

# **A PLAIN PATHWAY**

## **OPENED TO THE SIMPLE HEARTED**

*For the answering of all doubts and objections which arise against Christ's light and truth in the inward parts; by which many are kept from obedience, and so from peace to their panting souls.*

BY

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Friends and People, I have had a deep exercise upon my spirit, concerning many who are come to feel something stirring and moving in their hearts which is good, to bring them into a serious consideration of their course of life, and the inward state of their immortal souls.

When you have sometimes begun to turn your minds to this good thing that stirred in you; then many doubts and objections have arisen in you lest you should be misled, deceived or deluded, and lest this thing that inwardly strives with you, should lead you into the erroneous way of the Quakers, as the world's teachers call it. The Quakers speak and write of, and bear a constant testimony to, something (the Spirit of Truth) that is in man, that calls upon him to repent and to turn to the Lord; and because you have heard evil, and thought evil of that people, by the same rule you are apt to think evil of that which works in your own bosom, to lead you out of sin and iniquity. So you are tempted to slight it, and to find a critical name for it, to call it by, of which antichrist's ministers have many to afford you; as to call it a natural light; a common gift of the Spirit, but not a saving gift; conviction of a natural conscience; a legal work; yes, and many call it the devil's work, to disturb the soul of its peace; and some, a diabolical light, etc.

Thus when you are brought to slight that good Spirit that strives with you, under some such name, you get ease again for a little while, and take liberty to act against it, and to do and say

that which this good Spirit does in secret condemn. Then it rises again, and breaks your peace, and brings trouble and anguish upon your soul. Then up come many doubts on the one hand, and doubts on the other hand, and your poor soul is beset and encompassed with doubts, and fears, and jealousies.

Sometimes you fear you withstand the Truth to your own destruction, and sometimes you fear it is a delusion, and you shall be deceived. Besides, you find many learned men, and worldly wise men, that tell you there is nothing good in you.

Here you are in a great strait, and labour under many sorrowful thoughts, and many doubtful disputations arise in your mind. The flesh now strongly wars against that which comes to disturb it, and the Spirit strongly wars against that which resists and rebels against it. These two are contrary, and these contrary things are both in you, and you, poor creature, must feel the struggling of them both; and by reason of your darkness and doubts, and fears, you scarcely know, (or at least with certainty,) which is right. In this state and condition, how acceptable would a messenger be, one of a thousand, to show unto such a one that which might deliver his soul from going down into the pit, and save his life from the destroyer? (Job 23:23.) And truly very many are in this difficult state in these days; for whose sakes I am drawn into a deep exercise many times, by day and by night; and my cry to God is, that His glorious power may more and more arise to open these doors that are shut and folded upon such, and to bring forth the imprisoned spirits out of the prison-house, and out of the bondage of this spiritual Egypt, where our Lord was, and is crucified spiritually; and that He may expel the clouds of darkness, in which the fears and doubts, and questionings arise; and that He may make a clear way in all such, for His light to break forth out of obscurity, in which the answer to those doubts and questions does arise.

And by that same Spirit that labours with you, am I moved to send this forth unto you all, as a word of exhortation and counsel, in the name and fear of the Lord God, by which as many as do rightly receive it, and make a true use and proof of it, shall find help and benefit; and shall know the mouth of the questioner stopped, and the answer of peace witnessed to their immortal souls in the Lord's due time. Therefore consider this, that every good and perfect gift comes from above, from the Father of Lights and Spirits, who wills not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn and live. Therefore He has, out of His infinite love and tender mercies to the sons of men, prepared a way to draw nigh unto them, even while they are in their sins, which He does only through Jesus Christ the Mediator of the new covenant, whom He has freely given to be a light unto the dark world; and that He should enlighten every one that comes into the world, John 1:9. Of this number you are one, whoever you are, and are enlightened by Christ, though you be yet darkness in yourself, as the Ephesians once were; yet

the light shines in your darkness, or else there would not be two contrary natures and seeds found working in you as there are; and this light wherewith you are enlightened, is the life of Jesus, John 1:4, which He has given a ransom for man. This is not natural, as some foolishly imagine: for if it were natural, it could not be a ransom for man out of sin.

To suggest that both sin and that which reproveth it are natural, is contrary to the apostle, who said, the two that warred in the creature were contrary; and called the one flesh, or natural; and the other Spirit, or spiritual. Christ Jesus called that which should reprove the world of sin, the Spirit of Truth; and antichrist and his ministers call it a natural, insufficient light, etc. But know this, you who are inquiring, that that in you which does make manifest to you things that are reproveth, is the light wherewith Christ Jesus has enlightened you, as the apostle of Christ said in his epistle to the Ephesians, chap. 5 ver. 13, 14.

That principle which leads you to do or say such things as you are secretly reproveth for in your own conscience, that is the darkness, and the enemy of your soul's peace, and whoever walks in it, does not know where he goes.

This does minister a kind of peace and pleasure to you, and a delight to your carnal mind for a season; yet the other, namely, the light, the reprover has power to take away peace from you again, and to judge you, and to make that which was sweet to you to become bitter; and neither the darkness, nor lust, nor vanity of your mind, can deliver you from this stroke.

Now, that you might be resolved in such a state what to do, consider now, you that have these strugglings in you about the light in your conscience, whether it be true or no, or whether you shall acknowledge it or no, and are thinking in yourself what is best for you to do, whether to go on stoutly against it, or to submit to it: I say consider, if you rebel against it, you can never know where it would lead you: as it was said of old. Job 24. "They that rebel against the light, know not the way of it."

So then, if you do take that course to rebel, it will but increase your ignorance of the way that the light leads in, and make it more terrible to you every time it does appear in you; till you come to that state spoken of, Job 24:17, That "the dawning of the day will be as the shadow of death." The more you rebel against it, the more dark you will daily grow, and so the less able to resolve yourself in those doubtful things that fill your mind; but as darkness increases in you, so the power of it will bind you down as with a chain, and smother every good desire in you.

Thus by rebellion against the light, do some men lose the very sense and knowledge of it, and grow "past feeling," and strangers to it, though it be in them; for the custom of sin, takes away the sense and the feeling of the burden of it. But to you I write that are not yet come to this state

of hardness of heart, but are brought daily into a sense of the burden of sin; and that are ready to say, if you were but sure that this were the Truth and Way of God which shows you your sin, you would follow it, and love it, and acknowledge it; but are kept off by doubts and questionings. Verily, I say unto you, before these doubts can be resolved, you must *try* this, as, to your sorrow, you have tried the other, before you can be effectually informed; for arguments will not do sufficiently in this case. Therefore try and prove what this light can do for you when you obey it, which you already know has power to condemn you, and break your peace when you disobey it.

Why should you always be shut up in unbelief and in doubts, and so kept from trying and proving the light, as well as you have proved the darkness, that so you might reap the fruit of it to salvation, even as you have reaped the fruit of the other unto condemnation? Oh, dear people, consider this: you cannot obey this light of Christ Jesus in your own consciences, except by taking up a daily cross to your own wills, lusts and affections, for this light is contrary to such things.

That which leads you to obey your lusts, leads to disobey the light; and that which leads to obey the light, crosses the lusts and vile affections, which are at enmity with the light, and must be judged and condemned by it. That which leads you to slight it, and call it by some scornful name, is also an enemy to it, and must be judged by it.

As the light comes to rule over those things in you which are enemies to it, you will know that it will lead you contrary to your corrupt nature; and as you feel it working in you, you will come to be wiser than those teachers that have called it a natural light. For that which is natural, leads according to nature, but that which is spiritual, leads according to the Spirit; which the apostle said was contrary to the flesh, and warred against it.

And so, by your obeying the light, this objection will come to be answered far better than words and arguments could have done.

Likewise, if you do not oppose the light, but give up to be guided by it, you will come to feel its sufficiency, and will know that it is able to deliver you when you are tempted, as well as to judge you when you have yielded to the tempter. For you know already that it is able to condemn you when you sin against it; but you cannot certainly know its sufficiency to give peace and to justify until you obey it. So then, the plain pathway to the answering of your doubts about the Spirit of Truth in the inward parts is by obeying of it, and yielding to it. They that do evil grow into hatred against it, and it judges them. As they refuse to obey the light, so the light refuses to justify them, and so, coming justly under the condemnation of it by reason of transgression, they grow afraid of it. But, alas! this only proves that it is sent of God, for it

does God's work, which is righteousness.

“For to justify the wicked, and to condemn the righteous, both these are an abomination to the Lord.” And so is it with His witness in your own conscience, which God has placed there to bear witness for Him concerning all your actions whether they are good or evil. You yourself, whoever you are, whether high or low, rich or poor, professor or profane, must confess unto this—that this light has never condemned you for that which was good, nor borne witness against you for that which you were not guilty of.

Therefore, all you that have been hurried and tossed with doubts and questionings about the Truth, come hearken to the counsel of God at this time once more sounded forth unto you from His Spirit, by a servant of His without you, and answered by the measure of His good Spirit within you, which has the same voice and cry in you for obedience to what is made manifest of God in you. Obey the light, and you shall see daily more of it, till it break forth as a morning unto you, and till it shines unto a perfect day; yes, a day of gladness and rejoicing to your poor distressed souls.

Arise, you that sit sorrowing, and you that are crying out in secret, because of the bonds and fetters that are yet upon you. Arise, arise, I say in the name of the Lord God of Zion, who draws nigh to you by His quickening Spirit, and hearken to His voice, who says to the prisoner, “Come forth;” and to the bowed down, “Arise;” and to the feeble ones, “Put on strength, follow Me, and obey Me. I will confound your foes, and break the strength of your enemies. As I have done for my people, who have forsaken all to follow Me, and who obey Me, so I will do for you. If you walk before Me in uprightness, and keep my covenant, as they have done, no power or strength of the enemy within or without shall be too hard for you.”

And when the Lord does thus arise in your souls, and stir up His pure witness, and His arm awakens in you, and His pure light breaks forth: oh! what consolation it is to you, and how have many of you seen your vain doubts expelled, and a clear conviction has prevailed upon your spirits concerning the way of God! At such a time you have begun to resolve to follow the Lord in His pure way of holiness, thus opened to you in the light, though to the loss of all, and though it be to the bearing your part of the great reproach that lies upon all who love Him more than their lives.

And at such a time there was felt a secret joy in the hidden ground in your souls, and the Seed of the kingdom that had been long buried, began to spring up in you, in which Seed your souls felt some touches of that heavenly life and joy, which for the time exceeded all things that this world could afford.

Whensoever you come to feel this refreshing dew upon your souls, then take heed and wait singly in the sense of it. Keep your eye to the joy that is now set before you in Christ Jesus, the Seed; for if you let your minds wander, and your eyes go abroad, there will be objects on every hand to lead you out from your soul's beloved, and to bring you to defile your hearts, and make yourselves an unfit place of residence for Him who is holy and pure. He will not dwell nor take delight in a polluted temple; but will withdraw himself as He did from Israel of old, and from their temple, when it was polluted and profaned.

Besides, when your minds are taken hold of by any of the corruptible things of this changeable world, there will soon be kindled a desiring, a longing, and a lusting after the enjoyment of those things, though they are contrary to the will of God.

And then next, the reasoner and consuler gets up in you, and starts to question; "May I not enjoy the Lord and this? May I not keep in the way of Truth, and yet do this or that thing which my heart desires? And though it be not perfectly according to the Truth made manifest in me, yet I will have my will, my lust, my desire, satisfied just this one time! And that is not much," says the consuler; "and this is but a small matter, and there are others that do greater things than this." Such like reasonings enter the mind, and this grieves and vexes that good and righteous, tender Spirit that moved in you. It brings a weight and oppression upon the pure Witness in you, which withdraws itself again from you, and so a night comes upon you where before a light had arisen. For where the serpent can bring any to make a question of obeying the Truth, he is as ready to offer an answer as he was to beget the question. But his answer always comes with a liberty and a persuasion to disobey, as it did with Eve in the beginning; and when transgression is finished, then death enters upon you with its dark power, and manifold sorrows pierce your poor soul.

Though the fruit was desirable, yet now that it is eaten, you cannot approach the life to eat of that too, though you desire it. But you are driven out and kept away with a flaming sword that turns every way against you.

Now there is a ground laid for doubts and questionings of a higher nature than before, to arise in you. Before you doubted of the Truth itself, whether it was the Truth; but now, having tasted it and been convinced by it, you have let your mind go forth from it after other lovers, and your ears have turned to the voice of the adulteress, and so caused the pure light to withdraw from you through your rebellion.

Now you desire to but see again what you have seen, and feel again what you have felt, but you doubt and fear that you shall never see, or feel, or enjoy the like again.



And now you wish, oh, that you had stood in the cross to your own will, and that you had denied yourself, that you might not thus have lost the sight and sense of your soul's beloved. And you see by woeful experience, from where the doubts and fears and sorrows do arise, even from your joining with the enemy who brings forth reasons against your obedience to the light.

Therefore, now hearken to that which remains in you, though darkness and sorrow encompass you. There is yet something that remains which gives you a sense of your state and condition, and makes you know your loss and your need. Hear the voice of this, and it will humble you, and bring you into true brokenness of heart and contrition of spirit. As you come to know that broken state, then you will have something to offer to the Lord of His own preparing, which will be far more acceptable to Him than a multitude of man's words, and performances, and duties, so called. And as you, in true lowliness of mind, do come before the Lord and offer up this offering, God will hear in heaven, and will answer the cry of the poor and needy soul that cannot be satisfied without His presence. Yes, He will remember His mercies of old, which never fail, for His Seed sake, which is not yet brought forth in you. And when God does again shine forth unto you, and make His power known, you must expect it to be in judgment, because of the transgression you have gone into, that He may consume that in you which led you into the sin, away from His pure law, which is light: for "Zion is redeemed by judgment."

Therefore take heed lest you be offended at His appearance. Take heed that you do not limit the Holy One; but if His appearance is with more sharpness and bitterness to the carnal part than before, it is only just it should be so. It is the Lord, let Him do what He will. He sees more cause for it now than before, because of how much more you have sinned against His goodness. But bow to His judgments, bear His indignation, as Micah said, because you have sinned against Him, Mic. 7:9. And as you yield to His righteous judgments, you will know His coming in the midst of them, in which mercy is remembered and made manifest. Therefore the hasty and impatient, who flee from the judgment as soon as it begins a little to appear in them, never find the true deliverance, but get ease another way, which lasts but for a moment.

But they who come to know a thorough work wrought in their earth, and the floor thoroughly purged, come also to know the true and lasting peace to their immortal souls. And although this is not obtained by ease and liberty to the carnal mind (which must die), yet the end crowns all that hold out to it; they are the saved ones, as Christ said, Mark 13:28. They find themselves returning with sheaves, as the prophet said, Psal. 126:5-6. "They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy: they went forth with weeping, bearing precious seed, but they shall return with joy, bringing their sheaves with them." And as Christ said, they that forsake father and mother, wife and children, house or lands, yes, or their own lives for My sake, shall have a hundred fold in this time, and in the world to come, life everlasting.

Forsaking and self-denial have always been the way to life and true blessedness, and they are the way unto this day. Therefore all you who have wandered in your own ways, and have not yet learned to deny yourselves of what is contrary to the witness of God in yourselves, but have desires (and strong ones too) to keep and hold on to that which the light in you does reprove, and yet have desires of life and peace too, and so are in many doubts and straits about these things; to you all, this is the counsel of the Lord and the cry of His pure Spirit: Come out of the Babylonian confusion of your own thoughts, and touch not that which is unclean, and the Lord will receive you. What God by His pure Spirit has called unclean, let no man presume to call clean, and to join to it, lest they be found fighting against God, and nourishing and keeping alive that which God has appointed to die and be destroyed. You cannot serve two masters, nor partake of the table of the Lord, and the table of devils.

Oh! feed not that birth which hungers after evil things, and delights in them; but that which is for famine, let it be famished, and that which is for the sword, let the two-edged sword that goes out of the mouth of the faithful and true Witness cut it down, Rev. 1:16, and 3:14. So you may see the giants in the land slain before you by One that is mighty to deliver, and to bring you out of this spiritual Egypt with a strong hand. This you cannot come to witness, except by diligently following Him; and if you willingly yield to His gentle drawings when you feel them in your heart, you will find them to be effectual and profitable to your soul. And the more you follow Him, the more you will feel His goodness break in upon you for your encouragement, and the less you will doubt His love and mercy in leading you still further, even unto the end, and unto that rest which will satisfy your soul.

Therefore lay aside all consultations that are against your obedience to the gift of God in your heart, which reproves all sin in you, and does not give way to vain and needless doubts about it. And as you have been condemned and judged in your disobeying of it, now try and prove whether by taking up your daily cross, and obeying it in your words and actions, and in all things, you do not find the answer of sweet peace and joy. And when you find it so, then there will be no more room for doubts and questionings against your obedience; but as any questions or doubts do arise in you, or are cast in your way by any without you, you will feel the answer of peace in yourself to your great refreshing. In this way you will come to witness the effectual operation of it daily in your soul to work your change and translation out of yourself, into its nature; and so you will come not only to know the light in you, but you will also know that you are in the light, and that you walk there with God in the holy fellowship, where you feel the Lord near you in His light, and His reward is with Him. For a man may know the light to be in him and still perish, for Christ said that this is the condemnation—that light has come, but it is not loved. But you, loving the light, will come to walk and dwell in the light. So your citizenship will be in heaven, as with the saints of old, and your unity is witnessed with the



Father and the Son, as theirs was, who said, “If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with Him;” and if any said they had fellowship with Him and yet walked in darkness (which all sinners do, for sin is the work of darkness), such were said to be liars.

Those who walk in the light, as He is in the light, come to know the blood that cleanses and washes from sin and from all unrighteousness; and such as feel this work wrought in them, are brought into such a knowledge of the blood of Christ that they need not doubt about it, nor have any occasion to raise questions concerning where it is, what it is, or what the efficacy of it is. For having the work and witness of the blood in them, this quickly resolves all doubts that would arise.

Likewise those that come to know the light in all things to be their guide, to lead out of darkness and sin, and imperfection, and to bring into the innocent and blameless conduct which is fitting for saints, and so come to know their footsteps directed by the Lord—such have finished all doubting and questioning about perfection. For these see that which is perfect to be come, and they, from the belief which they have of attaining it, are laboring to conform themselves unto its rule. These seek after it, not as the carnal professors of Christianity, who say they labour to conquer their sins even while maintaining a belief they shall never attain it while they live. No, these so run that they may attain the prize, and they have the true hope in them, which purifies them even as He is pure. For John wrote, “He that has this hope in him, purifies himself even as God is pure,” so that, “even as He is, so are we in this present world.” Here the substance will come, and it will cause the shadows to flee away, and will answer all your doubts and questions far beyond what arguments can do.

And again, the many doubts and disputations that have arisen about the resurrection will be silenced as you come to be faithful in the daily cross that does slay and crucify that nature in you which has resisted the Truth, and held the soul in bondage. As that comes to die, and to be buried down in the true baptism into Christ's death, you will feel the pure Seed to spring up in you, and you will be made a partaker of the new life, and of the true resurrection, which is Christ. All that are in Him, are in the resurrection, and in the life; for He said, “I am the resurrection and the life, he that believes on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.” And all that live to God, in the Spirit of His Son, have part in the first resurrection, which whomsoever come to witness, the second death has no power over them. These come to know the thing as it is in Jesus, and their doubts are all answered about this also; for he that knows a death and a resurrection after this manner—that is, to be dead to sin and to be risen with Christ Jesus in the new life, even while they are in this earthly tabernacle, before it is dissolved—such will never question their appearing at the judgment seat of God after the body is dissolved. Yes, these believe with joy and gladness, and have a fervent hope concerning the resurrection of the

dead, and have their expectation in God in this matter, that He will (according to His promise) raise them up at the last day, and give unto every seed its own body, even as it pleases Him. The creature is not concerned then about such foolish questions and doubts, as to inquire what manner of body God will give them, but he leaves it to the Lord in full faith that He will raise them up according to the Scriptures. So here all your doubts will flee away, and are answered with that which was before them, as it comes to rule in the creature, and so death (which is the root and ground of doubts) comes to be swallowed up in the victory of the life.

As you feel your part in this resurrection, all the doubts and fears of your own condition will be effectually answered, which cannot otherwise be answered, except by that good Spirit of God that strives with you. When it prevails with you, and you become subject to it, then it witnesses for you. But it will also teach you by daily experience (much to your sorrow) that there is a state in which there is danger of falling away. For Christ said, "Every branch in Me that bears not fruit, must be cut off;" and besides this there are many examples in Scripture of those who departed from the faith, and made shipwreck of it, and turned with the dog to the vomit, and the sow to the mire. And you will see that if you stand, it is by faith, and so you must take heed so you may come to the crown, and seal, and assurance, and an establishment in the kingdom, where you shall no more go forth, but shall have your soul's desire answered.

When you come to know this state, and to receive the white stone that has the new name within, you will then be without doubt or fear, given up in your will to God, to do and to suffer all things according to His blessed will. And here is the true and perfect rest to your soul, whoever you are that are now laboring in the iron furnace of your own thoughts and doubts. But the more you give yourself up to these thoughts and doubts, the darker you become, and even more full of doubts, for these beget and multiply one with another. The more you reason against obeying God's witness in your heart, the less able you are to obey it. The little strength that God gives you, you consult it away, and then, when you desire to be strong, you become feeble, and when you desire in some measure to obey, your own consultations stand in the way and hinder you. And the more you increase in knowledge in this state, the more you increase your sorrow and condemnation, so that sometimes you are ready to wish you had never known so much Truth. And sometimes you wish you knew more concerning a particular point, or a particular doctrine, or scripture, or mystery, and are apt to think that because you are yet ignorant in some things relating to Truth, you are therefore the more excusable if you are disobedient.

But alas! poor soul, consider this: the way to know more, is to be obedient to the little which you have received; and then that mist and fog of your own unfaithfulness will vanish away from before the eye of your mind. It is this which keeps good things from you, and makes you

go about daily with a burden upon your shoulders, and a guilt upon your conscience; and also keeps you from coming before the Lord with an open face, for you are still covered with your own iniquities. In this state you know neither sabbath nor new moon, nor holy-day to the Lord; but all is labour, toil and travail, and wearisomeness of spirit, till many even come to wish an end of their days, and yet are in great fear that the end will be even worse.

Oh! how my soul pities you whose state this is, and I have a great sympathy with your sorrows! In tender love I am drawn forth to reach out a hand to help you, as one that has obtained mercy to know deliverance, and to witness the way of it, and have the testimony of God in my heart, to witness for the coming of the Saviour to the poor and needy souls, for their relief and comfort. My soul's desire is that your bonds might be broken, and your souls might escape.

But this I say in the name of the Lord to you all: there is no way for your deliverance, except by your giving up in single obedience to that faithful and true Witness of God, which stirs and moves in you against your sins. Therefore wait to feel your mind and will subjected to this, that you may feel yourself made willing in this day of God's power. Cease from your reasonings against obeying the Truth, and from saying "I cannot, I lack power;" or "When God gives me grace, then I will obey," etc., for these sayings are in vain. For though it is true that none can obey the Lord but by His grace and power given unto them, yet He has made His grace—even that grace which brings salvation—appear unto all men, as is said in Titus 2:11. And this grace has appeared unto you, and in you, to whom I write, and is a reprovener in you. You must therefore turn to that which smites you, and then you turn to the grace of God.

It is His grace that strives with you to lead you out of the evil that it reproves in you, and so out of the world that lies in the evil, up to God from which the grace comes. Whosoever gives up to the drawings of the good Spirit of God that moves in him, and in obedience thereto denies himself his own wills, and lusts, and evil desires, and pleasures, such as these do not lack power, but feel the One near them that works the willingness first, and then the deed according to His pleasure, and so the glory comes alone to be His. And then you know the mystery of the cross, and how it is the power of God, and why those who reject the cross complain for lack of power. So long as you live in the cross, you live in the power, and your obeying is easy, and all things are possible to you through it. And as long as you are daily dying to that which is corruptible, you will feel the more life and joy and pleasure in that which is everlasting, and your desires will grow more and more fervent after a full and perfect enjoyment of it, in the pure unity of the Spirit. And as these desires grow strong in you, it becomes a lighter thing to you to part with that which hinders, though it be your bosom sins, your Delilahs and darlings, yet all must go for the love you have to Truth.

Only such as have this love for the Truth, and continue in it, are counted worthy to be heirs of

the kingdom of God; for so long as anything be hugged and loved beside the Lord, if the Lord should manifest His love to you, you would play the harlot, and abuse His mercies, and cleave to your old lovers, as Israel did of old.

Therefore think it not strange to be brought through manifold trials, that thereby you may be purged and prepared as a bride for the true husband Christ Jesus. There are many that desire acquaintance with Him, but are not fitted for Him, for they must be washed first, and trimmed, and must put off the vile raiment first, and must come to know the white linen put on. While this work is process, what need there is of patience and quietness of spirit! What need of subjection to the workings of that Holy Spirit in all things, that you may not be setting limits and bounds to Him who must bound and limit you in all things. Nor must you say in your heart, "If my trials were but so, or my exercises such and such, then I could then bear them!" Rather submit in all things willingly to do and to suffer, to be tried and exercised even as it pleases the Lord to order or permit you to be tried. In all His dealings say with the good man, "It is the Lord, let Him do what He will."

Whosoever gives up in this way to Him, though He slay them, yet shall they live. Though He wound them, yet He will heal them again. Therefore, learn patience and stillness of mind, for by taking thought, you can add nothing in this work. Remember Israel of old, who were commanded to stand still to see the salvation of God in their greatest straits, and they are a figure unto you. In the light read this figure, and wait for the substance—the true Seed—that it may bring forth peace and rest to your immortal soul, and may set up righteousness in your earth. This is what I travail after, on behalf of all distressed and afflicted souls everywhere, to whom I am a friend and a well-wisher, as one knowing their trials, straits, doubts and besettings. And also, through the rich love of God in Christ Jesus, I do witness the delivering, answering, and satisfying life made manifest and revealed in its own eternal light, which enlightens every man.

In true desire that you may all know the same, and in discharge of my duty towards God and my generation, I have sent forth this word of counsel and exhortation, and do remain in my rest with the Lord, being thus far clear of the blood of all men, whether they hear or forbear. And though in bonds for the gospel's sake, yet I am the Lord's free man, waiting in patience and full assurance for Zion's full redemption.

Known by the name, Stephen Crisp.

Ipswich County Jail, this Third Month, 1668.