly forsake me?” But, blessed be His everlasting name, He did again arise in His own due time, to the joy and comfort of my heart; and I afterwards saw that this was for the trial of my faith and patience.

In all this time of my deepest distress, I never opened my mind fully to anyone, but endeavored to hide my exercises from all mortals. I appeared as cheerful in countenance as I could, even at times when my heart seemed ready to break with sorrow, though my face did often gather paleness, and some asked what ailed me, or whether I was sick. But I dismissed such questions, though I believe some sensible Friends saw that I was under exercise of spirit.

I am somewhat drawn-out in my writing of these things purely for the encouragement of Zion's travelers that they may learn to trust in the Lord, and not to despair of His mercy in the deepest of their exercises and afflictions. For by and through all of these trials, I gradually grew in the knowledge of the things of God. And though, when I was under the deepest of them, I could not

see through them or the end of them, yet afterwards, I came to know they were from the Lord. I saw that this was a time of the “ministration of condemnation,” in order to bring me nearer to the Lord by breaking down and mortifying the natural and fleshly part in me which had grown strong, and which could not inherit the kingdom of God. Through these sore exercises, and by taking up the cross of Christ under them, my own natural will and affections became much broken, and I became (in measure) like a little child, depending upon the Lord for strength and ability to do His will. And by the Lord's Spirit I was often led to deny myself of lawful things, as to eating, drinking, and the putting on of apparel, finding myself too strongly inclined to them. Moreover, the Lord's holy light opened an abundance of Scriptures to me that I did not understand before, so that I have said in my heart, “The world believes the truth of the Holy Scriptures by tradition, but those who come to witness the operation of a measure of the same Spirit in their souls (from which the Holy Scriptures proceeded), are confirmed by their own experience in the truth of them.”

Thus the work went forward in me, until, in the Lord's own due time, I could in measure say, “He brought me up out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet (in some degree) upon His rock, and established my steps. Oh blessed be His everlasting name forever!” Though the excess of my troubles and exercises wore off in a few years, and I could at times (when so enabled) sing in my soul both of the Lord's mercies and of His judgments, yet I was not, for many years, at seasons, without sore fights of affliction with the enemy of my soul, nor am I to this day. For most certain it is, that there is no state attainable on this side of the grave beyond that of watchfulness. Our Lord said to His disciples, “Watch and pray, lest you fall into temptation.” I have often compared the soul of man to an outward garden—though it be cleansed from weeds, still it naturally produces them, and if it be not watched and kept clean, the obnoxious and troublesome weeds will sprout again. And if these are allowed to grow, they will certainly choke the tender and good seed that has been sown. Our hearts are “deceitful, above all things,” and naturally prone to evil, and as the prophet adds, “desperately wicked.” Even when, by the power and sword of the Lord's Spirit, many things may seem quite destroyed and dead, yet if we do not diligently watch in the light, the enemy will steal in again, and revive some of those things which appeared to be eradicated, especially such things as we are naturally most inclined to.

I think this may also be alluded to in the parable of Christ relating to the unclean spirit gone out of a man. For this unclean spirit, wandering about and finding no rest, returned to the same house in the man's heart. And finding this house swept and garnished, he takes seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in (surely for lack of watchfulness) and dwell there, and “the last state of that man,” says Christ, “is worse than the first.” Thus even one who has in a good measure been cleansed from his iniquity, and eased of his inward affliction, may

become careless, and allow the enemy again to enter, unless he keep inward to the light, watching unto prayer. Oh this inward watching is too much lacking among many of the Lord's people! Therefore many have not grown in the Truth as they might have done, but have come to a loss, and some have quite fallen away. The school of Christ and His teachings are within, as says the apostle, "That which may be known of God, is manifest within man." It is there that Christ teaches His people Himself. The more we keep inward to this school, the more we learn of Christ. The less we keep inward, even when involved in lawful things, the less we learn of Christ. Oh read, you that can read in the mystery of life! There is no safety, no preservation, no growing in the Truth, but in true humility, keeping inward to the gift of the Holy Spirit of Christ, continually watching in the light against the temptations of the enemy.

Therefore, the earnest breathing of my soul to the Lord is that He may be graciously pleased to preserve me in watchfulness to the last moment of my life. For I well know that I cannot preserve myself, nor think a good thought, nor do the least good thing, as our blessed Lord said, "Without me, you can do nothing." But the Holy One of Israel gives strength to the poor and needy in spirit, by whom alone they can stand, and not of themselves. Let all might, majesty, power, and dominion, be ascribed unto Him, who lives forever and ever!

Having given some relation of the various exercises I have passed through, I can now, from living and certain experience, say, that it is not being educated in the form of truth; it is not the profession of it, nor being called a Quaker; it is not by frequenting our religious meetings; it is not even being of a moral conduct that will do, or be acceptable to the Lord, unless we also witness the possession and enjoyment of the Holy Truth, and its life and power in our souls. Therefore I earnestly desire that the professors of truth, and all who have been educated in the form of it, may not rest satisfied therein, but turn your minds inward to the Lord, to the gift of His Holy Spirit there manifested, that you may thereby experientially witness a growth, a progress, and finally an inheritance in the Lord's eternal Truth, of which you make a profession. This alone gives true acceptance, and a union and fellowship with Him.