Seasons Vol 1 & Bible Quotes **(Saved, Boswell Ecclesia)**

**Seasons of Comfort Vol 1**

**By**

**Robert Roberts**

**p. 20, Errors of Traditional Christendom**

It lacks, yea rejects, the very first principles of the oracles of God. It teaches a triune instead of the one God: it asserts man to be immortal instead of mortal: it declares torment instead of death the wages of sin: it preaches the death of Christ as a "substitutionary" satisfaction of the Divine law, instead of a declaration of the righteousness of God (Rom. iii. 25) in the condemnation of sin in the flesh (Rom. viii. 3), as a basis on which the forbearance of God offers the forgiveness of all who recognise themselves "crucified with Christ" (Rom. iii. 25; Gal. ii. 20). It proclaims death instead of resurrection the climax of the believer's hope; it preaches heaven instead of earth as the inheritance of the meek. It affirms our going, instead of Christ's coming as the means and occasion of the promised reward. And so forth. The dissimilarities might be enumerated in other points. Instead of being "the pillar and ground of the truth," the religious system around us is the puller-down and scatterer of the truth.

**pp. 37, What is Our Position?**

It is very possible for us to be in the position of Israel. We may be zealous of the Divine ordinances in the same way. We may have a liking for the Gospel theoretically; we may attend and enjoy the meetings: and in a manner be as strongly in love with the Christadelphian position as the Jews were with their temple, and yet be lacking in the spiritual element that makes these things acceptable to God as part and parcel of a faithful service. They are good in their place: Divine in their place: indispensable in their place: but if unaccompanied by the sentiment toward God which sincerely offers all to Him, and that disposition toward man which prompts to deeds of blessing and mercy, it may be all in vain, for on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets, and therefore, all the Gospel and all the meetings and the whole machinery of the Divine service of our day. Therefore, what can we say more to the point than what Paul says? "Let us, therefore, fear."

**p. 43, Lay Aside Every Weight**

We must make up our minds to forego many things that are in themselves legitimate, but hindrances in the race. We must lay aside every weight; giving all diligence to make our calling and election sure.

**p. 46, Faith, Love, Hope,**

Love is an indispensable element in mutual comfort. Faith and hope are refreshing to behold-so much so, indeed, in these barren days, that we can love intensely where they are manifested, even if they are unaccompanied by the manifestation of benevolence. But the truly joyful and love-evoking combination is where the greatest of the three stands high in the centre of the group, and faith and hope stand obediently at each side. This love will flourish when faith and hope are swallowed up in the glories of God's realized purpose. Faith and hope are greatly marred if love stands not with them.

**p. 47, The Mystery**

"To the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ." To" know him that is true," in the apostolic age, was to acknowledge" the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit" (I Tim. 3 : 16). Any" full assurance of understanding" that came short of the acknowledgment of this mystery was a full assurance of mis-understanding or non-understanding. What was this " mystery ofGod "? An amended translation would make it more apparent than it is in the common version. It should read: “The mystery of God, even of the Father, and of Christ." That is, the" mystery" comprehends the Father and Christ as the items of its constitution. As Paul elsewhere bv the Spirit defines it: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Cor. 5 : 19). Or as Jesus declared it: "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? ... He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14 : 10, 9). Or the testimony of John: "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John I : 14).

**p. 47, The Mystery – Christ Was No Mere Man**

The mystery of God presented for the recognition of the world in Paul's day, was that the man crucified by Pontius Pilate, at the instigation of the Jews, was no mere man, but the manifestation of the Creator of heaven and earth by the Spirit, in the seed of David according to the flesh, for the condemnation of ancestral sin in the flesh, that the Father might be just in justifying those who should believe in the crucified one (Rom. 3: 26) ; that the praise might be of God and not of men (2 Cor. 4: 7). This was a " mystery," whether as regards its own nature or its place in the divine plan of working. It was a thing not to be comprehended, as men comprehend common things, that God should veil Himself in a man; yet it was the solution of the other mystery, how God was to save a condemned race consistently with his own unchangeable methods.

**p. 48, Philosophy Taught**

Philosophy taught that all men were equally important by reason of their participation in a common divinity, and that to direct attention to one in particular, as the Gospel did to Christ, was absurd and unphilosophical-that Christ was all very well in his own place as a remarkable moral hero, but that to exalt him to the position of a fellow of the Creator, and assign him supremacy over men, to whom every knee must bow, and to make human salvation dependent in every case upon his goodwill, was the outrageous freak of an over-heated enthusiasm. This was flattering to human vanity, and greatly liable to " spoil" those who gave ear to the enticing words.

**p. 48, Judaism Taught**

Judaism, on the other hand, contended that as the law of Moses was divine, and had been the glory of Israel for ages, it could not be superseded, and that any goodness that appertained to the doctrine of the Nazarene had been borrowed from it, nay more, stolen from it, and made the basis of blasphemous pretences on the part of an unlearned Jew of Nazareth, who, even if he rose from the dead, could never be admitted to come into competition with what God spake by Moses.

**p. 49, We Cannot Put Christ Too High**

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We ca **oo High**nnot put Christ too high. God hath given him a name above every name, even His own name, the name of God, which shortly cometh from far. He is the Way, the Truth, the Life, the Resurrection, the Hope. He is the Head; the beginning of the creation of God, the first-born of every creature, Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Lord Almighty (Rev. 1 : 8, I I, 17).

**p.52, Thank God For True Brethren**

Paul, however, did not thank God for Philemon merely because he was a brother. This is sometimes not a cause for thanksgiving: for there are many whom we may thank God are not brethren, because of the disgrace and hindrance that would come from their being so: and there are some concerning whose brotherhood we cannot be thankful, because, like those of whom Paul speaks in another place, though professing godliness, they are destitute of the power thereof, and are enemies of the cross of Christ, though bearing the name of friends. What made Paul thankful was this: "Hearing of thy love and faith which thou hast TOWARD THE LORD JESUS and toward all saints." Such a condition in any professor will certainly inspire thanksgiving in any brother to whom, like Paul, "to live is Christ." It is an unerring law that "he that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten" (1 John v, 1).

**pp. 57, Resurrection And The Establishment of Kingdom**

When we direct our eyes forward, we see Christ more distinctly than even in the past. We see ourselves on the verge of that great change by which the kingdoms of the world are to be abolished, and transferred to a new order of rulers who have been in slow and painful preparation for ages past. Anon we see Christ again in the world, rousing his dead friends from their slumbers, apprising his living friends of his presence, and summoning them all before him for that grand assortment which has been both their hope and fear from the beginning. The judgment past, and the unfit sent back from his presence, we see him take part in the affairs of nations. We see him crush immense armies; we see him send messages to the governments; we see his claims set at naught, and mighty armaments raised to roll back the tide of his power. We behold a time of trouble such as never was. We hear the dreadful shock of war -- universal war; we see armies shattered, fleets destroyed, fortresses and cities in ruins, commerce at a standstill. We see the tempest roar with unremitting fury till the whole world is a wreck at the feet of Judah's Lion. Then slowly, calm ensues; the storm abates; the sun shines; order returns; a new government rises out of the universal chaos. The kingdom of God spreads overall; the immortal friends of Christ take power everywhere in the name of "Divine right"; peace overspreads the scene; soldiers disbanded; fortresses dismantled; arsenals emptied, the arts of war suppressed, and mankind set free to worship God under Heaven-sent guides and governors, and to live in joyful harmony everywhere, surrounded with plenty, and delivered from disease. "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth and goodwill among men."

**p. 62, Christ, Flesh And Blood**

The Lord, in the flesh and blood of his brethren, destroyed, through death, their great destroyer, Sin; and delivered them who, through fear of death, were subject to bondage.

**p. 72, The Race**

In the race for life eternal, there are many things lawful enough in the abstract; but that viewed in relation to the object to be attained, are highly inexpedient, and to be 'laid aside', as Paul advises. It is a simple, and a safe and a reasonable, and a wise rule, and one that will give us much cause for joy at the last, to dispense with every habit or pleasure, or practice, or occupation, or friend that hinders our progress in the narrow way.

This is but another way of saying what Christ said: 'If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out. It is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into the fire of Gehenna.' It is better to make our calling and election sure, at the expense of worldly friends and engagements and advantages, than to secure all these, in this present time, and find, at last, that we have cherished them at the expense of Christ's approbation, and have to pay for them with the loss of the kingdom of God.

**pp. 72, The Sacrifice Of Praise**

Yet another lesson: "By him (Jesus) therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his Name." What is this but the continual command of the Spirit in the Psalms: "Praise ye the Lord"? A necessary lesson, indeed, that needs to be continually dinned in our ears! We have come from a state of things in which no sentiment is more distant or unreal than ascription of honour and thanksgiving to God. The carnal mind reigns in the world in all its rank development; "it is not subject to the law of God, neither can be." God is not in all their thoughts. They say "Our lips are our own; who is Lord over us?" If there is one lesson we have to learn more than another, it is that it belongs to our calling in Christ to "offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His Name." God will be praised. This He declares of Himself, "I will be exalted in the earth" (Psalm x1vi. 10). "My glory will I not give to another" (Isaiah x1ii. 8). "He that offereth praise glorifieth me" (Psalm l. 23). He has revealed that all things are formed for His glory; for His pleasure they were created. All intelligence is out of Him, and must bow to Him, as saith the scripture: "Every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue confess." Adoration of Him is the highest act of created intelligence. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Nothing exists by itself or for itself. All exist in God: all power, and strength, and wisdom, beauty and wealth is of Him. Nothing can be without Him; all would perish by a word if He gave it. But He is great and wise, and kind, and long-suffering; and so the world is established that it cannot be moved.

**p. 74, Philosophy And The Doctrine of Christ**

Philosophy teaches that a future existence is an affair of "virtue," the natural offspring of a "moral" course. The doctrine of Christ teaches that, without him, there can be no future existence; that it is a special manifestation through him alone; and that all without Christ are without hope and without God in the world.

**p. 75, Our Capitan, Our Lord** We have a Captain. We have a Head, a Leader, a Lord, and a Master. We have not seen him, yet we know he lives. We have not chosen him; he has chosen us. So he said to the twelve immediately around him; and if he could say so to them, how much more to us, who have been selected in a much more indirect way; who never would have known him but for the voice of invitation coming to us through the channels of his own appointment. In the natural order of things (that is, if Christ had not appeared and sent out a call to all willing men to become his) we should have been occupied like the Gentiles around, with mere questions of eating and drinking, and being comfortable and merry in this mortality, indulging in Pagan dreams of futurity, doomed to eternal disappointment. We therefore realise this idea that this Captain differs from other captains, in that he himself makes his own election. It is not as if his people were a political party, looking round and choosing the man that happens to suit them best. The movement proceeds from him.

**p. 76, Faithful Stewardship Required**

"Be diligent to make your calling and election sure." This is the time for diligence; it is not a state of things in which we can congratulate ourselves upon being safe. There is nobody safe; that is to say, nobody can say that they are saved until the day of selection come, and they have been selected. They cannot judge themselves. Some people imagine that when they have believed the Gospel and been baptised, they have done all -- that they have secured the prize. They have not secured the prize at all; they have but entered the lists for the competition to secure it. The attainment of it is contingent upon faithful stewardship.

**p. 85, The Place Of The Bible**

The Bible in the house is God in the house. The Bible in a man's life is God in a man's life. Where people place the Bible, they place God. The place it demands is the heart -- the throne. With nothing less will God be satisfied. Do you neglect it? you neglect God. Do you allow the affairs of house, or business, or friends to ride over it, to displace it from the first position, to put it in the corner, to keep it hidden, neglected, disregarded?

**pp. 85, The Bible, The Best Time Of The Day**

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy strength, and all thy mind." His own demand is "My son, give Me thine heart." He demands the highest place in all our affairs, which is His reasonable place. Let us render the service He requires. His word is in our houses. Don't let us insult Him by giving our feeblest moments to the reading of it. Don't let us wait till all our energies are worn out, and our faculties impaired in attending upon the affairs of the natural man. Don't let us sit down to the Bible when nature is exhausted, and sleep hovers on the eyelids. Let us give the best time of the day.

**p. 93, All the Counsel**

“If any man think himself a brother, let him show it by acknowledging frankly and abetting heartily the whole counsel of God; but if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.” If he is uncertain in this or that, and disposed to temporize and compromise, let him take his place as an ignorant man, whose voice should not be heard in counsel, and least of all, lifted up against those who are where he professes to be, and who are doing the work, which, by his profession, he ought to be doing with all his heart.

**pp. 97, Mere Sorrow Will Not Help Us**

"Be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless" (2 Pet. iii. 14). Let our determination, however, on this head, take a wise form. Mere sorrow for shortcoming, and resolve to do better, will not help us. The religious world abundantly illustrates this vanity. In the more earnest sects the people come together in solemn assembly, and groan while the preacher declaims, or the player-saver pours forth his Baal-like invocations: they groan and cry and feel bad, and go away and continue as they were before…We read in Malachi, "And this have you done again, covering the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping and with crying out, inasmuch that HE REGARDETH NOT THE OFFERING ANY MORE, or receiveth it with goodwill at your hands" (Mal. ii. 13).

**p. 100, God Delights In Our Prayer**

God delights to be requested to move in our behalf, and that our help depends on the continuance of our attitude of prayer towards Him. On the hill top, overlooking a battle going on in the valley between Israel and Amalek, he stood with the rod of God in his hand. "And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand that Israel prevailed, and when he let down his hand Amalek prevailed" (Ex. xvii. 11). So must we always have our eye towards the upholder of heaven and earth, in everything give thanks, and make our requests known unto God.

**p. 104, Death Ends All**

The world goes on after other people die, but when it comes to a man's own turn, the world stops. There is no more business for him; no more friends for him; no more reading for him; no more meetings for him. The whole scene suddenly cuts short, the world passeth away, never, never to return. Only one thing remains, [for those with knowledge] and that comes quickly, immediately, as soon as the breath is out of his body, as it seems. Christ remains for him -- a dread meeting for weal or woe.

**pp. 111, God’s Plan Is Independent Of Us**

It is profitable to realize one fact. During all these centuries, the vision of Daniel has been slowly and surely working itself out in the affairs of men, without our assistance -- yea, without our existence. When Daniel stood before Nebuchadnezzar you might have searched the measureless universe round and you would not have anywhere found the persons who are assembled here this morning. Five hundred years afterwards you might have renewed the search with no greater success. A thousand years -- two thousand years afterwards, we were still unborn; yet the hand of God was slowly writing on the page of history the record of His purpose accomplished. Does this not enable us to feel how unnecessary we are to God: how certainly His word will come to pass independently of us?

**p. 127, The Doctrine Of Christ And Fellowship**

"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." The doctrine of Christ is that he is God made and manifested in the mortal flesh of Abraham's race for the deliverance thereof, on His own principles, from "that having the power of death." Those who hold fast to this have both the Father and the Son; for in Jesus, they have the Son, and the Father manifest in him.

As to those who "bring not this doctrine," John's commandment is "Receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed!" This command we can no more evade than any other commandment delivered unto us. The obedience of it may cost us something. It is crucifying to the flesh to refuse friends -- some of them excellent people as human nature goes -- who in one way or other have been seduced from their allegiance to the doctrine of Christ; but there is no alternative. Friends are but for a moment; the truth is for ever; and if we sacrifice our duty to the latter from regard to the former, the latter will sacrifice us in the day of its glory, and hand us over to the destiny of the flesh, which, as the grass, will pass away.

"He that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." This applies to all without distinction, and erects a barrier to fellowship with even some who hold the truth; for though they may hold the doctrine of Christ themselves, yet, if they keep up a "God-speed" connection with those who do not, by John's rule they make themselves partakers with them, and, therefore, cut themselves off from those who stand for the doctrine of Christ.

**p. 138, Worship Of God**

What is the worship of God, brethren and sisters? It is the deferential and reverential concentration of the mind upon Him, intelligently, consciously, lovingly, adoringly, trustingly, and prayerfully, with a deep sense of the things disclosed concerning Him and us in the truth.

**p. 149, Honor God**

We must honour God by listening every day to His voice which speaks to us in His Word. Thus shall we obtain the mind of the Spirit. Thus shall faith grow strong within us, ready for the trial which shall not destroy it, but purify it as gold. Thus shall we pray effectively before Him that we may be assisted in time of need. This figurative exhortation to buy gold tried in the fire, resolves itself into an exhortation to read the word ; to watch daily at wisdom's gates, waiting at the posts of her doors, that finding her, we may find life and obtain favour of the Lord (Prov. 8 :34)

**p. 155, Hobbies**

Here is what you may call the philosophy of spiritual strength. It is here where the vital importance of the Bible and all the institutions connected with it is to be seen, and the importance also of avoiding all things, however "lawful" in themselves, which being calculated to foster the false impressions of life, or to interfere with the nurture of the true, are most inexpedient and dangerous. A man giving himself to the pursuit of a scientific hobby or a political enterprise engaging the enthusiasm of ungodly crowds, or to the cultivation of friendships on the basis of the present evil world, burdens himself with heavy weights which are almost certain to sink him into perdition in an elegant style.

**p. 160, Many Shall Seek To Enter In**

Many should seek to enter in but should not be able. Why not able? Because they are not in earnest about it; they do not give enough energy to it. "We ought to give the more earnest heed," says Paul, "to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." Many fail to attend to the things in this earnest way; they lay hold of the kingdom of God, but, at the same time, keep hold of twenty other things. They devote their best faculties and their principal time to the promotion of objects unconnected with Christ entirely, and which are not even necessary for them in the provision of their livelihood.

**pp. 161, A Peculiar People**

Let us imagine the time for resurrection come. On the one side of the resurrection-line there is the past -- the human past, with its dropped burden of human anxieties and human business; and on the other side, what is there? God's business; God's business on a large scale. Christ is at the head of it. He puts aside the kings first and all their governments, and his great business is to exalt the name of God in the earth, and to bring the nations into subjection and harmony with him. Now, whom of all that congregation of the dead, whose mortal days and mortal concerns are all gone, whom of them would you select to be companions of Christ in this mighty work upon earth, which has as its object the exaltation of the honour of God's name for ever and ever, in the countless population with which the earth is yet to be peopled? Would you think it a large price to ask of any of that dead, rotting congregation, for the privilege of immortal partnership in this work, that they should have devoted their mortal affections, their mortal energies, their mortal day, their mortal opportunities, to holding up the name of Christ in the day of his disgrace? I am sure that no one realizing the matter would falter in the decision. Everyone would say, it was most reasonable that people who lived for themselves should reap what they had sown. The great majority of the dead lived for mortal life; and they cannot complain that they get and perish for what they worked. All they worked for was to have good things to put into their mouths, fine clothes to put on their backs, and the satisfaction of "respectability" in their day and generation. They got what they worked for; they had their reward; therefore, what would you bring them forward into the kingdom of God for? The kingdom of God is for those only who seek it first, and work for it in a practical, enthusiastic way, and are considered fools for their pains. Let us then, brethren, never listen for a moment to those who would hinder in the good fight by recommending what is called "temperance" and "moderation" in the things of Christ. Their exhortations are altogether misplaced, and altogether uncalled for. The tendencies of the sluggish beast of the natural man are sufficiently powerful in that direction to render it quite needless for anyone to exhort us in that line. We need exhorting the other way. We want continually to be pulled up in the direction of the path which the Captain of our Salvation himself has trodden before us, and in which he is, so to speak, leading us on. We know what sort of path that was. We know he was no "mild" and "moderate" man in the things of God. We know he had no schemes in hand but the one scheme of God's purpose. We know that he was never found trimming his sails to worldly breezes, or emulating or inculcating worldly principles; he devoted himself solely to the work which the Father gave him, and his relation to the world was one of continued antagonism. Our work, and our attitude, if we are his brethren, will be the same. The work may be different now in its external form, but it is the same work for all that, based upon the same testimonies and the same principles, and aiming at the same end - - the purifying of a peculiar people for the inheritance of the kingdom of God. Let us not fear to give ourselves to it with all our hearts.

**p. 166, The Hidden Mystery**

There was doubtless a higher aspect to the work of Christ. "To him," as the climax of God's work with man, "gave all the prophets witness." In him was to be accomplished the mystery hid from ages, how God was to be just and yet the justifier of transgressors of Adam's race unto life eternal, and the way thus opened in one man for the reconciliation of Jew and Gentile. In him was to be accomplished the resolution of the problem how condemned men were to be saved by obedience and yet the glory of it should be alone to Jehovah [Yahweh]. In him was to be historically illustrated the name Emmanuel -- God with Israel reconciling them to Himself, and not imputing their trespasses unto them - giving us in one man the glory of the Father, and the headship and brotherhood and obedience of the firstborn among many brethren.

**p. 168, Saintship - Disfigured And True**

The saintship that is disfigured by a conformity to this God-forgetting, man-fearing, self-seeking, money-making., poor-neglecting, proud, unjust, merciless, impure, drunken, tobacco-stupefied age -- is a saintship that will not be recognized by Christ…

Christ will recognize only the saintship of his own pattern, which is abundantly exhibited beforehand in the word of truth. That saintship is a saintship of zeal for God, independence of man, faithfulness to truth, purity (both of body and mind), righteousness, mercy, faith in God, love, meekness, gentleness, unselfishness, submission to evil, and kindness to the unfortunate - even if they are erring, fruitfulness in every good work, always abounding therein with thanksgiving, in the inextinguishable hope of the heavenly calling. This is the portrait drawn by the hand of the Spirit: the "image" exhibited for us to try and become conformed to.

**p. 169, The Bible’s First Principle**

Of one principle, running through the whole of the divine economy, we must never lose sight… That God may be exalted; that He may be had in highest reverence; that His unsearchable greatness may be recognized; that His great power and goodness, and His underived and absolute prerogative, may be apparent to the sons of men in their deepest affections and profoundest adoration; that His great name may be magnified and extolled, is the great object of all His recorded dealings, including that widest and greatest of them all, His permission of sin to reign unto death. Apart from this, His ways are not to be understood. It is no wonder that men do not understand the Bible; I mean the intellectual talented men of literature. They ignore or do not appreciate its first principle -- the honour of God. They look at it through the medium of the conceptions they have formed through the study of Nature, which can give them no information of the true reason of things. They interpret it in the light of mere philanthropy. They tacitly assume that creation exists for man alone, and that all things are to be judged good or bad according as it affects him. This philosophy stands between them and the Bible as a veil; for the Bible exhibits, a system of truth at variance with this philosophy in many points. The Bible shows us all things for God, and for man only in so far as man fulfils his part toward God.

**p. 170, The Spirit Of Slumber - Of God**

"As I live, saith the Lord God, I will not be enquired of by you" (verse 3). There are circumstances in which God will not receive men's advances, and in which He will even lay stumbling-blocks before them to turn them out of the way (Ezek. 3:20). Both Israel and the Gentiles are illustrations. After long patience, God poured the spirit of slumber upon the mental faculties of the Jews, because they took no delight in His appointments, and honoured not His name; and on the Gentiles also, to whom He sent His messengers in the first century, armed with the gifts of the Spirit, He finally "sent a strong delusion, because they received not the truth in the love of it."

**p. 178, What Is The Wedding Garment?**

What is this wedding garment [ Matt.22] ? We ascertain from another figure of the same matter. The guests in their collective capacity are symbolized in the Apocalypse as a woman in white array -- a bride in fine linen, clean and white. And concerning this white raiment it is added, "the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints" (Rev. 19:8). In the parable this principle is illustrated in its individual application. Each applicant for a place at the feast must possess the **individual righteousness,** without which no man shall enter the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9; Matt. 5:20).

Some escape this conclusion, deceiving their own selves by saying Christ will be their righteousness. Why was he not righteousness for the rejected guest? Why will he not be righteousness for false brethren who sow to the flesh, and to whom he tells us he will say, "Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity"? If a man have no righteous fruits of the Spirit to present before Christ in the account we must all give at his judgment-seat, when he judges the living and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom, the fate of the rejected guest will be his. "Cast out the unprofitable servant" (Matt. 25:30). Those who have to say they have no righteousness of their own, will find that Jesus will be nothing to them.

**p.178, Sinners And Saints**

The sentiment that Christ's righteousness alone is to be the basis of our acceptance., is one of the countless and pernicious corruptions of clerical theology…Men have long ceased to perceive that this principle applies only to unjustified sinners, and not to those who have been placed in a justified or forgiven position, through the obedience of faith. Christ is righteousness for sinners in this sense, that God offers to forgive them for Christ's sake, and to grant them a co-heirship with Christ, of what Christ as a manifestation of God, has achieved for himself. But when sinners become saints, they come into relation to a new principle. They are responsible to him as servants to a master, and he will judge them according to their works (Rev. 2:23; Matt. 16:27; 2 Cor. 5:10; Gal. 6:8). [Once we through knowledge become responsible to the Truth we enter into a new relationship with God and works by faith are required].

Most students of the word, in the early stage of their studies, fall into the mistake of supposing the "wedding garment" stands for baptism. If they pursue their studies to any practical effect, they by and by get rid of this mistake. They remember that many baptized persons will be rejected at the judgment seat, and that the most distinguished of the guests "Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets" -- have never been baptized…Baptism is only the first act of obedience on the part of a believing sinner… The law of admission to the kingdom says: "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of God" (Matt. 5:20). This is the righteousness typified by the wedding garment -- "the righteousness of saints" in its fulness and ripeness, the unreserved and patiently-continued submission of enlightened men and women, in whose hearts faith fully dwells with purifying effect, working by love to the keeping of the commandments of God.

**p. 183, Failing A Trial**

Do we not feel like Peter? "Lord, I am ready to go with thee unto prison and unto death." Peter failed in the first trial; but afterwards, he went both to prison and to death for Christ's sake, and was of those who "rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name." So must we, even should we quail at the first shock of battle, overcome at the last, and be found among those who earn the victor's crown, setting all foes and all consequences at defiance in our determination to walk in that path of faith and obedience that alone leadeth unto life.

**pp. 186, Present Worldly Pleasures**

There are pleasures in the world. There is recognition, entertainment, society, merry-making, and honour for those whom the world loves, and these things make the time speed pleasantly away. Even for those that the world does not love, there are many pleasures provided, if people like to go in the way of them. There is a gratification to the natural mind in going with the multitude in the ways of pleasure. There is always a fascination about the thing, especially if it is "respectable," and engaged in as something about which the lovers of pleasure can say there is "no harm" in it…these things are hurtful to the new man formed within them by the word…[and] God is dethroned in His own house.

**p. 188, Saints Consorting With The World?**

Now shall these – [the saints] the appointed executioners of divine vengeance on the world, the appointed reflectors of divine wisdom in the age to come, the appointed instruments of enlightenment and blessing to all mankind in the day of holiness to Jehovah -- shall these be found consorting in the pleasure-seeking of a world that knows not God, and obeys not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ? Can the sons of God give countenance to assemblies and occasions in which God is dethroned, and pleasure placed on the seat of honour and power?

**p. 191, Keeping God’s Commandments**

The keeping of the commandments of God, because they are His commandments, is a rule of action out of the reach of the natural man: yet it is the simplest rule in the household of God -- one of the first of first principles. There is no safety for any of us apart from the adoption and practice of this simple principle.

**p. 192, Doing Good**

No form of disobedience is so dangerous as that which is proposed under the plea of doing good. It is an old doctrine, "Let us do evil that good may come." Paul himself had to oppose it in his day, and his verdict on its advocates is vigorous and unmistakable: "Whose damnation is just." Such apologists for disobedience are far more dangerous than those who oppose Christ out and out; for they may beguile the unwary to their destruction.

**p. 194, Dangerous Sophistry**

The desire to protect the interests or secure the honours of the present life, is liable to mystify a man's reason when they are interfered with by obligations that appertain to the house of Christ. It is a dangerous sophistry that tries to make the path of wrong appear right, or a little less dangerous than the word represents it to be. This is a sophistry of which we are all in danger, because the love of the present world is innate, and is liable to lead us to favour a loose construction of the commandments of Christ, which is the first step to ruin.

**p. 197, Friendship With The World**

The will [of God]is that we make no friendship with a world which is full of everything contrary to His mind; but that standing apart from it, we shine as lights in it, testifying against it, and leaving its pleasures, its honours, its politics and its wars to its own children, in whom He has no delight. His intention is to destroy the system of things that goes to make up the world in its present constitution. The coming of Christ is to take vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thess. 1:8). These words are not written in vain. The purpose of God is to destroy the world as it now is, and to establish a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. Shall we build that which God means to destroy?

**p. 205, Lay Aside Every Weight**

In the course of daily life there are things we can choose to have to do with, or let alone. Paul recognizes this in advising us to lay aside every weight; that is, everything that will act as a drag in the race we are running, for eternal life. Some do not choose to lay them aside, but cumber themselves with occupations and associations at variance with the objects of the calling which every man has accepted who has put on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Such a choice can only be due to a want of recognition of the practical nature of the demands which the Gospel makes. Those demands have to do entirely with the present life; and if men exclude them, there can only arise one result, the decay of the spiritual man now, and denial by Christ at his coming. Spiritual vigour now, and recognition by Christ at his coming, can only be secured in the way the Spirit itself has provided, and that is, first, by a diligent submission to its tuition in the word, which practically means the daily and methodical reading of the Scriptures, and secondly, by an avoidance of the pleasures of the world and the society of fools. Compliance with the Spirit's requirements in these particulars may entail a sense of deprivation sometimes, but in the long run it brings great satisfaction and peace, and lays up in store a harvest at the appointed time of joy and well- being, which it is alike beyond the power of speech to exaggerate, or human imagination to conceive.

**pp. 207, Friendship With The World**

Only those who have a name to live and are dead could be found advocating a friendship which Jesus has forbidden and himself has set us the example of refusing. Shall we unite in bonds of friendship with those for whom Christ would not pray? "I pray not for the world" (John 17:9). Surely, no one could be guilty of it who believes in Christ and reverences him as our leader and teacher sent from God. We must be on our guard; the beginnings of things are insidious. Little slips lead to greater ones. Resist the devil and he will flee: give in to him a little, and he will soon push the door open and force himself into the house.

**p. 211, The World’s Wickedness**

"The FIRST and the GREAT commandment" has reference to our duties towards God. Consequently, the disobedience of it is the first and the most heinous crime that can be committed. It is here that the world, in its most cultured and respectable form, is guilty of wickedness so great and prevailing, as to justify the description of John: "The world lieth in wickedness." They live for themselves only and absolutely: the honour of God and the pleasure of God in the doing of those things He has commanded (and they are many) is absent from all their schemes and all their maxims. If this is true of the educated, what is the state of "the great unwashed"?

**p.216, The Few**

The plan [of God] as revealed is to "take out from among" the bulk, a certain "few" who are chosen, on the principle of faith and obedience under difficulty. These are to be "delivered from the present evil world," as Paul expresses it, after they have faithfully endured for an appointed time the tribulation incident to being in it, while not of it.

**pp. 216, Wickedness**

Wickedness…is the forgetting of God, the omission to constantly do the highest honour to Him, the ignoring of His will in expression of our thoughts and the formation of our purposes ; and the doing contrary to His commandments in the many matters that go to constitute " life." Judge the world by this rule and you see at once that John's testimony is true that "the world lieth in wickedness." God is absolutely ignored and His law cast aside with contempt. The sole rule of action is self interest in one form or the other. In some cases it takes a very refined form but in its essence it is the same the rejection of God, the service of natural inclination. The love of money the love of honour, the love of ease, or the love of appetite will be found to comprehend the motives that rule the world.

**p. 218, The Called And The Chosen**

All who are the called are not the chosen. Many are called but few are chosen. The reason of this is that the choice is limited to those who are led by the Spirit of God. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the children of God." A man who is guided by the ideas communicated by the Spirit through the apostles is guided by the Spirit; for these ideas, in their communicated form, are the power of the Spirit in the world for the effectuation of its work. Now, not all who profess the truth walk in it; some walk after the desires and inclinations of the natural man. There always are in the truth those who are of the flesh and those who are of the Spirit.

**p. 222, The Great Crime**

The reign of evil tells us that God is great -- that man cannot trifle lightly with His word. Six thousand years ago He was disobeyed, and this was the cause of the curse that has blighted all things. It was but one offence: behold the ocean of mischief that has come from so small a spring, and we learn the greatness of the crime of insubordination to the will of God. The greatest work of the truth is to teach men this. Man is mortal for this. Christ died for this. We break not this bread and drink not this wine discerningly unless we see in Christ crucified the vindication of the honour of God, in the condemnation of sin in the flesh of sin as the basis of our acceptable approach to God, and our forgiveness unto life eternal.

**223, Christ, The Sacrifice And Judge**

By and by, the Lord who was the sacrifice for the sins of the world comes also as a judge. It is a beautiful arrangement. Through him the way was opened, and he is the way to its ultimate issues. God accepted him, and leaves him to administer the results as regards others. All judgment is committed to him. It rests with him at his coming as to which of us shall enter into life eternal. And of whom will he make choice. Will it depend on "influence"? Will he be influenced by favouritism? Nay, verily. Just will be his judgment, and without respect of persons. Yet his selection will be made on a definite principle. He has himself been made perfect through obedience; and being made perfect, he has become the author of eternal salvation to all them that OBEY him (Heb. 5:9). This is the class that will be chosen: those who obey him. We are here this morning in obedience of him.

**p. 225, Our Obligations**

The trial is great. Some are equal to it; some not. The latter class would run eagerly if the Lord himself appeared to them and said, "Do this and do that." But they are as insensible as oysters to the actual obligations before their eyes. They are those who say when he comes, "Lord, when saw we thee naked, and clothed thee not?" They are not aware of their opportunities; they know not the day of their visitation.

**p. 233, The Property Of Christ**

We must treat ourselves and all we have as the property of Christ.

**p. 238, “I Know Thy Works”**

Where then are we to look for the indications of the real state of the ecclesia? The answer is, on the individual lives of the brethren and sisters. Let us follow them in their dispersion during the week, and ask how they act when thrown upon their own resources. What do they do with their leisure time and their surplus money? How do they transact their business or do their work? Do they continue instant in prayer, abounding therein with thanksgiving? Are they ready to every good work? Are they merciful to the poor and the penitent? Are they men of truth and honour? Have they the fear of God before their eyes? Are the commandments a law with them which they fear to break? Do they keep their promises, and are they punctual to their engagements? Are they bold to confess Christ before men, and forward to say "come" to those whom God may bring within their reach?

**p. 239, Our Failures**

There is no good to be done by giving in to failure. Some fall and incline to lie where they fall. This is a mistake. Let them get up and try again. We do not stand where Adam stood. One offence brought ruin on him; he had no High Priest; we have, and we are invited to make confession of our failures and trespasses and try again. Obtaining forgiveness, we are to "hold fast and repent," not losing hope, yet putting ourselves on a strict guard, for, with this, Christ is well pleased.

**p. 239, Watch!**

What was said to Sardis: "If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee"; that is, Christ, working in what are called the ways of Providence, would invisibly compass their destruction, if they did not take up that position of anxious vigilance which the situation, in all respects, called for. He would cut down the barren fig tree. This is a lesson to us. If we diligently and anxiously improve our standing in the things of the Spirit, "doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God," we shall be assisted from behind the veil in ways not visible to man.

**pp. 240, Jesus Christ – Altogether Lovely**

The saint has every reason to love Christ. He is in all respects beautiful in himself to such as have learnt the first and the great commandment to "love (and fear) the Lord with all the soul, and mind and strength." By any other class his beauty is not appreciated. His beauty is not such as would answer to the world's ideal -- moral, artistic, or religious. It is not the beauty of a statue or of a "gentleman born." Christ is more than kind; he is holy. He is more than forgiving; he is just, and with wickedness angry. He is more than gentle; he is exacting of supreme affection. He is more than good; he is zealous of the Father. He is more than courteous, refined, and cultivated; he is the impartial judge according to each man's work, regarding not the persons of men, and speaking flattery to none. He is more than man; he is God manifest. The Lamb of God, he is yet the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. The healing Sun of Righteousness, he is yet the treader of the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. A right acquaintance with him will embrace all the features of his beauty, and will lead to the imitation of each of them in our own characters: for he is the example set us to copy. The omission of any causes defect. Some try to imitate his kindness while forgetting his zeal. Others copy his severity while failing to remember his gentleness. Others extol his placability and charity while overlooking his righteousness and jealousy of the Father's honour. Let us remember all the elements of his perfect character. They are altogether lovely. They constitute the Lord Jesus one by himself in the history of the world.

**pp. 243, Ecclesial Unity**

Agreement in the things of the Spirit is the first condition of ecclesial unity. The unity of the Spirit may be kept in the bond of peace; but the schism of the Spirit -- disagreement in the things of the Spirit -- renders peace impossible. Those who are indifferent can easily afford to ignore disagreement; and preach cordially of the virtue of "agreeing to differ." This is no characteristic of the church of the living God. It contends for the faith once delivered to the saints, and obeys Paul's command (1 Tim. 6:5) to "turn away" from the perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds. The first characteristic of the true saint is zeal for the things of God. He is not content to cultivate friendship on the basis of "adhesiveness" or any other merely fleshly instinct. He stands "in God": God's ways and principles are the rule of his life, the measure of his aspirations, the standard of his friendship, the foundation of all his doings. The Laodicean attitude of indifference -- the readiness to agree to differ within the precincts of the ecclesia -- is impossible with him. He must have the faith first pure, knowing that peace will follow, and from peace edification, and the growth in every good thing that shall prepare the brethren for the coming of the Lord. A contrary condition produces every evil work. Unity in the Spirit will admit of growth to the stature of the perfect man in Christ. It will help us to dwell together in love and hope, striving together for the faith of the Gospel, abounding in the whole work of the Lord with thanksgiving.

**p. 255, The Fountain Sealed, The Veil Drawn**

"Except a man receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein." A simple, docile, childlike, disinterested, unbiased, and perfectly candid and earnest desire and search for truth is essential to the acquisition of divine wisdom. To any other state of mind, the fountain is sealed. It is easy for God to draw the veil without a man's knowing it. In this way, He has blinded Israel, and thus He blinds many a man who scornfully seeketh wisdom, but findeth it not.

**p. 262, Divine Help**

There must be no familiarity or presumption towards God … we must make a wise and full use of all that He has put in our power, and that divine help is only for the need that remains after there has been a humble, wise and loving employment of the means already in our hand.

**p. 266, “Lay Aside Every Weight”**

Whenever anything -- be it a habit, a friend, a connection, or what else -- acts as a hindrance in the race. It is the duty expressed by Paul: "Lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset." All things that are lawful are not necessarily "expedient": do they hinder or help the work of the Gospel in us? This is the simple test by which we may easily decide what is wise to be done. There are many enterprises, occupations, and things that, judged by this rule, will be let alone by spiritual men -- enterprises, occupations and things which, while innocuous enough in themselves, are prosperously effected only at the peril of eternal life. Under this category, it would be easy to include large business aims, worldly friendships, scientific specialities, political and social hobbies, and fashionable pleasure taking.

**p.269, Do Good**

What a man does by the law, he does himself. By this, he can more destructively smite his enemy on the cheek than if he tried it with his own hands. What virtue in withholding a blow with your own hand if it is only that you may inflict a heavier one through the resistless and cruel instruments of the law? Doing good to them that hate and hurt you excludes the resort to all retribution-by the law or otherwise.

**p.275, Christ’s Necessary Death**

If the Lord had not died, men would not have been saved, nor mansion developed. Death had passed upon all through sin, under the law which constituted death the wages of sin; and it had pleased the Father to require this law to be fully upheld as the basis of the scheme by which salvation had come by Christ. Without the blood of a sinless representative, the covenants of promise must remain a dead letter. Without the slaying of the lamb, there could be no “passing over” by the angel of death.

**p. 276, Altogether Lovely**

Wisdom, power, excellence, goodness, and authority combine to make him altogether lovely, and this loveliness is made to shine with greater power into our hearts by the fact that he died for and gives life to us, but for which, we should never have risen above the level of the perishing races around, We can love him without danger of recoil. No inferior manifestation on his part will ever cool our ardour or tire our preference, He is the focus of the covenanted goodness; the head of the body; the centre of the circle, the nucleus of the glorious family, the beginning of the new creation; the spirit of the system; the life of the community.

**p. 283, Justification**

Scriptural justification consists of a wiping-out of a sinful past; a giving to men a clear foundation, whereon to build the “works” which shall be unto life eternal. Justification does not ensure final salvation. A man may be “purged from his old sins,” and forget himself (2Pet. 1:9) and return like a washed sow to her wallowing in the mire (2Pet, 2:22). In the justified state to which he is introduced on his obedience to gospel, he may bring forth fruits of the flesh (Rom.8:13), and not of the spirit, and of these he will reap—not life everlasting, but corruption (Gal.6:8). Justification merely places him in a position where he may “work out his own salvation” (Phil.2:12). This position is all of grace or favour. Without it, a man’s exertions would be entirely in vain. In this respect, salvation” is not of works”: the basis of it is the bounty of God. Yet in the position, works will determine everything. We shall be judged “according to our works, good or bad” (2Cor 5:10; Matt.16;27; Rev.22:12).

**p. 285, Continue In Sin?**

It is written of the Holy City. “There shall not enter therein anything that defileth.”The list of excluded persons includes “drunkards, revilers, extortioners, fornicators, adulterers, effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind.” (1Cor.6:9). Nothing is more incontrovertible in our most holy faith, than that righteousness of a high order is indispensable to secure approval at the hands of the Judge of the quick and dead. A continuance in sin in any form is fatal to our prospects in relation to that great day when every man will stand nakedly revealed in the presence of men and angels.

**p. 286, The Value Of Law**

In a family where law is maintained, you have whipping and tears, but then you have also the sunshine after the rain—the beautiful spectacle of obedient, cheerful children, whose society is not a nuisance. In families where there is no law the children escape the rod, but they get something which is a thousand time worse—the misery of undeveloped minds and willful, wicked dispositions, which repel sympathy, and lead at last into all sorrow.

**p. 288, Bury A Living Man?**

It ought, therefore, to be seriously considered by all who contemplate [baptism], and by all who are called upon to assist them, whether there is evidence of death to sin before arrangements are made for burial. The burial of a living man is cruelty, It were better for the sinner to leave God’s covenant alone than to make a mockery of it.

**p. 289, Baptism Is Not Salvation**

[One]…must not delude himself with the idea that now that [he is baptized and] his sins are forgiven, and his connection with Christ made sure, he has nothing more to do. A delusion of this sort will be fatal. His connection with Christ is made sure, but not his salvation.

**p. 289, Baptismal Probation**

The justification of which he is the subject at his baptism does not ensure glorification. It but reinstates him in the position from which Adam fell. This was a position of probation.

**p. 314, Faith And Depression**

God is not displeased at our weakness; He is displeased at a lacking faith and a faltering obedience. This lesson has been obscured by the religious teaching in which most of us have been brought up, and some of us may be liable to suffer from the error now. We have been led to look at ecstatic feelings as the symptom of spiritual life, and to regard depression or even sobriety as indicative of deadness. Whereas faith and depression may co-exist as in the case of Job, David and the Man of Sorrows.

**p. 315, Immortal Qualification**

The saints will not rule the world as they now are. They would be incompetent for the work in every sense of the term. Such of them as are chosen will be qualified for the work before they are called to enter upon it. To begin with, they will be immortalized, which of itself will give them a vigour of body and mind that will go a long way towards making them fit to hold a divine commission. In addition to this, they will be endowed with powers and gifts unknown to the human organization.

**p. 319, Humanity Is Debased**

The human race is debased. Nine hundred and ninety-nine in a thousand are in poverty –poverty of pocket, poverty of mind, poverty of nature. Unscrupulous cleverness lords it over the interest of mankind. Iniquity is established. All are dying. Life is a troubled dream. Vanity and vexation of spirit is written over all.

**pp. 328, ALL Good Works**

“That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works”—not partially, but thoroughly furnished, wealthily furnished, heartily point of having the word of Christ swelling in us richly, with that intensity of appreciation expressed in the words,” My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times. And furnished unto all good works –not one or two; not like those who perform one set of duties and neglect others: who attend lectures, but absent themselves from the breaking of bread; who like to argue about first principles, but disrelish exhortation to holiness and prayer: who get up public meetings, but forget the ministration of the saints: who like discussion, but have no taste for worship: who are interested in the stranger, but forget love to the brethren: who zealously invoke the law and the testimony, but neglect the daily reading of the Scriptures: who teach doctrine, but pass over mercy and the love of God: who are diligent in business, but do not serve the Lord; who cherish theory, but fail in practice; who are alive to correctness of belief but dead to holiness of life; who content for the faith, but neglect the works without which faith is dead; who promise liberty to others, while they themselves are servants of corruption. On the other hand, the man of God, furnished unto all good works, will not be found in opposite extremes. He will not exalt ”charity” over the gospel: he will not preach “love” where the word of God is corrupted; he will not advocate peace where there is not purity; he will not hold up almsgiving as the way of salvation; he will not inculcate union and friendship with the world on the plea of loving our neighbours as ourselves. For everything there is a time and a place; and the study of the world will teach us the when and he where. There is a right division of the word of truth and a handling of the word of God deceitfully. The man of God, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, with discern instinctively the one and the other and be enabled to give its right place to every part of the word of the testimony.

**p. 343, Weights To Be Laid Aside**

While taking care to use the means to keep awake, it is necessary to avoid the things that tend to draw us into the universal slumber. On this head, there are books not to be read, companions not to be kept company with, pleasures not to be followed, pursuits not to be engaged in, habits not to be practiced, objects not to be aimed at. There are “weights” to be “laid aside”-to use another of Paul’s figures when comparing the calling in Christ to a race. Every earnest man will be able to recognize these for himself. They are discernible by the simple test of whether they interfere or not with the growth of Christ dwelling in our heart by faith. By this test, novel-reading will be abandoned. There is no more powerful spiritual sleeping draught than this. It conjures a fictitious picture before the mind. It invests human life with a beauty that does not exist in fact, and teaches men to be interested in trifles, and to be interested even in important things and in men from the wrong point of view. It excludes God from sight, draws a veil over real wisdom, and hides the glory to be revealed.

**p. 343, Trustworthy Brethren**

Brethren are only trustworthy in so far as they echo …[the Truth’s] sentiments and principles. If they complain of the way of godliness being narrow, or the standard high, they complain against the word. If the way is narrow, and the standard high, it is God who has made them so, and it would be madness in us to tamper with them while professing to accept them.

**p. 374, Christ Our Model**

There may be many who are called brethren, through whom the truth is brought into reproach, who conform not at all to the Pauline standard. They are contentious without being faithful; intelligent, without being loving; courageous without being humble; bold without being reverent. They are self-assertive, without being regardful of others ; sensitive to human opinion, without the fear of God ; manly and resolute, without being sympathetic and considerate. Wise men will resist the influence of this class, and seek to neutralize it by the exhibition and assertion of the model Christ has given us in Paul.

**p. 382, Sing Praises To God**

We are told in another psalm, “It is good to sing praises to our God, for it is pleasant, and praise is comely.” In the psalm before us a reason is given for the invitation to indulge in this good thing. It is not a mere sentimental rapture, though in the act of praise directed to God. It has a reason, and the reason is: “For the Lord is a great God.” Another psalm, like many besides, indicates the nature and extent of the greatness: “By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.”

**p. 382, Man An Admiring Spectator**

How reasonable is praise to God. He made us, and not we ourselves. He made all things. Do we admire the stupendous and well-ordered movements of the universe? Are we impressed with the beneficent march of the seasons? See we anything in the poise of the elements and the inimitable adjustment of the intricate forces of nature? Or are we struck with the exquisite skill exhibited in the construction of the minutest fibre in plant or animal? To man we can attribute nothing of all this power and all this wisdom. Man himself is a product of it. He is a helpless, if not an admiring, spectator.

**p. 389 The Only Good**

In the exercising of our understanding, then, we look at the fact that the best that is possible, and the only permanent good that there is for any, is the gift of an immortal nature at the appointed time of Christ’s return to the earth, and incorporation in a system of society in which intelligence, faculty, health, wealth, and opportunity will combine to confer the conditions of perfectly blessed existence on the basis of permanence. We look also at the fact that this is attainable only in the channel of faith in what has been revealed concerning Christ, and obedience to what he has commanded.

**p. 390 Inside Or Outside?**

But this great and unsearchable foundation-the Rock-the everlasting Power-has revealed Himself, and the gospel connects us with Him. Here is where a simple believer of the gospel is far wiser than the man laden with the technicalities and the honours of science. He stands inside creation, so to speak, while the man of science is on the outside. The man in Christ is related to the power that can affect and effect the developments of the universe; while the man of science, rejecting Christ, merely sees what exists for the time being, without any power to affect it, or any relation to what God means to effect. The man in Christ may be ignorant of the technicalities of human knowledge; but he possesses a knowledge of far more value in knowing God, and having a place in His love for this is the ultimate source of all knowledge and power.

**p. 392, Get Christ**

A man will be able to say to himself, “If I get Christ, I get all - health, life, riches, honour, knowledge, joy, and every conceivable and (to us meanwhile) inconceivable good. How can I get him? I read and I find my answer. I am to love him and to obey him. To do this I must adopt that course of action that will help me to do so, and avoid that course of action that will interfere with my doing so. I cannot love him if I forget him, nor obey his commandments if they fail my memory. I must therefore read of him continually, and call to mind his commandments always. I must consider him in all I do. I must keep the company of his friends. I must avoid the friendship of his enemies. I must suffer with him in the self-denial he requires. I must refuse to enjoy the pleasures of sin, which constitute the pursuits of the present evil world. I must spend the time of my sojourning here in fear. I must speak of him and show him forth in my day and generation even as a lit candle at night gives light to the house. I must live as his steward, and consider his interest and mine identical. He prayed: I will. He did always the thing that pleased the Father: I will try. He went about doing good: I will strive to follow his example. The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister: aspiring to a place among his many brethren, conformed to a common image, I will endeavor to act on the same principle, to follow the same rule.

**p. 401, A Work Of God**

The Assyrians, Babylonians, and Romans were merely instruments in God's hands, without their being aware of it.  The work done by them was work done by Him.

**p. 402, Abraham’s Children**

We are not sons of Israel by birth but we have become so by adoption (Rom. 11:17; Eph. 2:19); and our standing in Israel is not less real or valid because we are of Gentile birth and extraction.  On the contrary we are more really Jews than those Jews after the flesh who lack the faith of their father Abraham. It is principle of New Testament doctrine that "they are not all Israel that are of Israel" (Rom. 9:16). Jesus did not recognize the Abrahamic relations of those Jews who rejected him, though he admitted their lineal extraction. He denied they were Abraham's children in the full and effectual sense, because they were destitute of the character of Abraham (John 8:37-44). Gentiles, though not born of Abraham's blood, are truly the children of Abraham, if having become adopted in Abraham's family, they are characterized by Abraham's faith and works (Rom. 4: 11-12; Gal. 3:29). Consequently, we can rejoice in hope of these glorious promises, made in the prophets concerning the seed of Jacob.  They belong to the Jews, and we are Jews.

**p. 407, Bible Reading And Prayer**

The diligent, sympathetic daily reading and studying of the oracles of the living God, with prayer to Him who slumbers not nor sleeps, will fortify a man for successful conflict with all the enemies he has to encounter on the road to eternal life; while the neglect of them with certainly ensure his failure, however gifted he may be as a natural man, or however successful in the objects of life which the common run of men set before their eyes.

**p. 408, The Bible**

The Bible is distinct from all books and systems in this, that its main aim is to make man acquainted with God.  It is not a book of philosophy; it is not a book of morals ; it is not a book of poetry ; it is a stately, majestic, pure record of what God has done among men, with the object He has plainly declared throughout--the object of making Himself known, and of bringing men into adoration and subjection.  It makes nothing of man:  it makes everything of God.

**p. 418, Hope**

Hope is the language of heaven and earth as we see them, even if we were unable in the absence of the Father's voice to interpret their speech.  "Good hope through grace,” is the proclamation of the gospel.

**p. 419, “Rejected” Or “Well Done”?**

The ground of rejection is the pursuance of a certain line of action in the present time, while we are, so to speak, left to ourselves.  A certain line of action the Lord considers iniquitous; of a certain line of action he will say, "Well done." How important to know the one and the other. There is forgiveness with God, but it is for those who "confess their sins and forsake them" (Prov.28:13); who "repent" in this scriptural sense.

**pp. 419, The National Liturgy**

There is a poor prospect for those who cannot truthfully say more than the national liturgy makes the national sinners dolefully mumble every Sunday: *"We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done."*  The people seem to think that a confession of this sort is the very pinnacle of piety. They justify it by reference to the publican of the parable who, standing afar off, looking toward the temple, besought mercy to himself as a sinner and of whom Christ declared that he went to his house justified rather than the complacent Pharisee who was able to recount his righteous deeds.  But this is a misapplication of truth.  It is quite true that the ground of the justification or forgiveness of a sinner to whom the gospel comes is the confession of his unworthy history, and the hearty recognition of the entire absence of any ground recommendation to God; but **the case is altered when in the waters of baptism,** he becomes washed and sanctified and cleansed from all his past sins.  He is no longer a sinner laden with his sins: he is a saint or consecrated one, who having become dead to sin, in his baptismal participation in the death of Christ, no longer continues therein. He no longer yields his members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but unto God, as a man alive from the dead, and his members as instruments of righteousness (Rom. 6:13). He no longer lives the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men but to the will of God (1 Pet. 4:2). He belongs to those who are sober, and hoping to the end for the salvation coming with Christ, as obedient children, not fashioning themselves according to the former lusts in their ignorance, but being holy in all manner of conversation, after the image of Him who hath called them (1:13-15).  He is not without fault, but for this there is provision in the priesthood of Christ, who makes intercession for the saints, and obtains forgiveness for those who walk in the light (1 John 1:7; 2:1). A saint with forgiven faults and failings is a very different person from the incorrigible sinner of the Prayer-book. Although he is commanded to say with his brethren, "We are unprofitable servants: we have done which it was our duty to do," still this speech is to come out of their mouth after he has "done all those things that are commanded."

**p. 420, Righteousness And Sin**

It is a deception widely and perhaps unconsciously practiced in the present day. The difference between righteousness and sin is either practically abolished by the vain thoughts and theories of men, or the necessity for righteousness is destroyed by false theologies which practically teach that salvation is independent of personal reformation, and more likely to be secured by remorseful guilt than a purified conscience.

**p. 420, Faith And Obedience**

Jesus is "the author of eternal salvation to them that obey him" (Heb. 5:9). Consequently, those who are destitute of faith and obedience are without hope. Disobedience resulting from unbelief was the beginning of mischief with the Adamic race.  Obedience resulting from faith is the road back to blessing opened through Christ.

**p. 420, Now Is The Day**

Now is the day of our trial.  When Christ arrives, the necessity for the commandments we now have will have passed for ever.

**p. 436, True Sonship**

Jesus says, "they are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."  There is such a thing as sonship now, as John and Paul testify, but it is not a completed sonship.  It is a sonship based upon adoption on account of faith and obedience;  a sonship commencing with water-birth. But the sonship that awaits the accepted is a sonship based upon identity of nature, and established by a spirit-birth which produces that identity, for”that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."  To be received as sons and daughters in the day of decision is to be accepted as constituents of the Father's house, and conformed to the likeness of the Lord's glorious nature in fulfilment of that other promise to the victor which say, “I will write upon him my new name."  The name of Christ is named on every one who obeys the truth in baptism; but then there is another and a higher sense in which that name has to be named upon us.  His nature has to be imparted to us by whom he judges worthy to receive the gift of life everlasting.

**p. 437, The Fine Linen**

To get ready for the marriage in the preparation of that "fine linen, clean and white" in which the Bride will be arrayed, by which the Spirit of God tells us we are to understand **is** the righteous actions of the saints.

**p. 450, God’s Program**

It is a marvel with a meaning.  It is part of a plan.  We comprehend the plan in the light of the prophets evangelized to us by the apostles of the Lord Jesus. The plan is in fact the programme of the earth's deliverance in harmony with the honour of the earth’s Possessor and Creator. The plan consummated shows us the earth “full of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea"**;** and Israel restored, the head of a family of enlightened and happy nations, united in the service of Israel's God.

**p. 466, The Ways Of God**

Important instruction in the ways of God -- ways which, as Jehovah Himself tells us by Isaiah, are as much higher than our ways as heaven is higher than the earth; ways therefore which fail to engage the sympathies of the purely natural mind, but which, nevertheless, are more beautiful and ennobling and ultimately beneficial than all the best ways of man.

**p. 467, The Coming Nobility**

How glorious will be the result… Every member of the developed family, when Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets, will appear in the kingdom of God, will be a tried and true man, not only holding, in the grace of God, a true title to his position as a noble in the future age, but possessing those moral characteristics which will make him a blessing to all in subjection to him, a constant sweetness to all his glorious equals, a joy to Christ and a glory to God.

**p. 467, Who Are Forgiven**

Only certain are forgiven.  The question is, who? The answer in all the Scriptures is,” Those who confess their sins and forsake them,” those who are of broken and contrite heart,"  "those who forgive others," and who, having been forgiven much, and labour much in the Lord and for the Lord.  They do the works of Abraham -- works of faith and obedience: these have the spirit of Christ.

**p. 468, Calvinism**

The development of God's family upon earth is an affair of *divine purpose* upon divine principles of selection, and not a matter of human plan working out at all.  Both the Jews and the Greeks assigned to man a large part in their respective conceptions of the working out of futurity.  Human merit according to the Greeks, human pedigree according to the Jews, had all to do in determining the evolution of spiritual destinies.  Paul's argument is that it is an affair of divine pre-conceived purpose altogether; apart from which, man could have done absolutely nothing; and that the purpose is according to election or choice, that is, a purpose based upon certain principles of choice.  Where Calvinism is wrong is that it ignores *the principles which regulate the choice.*  It makes it purely an exercise of "sovereign will,"  which it truly is in the sense of being unconstrained and irresponsible authority; but it fails to take into account what God has revealed  concerning the way He exercises His election, selection, or choice.  The cases of Jacob and Esau, and Pharaoh cited by Paul, illustrate the point. They were all the result of a divine purpose: but the purpose was formed in harmony with moral fitness.

**p. 469, God’s Mercy**

Though God says, “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy," He does not mean that His mercy is capriciously bestowed.  It is bestowed on very well defined principles.  "His mercy is towards them that fear him."  “to the merciful man, thou wilt show thyself merciful,"  " Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

**p. 470, Riches**

If they are rich in faith and good works, their worldly riches will no more work against them than the riches of Abraham.  But “rich in this world and poor in faith" is a bad case.  ”Poor in this world and poor in faith” is worse.

**p. 471, Forgiveness**

It may be asked, where the need of righteousness if forgiveness rehabilitates the sinner? The question overlooks the fact that forgiveness itself is conditional.  For example, Jesus teaches that a man who is not forgiving will not be forgiven (Matt. 18: 35).

**p. 473, The Promise Of Youth**

The young man steps upon the scene with much promise in his own eyes and the eyes of spectators: healthful and graceful and strong, and gifted and ardent -- (let him also have plenty in his hands) -- he thinks himself an exception to the vanity of which perchance he has heard much.  He thinks the vanity a fact as regards the past and the old people around him: he thinks it in some way due to a want of enlightened views and wise practical application of scientific principles: in his own case, he is persuaded, as he hurries with buoyant step and bounding spirit along the bustling highway of active life, that he will be able to extract a different result from what appear to him the noble energies of life and the lofty aspirations of "heaven-born humanity."  Ah!  give him time enough.  Give him sixty years more.  Follow him, and ask, “Where is he now”?  Perhaps he is still in the land of the living. He has not yet descended to the silent abode of past generations.  Let us have a look at him.  There he is crouching by a fireside corner, a shivering old man, elbowed out of the race by the rising generation, who are kind to him perhaps, but patronizingly kind, and only waiting to see him, with relief, breathe his last breath, and take his place among the countless myriads who have lived and died before him.  He lingers a little:  but at last the day comes, and the grave closes over him and how soon his name is forgotten.  "Surely every man at his best state is altogether vanity."

**p. 478, The Mind Of God**

*Enlightenment recognizes God as the “possessor of heaven and earth,"  and the Bible* as the present index to His mind; and His views and objects therein expressed, the ultimate light in which everything is to be contemplated. In this way of looking at things, the divine purpose is the only stable element in the situation.  Human life and human history are in themselves but shifting shadows on the ocean -- mere elements in the working out of the divine purpose.  The “theological ingredient” is the only rational solution of what the highest intellects feel to be the universal mystery.

**p. 478, A Jealous God**

Jehovah's jealousy for the honour of His name appears a stern and unattractive feature of the Bile at first; but a great change comes over the mind when the nature and effects of the jealousy are apprehended. It is not a human jealousy, which denies to others their due.  It is the desire for the ascendancy of eternal and beneficial truth.  The honour of Jehovah is founded on the eternal constitution of things.  All things are in Him; they are the concretion of His own invisible energy.  Consequently, if they are not in harmony with Him, there can be no well-being.  Without the honour of Jehovah, there can be no well-being of man; for man's highest interests are bound up with the recognition, love, service and obedience of His Creator.  In the nature of things, it is man's highest happiness to give to God the highest praise.  Consequently, Jehovah's jealousy of His name is one of the glorious attributes of the eternal character.

**p. 482, The Great And Dreadful God**

Let us ponder one or two features of his [Daniel’s] prayer.  Mark the opening words of his address to God:  "O Lord, the great and *dreadful*God."  This indicates one ofDaniel's thoughts concerning God which may not be common, but which is undoubtedly natural to the subject.  It may not occur to us at first sight to think of God as the “dreadful" God.  We think of Him as the good, the wise, the great.  If we do not think of Him as the dreadful, it is because our minds do not easy rise to the estimation of His greatness.  In proportion impressed with the dreadfulness of the Being who contains in Himself the inconceivable immensity of the universe.   It has been the characteristic of great minds in all ages to realize the dreadfulness of God in this aspect.  It is a sign of greatness to be thus impressed and to have a sense of man's smallness.  It is a sign of smallness when man, either in self or neighbour, seems great, and when the universe is powerless to impress.

**p. 496, The Passover Lamb**

The passover was a memorial of the deliverance effected in Egypt, and a typical foreshadowing of the deliverance to be effected in Christ. It looked back and it looked forward. In both, Jesus was concerned.  As the  "son of David, the son of Abraham" (Matt.1:1) he was as much interested retrospectively in the Egyptian deliverance as his disciples, who were to be considered as having come out of Egypt in their father; as the son of Mary, partaking of their common sin-caused mortality (for death entered into the world by sin -- caused mortality (for death entered into the world by sin - Rom. 5 : 12), he stood in as much need as they of that redemption from death, which he finally attained through the shedding of his own blood, as the antitypical lamb of Jehovah's passover (Heb. 9 :12--omit ital. "*for us*"; also chap. 5:7).  Where he differed was in the mental state resulting from the act that God was his father in the generative sense.  He was God's well-beloved son, in whom God was well pleased, because he abode in His commandments, and did always those things that were leasing unto Him (John 15:10; 8:29). He also differed in the Father's abiding presence in the fulness of the Spirit in the vessel so prepared.  He was the Father's human manifestation in the midst of Israel, for the purpose of laying the foundation of human salvation in harmony with the principle of the Father’s supremacy which required in the blood-shedding of such as partake of human mortality, the declaration of the Father's righteousness as the basis of the remission of sin unto life eternal to those recognizing and submitting to it.  The work  was accomplished in his death and resurrection, by which he became "the first begotten of the dead" (Rev. 1:5) and a name by investiture with which men may be saved -- the only name given under heaven for this purpose (Acts 4:12).

**p. 497, The Condemnation Of Sin In The Flesh**

This agonizing tragedy, so far as the, human aspect of it was concerned, was the divinely arranged public condemnation of sin in the flesh--the declaration of the righteousness of  God in the offering of the body of Jesus once for all--a body which was at once the condemned nature of Adam and the sinless Son of God, in whose death the righteous law of God had its execution, and in whose resurrection the perfect righteousness of Jesus had its vindication, and by which double event a man was provided through whom came the resurrection of the dead without any nullification of any of the ways of God.  All this was involved in the words of Jesus, “This is my body given for you."  The whole arrangement was" for (or, on account of) those who shall be saved," but of course included in its operation Jesus himself, who is the "firstborn  among many brethren" (Rom. 8 : 29). By this accepted offering, all are sanctified who come unto God through him, confessing their sins, humbling themselves in the obedience of baptism, which ceremonially introduces them to the death of Christ.

**p. 499, The New Covenant**

“This is the new covenant in my blood, shed for many for the remission of sins.”  The new covenant or agreement, which ensures coming blessedness to the fallen sons of Adam, is in the blood of Christ and nowhere else. There can be no blessedness without covenant, because, apart from the addition of special covenant on the part of God, who only has the power to bestow blessedness, we are shut up to what we have by nature, and that is a poor mortal that will wear out in due course, and disappear in death.

**p. 499, Covenant Based On Sacrifice**

There can be no covenant without sacrifice, for so has God willed and we can no more get past His will in this matter then we can alter the constitution of heaven and earth.  And there is no sacrifice but one with which we can approach God for covenant, and that is the one great sacrifice accomplished in Christ.  And there is no way of becoming associated with that sacrifice but by enlightenment in the promises on which the covenant is established, and faith in the blood in which it is offered, and legal contact with that blood in baptism, which is the divinely appointed mode of association with the death of Christ.  The root of the whole matter lies first in the greatness, and then in the goodness of God.  God is a great and dreadful majesty, to whom the earth and all flesh belong, for He has made them out of His own energy.  He is not only great, but He is holy, and jealous of His supremacy,  He has been disobeyed on earth, and has in consequence given us over to death; and will not be approached by us except in the manner He has appointed. But He is good, and He will forgive and bestow everlasting life if we humble ourselves and come to Him in the way appointed.  The way appointed is through the shed blood of a perfectly righteous wearer of our nature, in whom sin was condemned on our account. He will forgive us if we come in this way: not because that blood-shedding pacifies Him, or gives Him anything, or pays any debt; for then it would be no forgiveness - but because His righteousness is declared, and His prerogative recognized, and our position acknowledged in the acceptance of the slain lamb of His appointing.

**p. 511, God - Energy and Matter**

In the spiritual body which is powerful (Cor. 15:43), this power exists in perfection, and can assimilate food to the last grain of substance without a remnant for corruption.  We must remember that all substance is spirit at the root: for out of God all things have come, and in Him they subsist.  What we call matter is His energy made concrete in limited forms and conditions according to His wisdom.  Consequently, a spiritual body will presumably possess the functional capacity of reducing all substance to its first element, spirit, and assimilating food to its own spirit nature, possessed by the eater. This excludes the very idea of corruption, and at the same time, it preserves to us the act of eating without the association of corruption which belongs to present experience.

[Note: This statement by Brother Roberts was some years before Einstein’s famous formula equating energy with matter, E=mc2 .]

**p. 516, Old And New Testament – Systems Of Divine Service And Worship**

We have a New Testament and an Old Testament; a first covenant and a second. We look at these two systems as they are in themselves - as they are displayed to us in the Scriptures (and not as they are conceived by moderns, whether teachers or taught).  They are both divine, and the only divine systems of godliness ever extant upon earth.  And what do we find? That God is on their forefront with a brightness almost blinding.  They are not systems of morality - systems of “goodness" as understood in our day; not systems of human behaviour, but  systems of divine worship and service.  They are not concerned with philosophy or science or learning - terms that after all only define the partial and very small way in which limited aspects of eternal truth impress the shallow mind of man.  They go to the root of the matter: they bring God the eternal and archetypal personal intelligence of whom the physical universe is but the expression in His attributes of power and wisdom.

**p. 531, Forgiveness Is Limited**

A man who allows “sin to reign in his mortal body, that he should obey it in the lusts thereof” (Rom. 6:12), is without hope: for the end of these things is death (verse 21).  Forgiveness is not for those who are reprobate to every good work, but for those only who, by obedience, seek to work out their own salvation amid the fear and trembling of this whole clouded state.  It is only “if we walk in the light” that the “blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin" (1 John 1 : 17).

**p. 536, The Scriptures And The Love Of God**

Of one thing we may be certain: it is not possible to go too far in the cultivation of the love of God: for what is left when a man has given all his heart, and soul, and strength? And who can refuse this reasonable service?  A man has only to realize God as He is displayed to us in the Scriptures--historically, illustratively, incidentally, declaratively, prophetically, doctrinally, receptively--every way, to have his highest adoration enkindled, if his heart be not a piece of stony barrenness.  The love of God is the first characteristic of the family of God.  It comes as all love comes--by acquaintance; and this acquaintance is only possible in our day in the reading of the Scriptures. Therefore we are on the right road to render the required obedience of the first commandment, in performing the wisdom of a daily reading of the Scriptures.

**p. 545, Tribulation Required**

"Be thou faithful unto death"--not that we shall necessarily go to death; but be prepared for that in case of need.  The mode of tribulation is graduated and diversified according to the endless variations of individual requirement.  The Lord knoweth them that are his: and he knows how much and what sort of tribulation each case requires.  Let us humble ourselves under his mighty hand with this confidence.

**p. 547, Life Is Short**

In youth, age seems a long way off, and death an old fogey calculation. In young manhood or womanhood, life is full of earnest vigour and pleasing possibilities, which fresh and lively powers set themselves to realize, without much thought of the ultimate drift.  At maturity, anxieties have taken the place of hope, and equally shut out the future, as they engross the present.  In old age, susceptibility deadens, and desire fails, and the face turns backwards rather than forwards. At every stage, it requires an effort of the mind rightly to estimate life as a fleeting scene soon to disappear, with all its joys or burdens, as the case may be.  The success of this effort marks the difference between wisdom and folly.  Whatever helps us in it, helps us to be wise and good.  A man who has once fairly mastered and accepted the fact that the life we now live is a short-lived affair, is much more likely to be dutiful towards God, and kind and patient with all men, than the man whose mind turns only on present matters.

**p. 548, Forgiveness Conditional**

In His [God’s] forbearance, he proposes forgiveness (Rom. 3: 25), but not unconditional.  There must be a declaration of his own righteousness in the whole case, in the shedding of the blood of one whose blood-shedding shall be a declaration of righteousness by reason of is participation of the nature under condemnation, and whom, at  the same time, he can accept and raise from the dead on account of his perfect obedience. Such a one, in Christ, he hath set forth to be a propitiation--a meeting-point of peace and reconciliation, through faith in his blood (Rom.3:25).  He is thus just, and yet the justifier of every one coming to him in this faith.  Christ's death was just; Christ's resurrection was just; and for Christ's sake, he forgives everyone who lays hold of his blood-shedding - in being ceremonially buried in his grave - in being baptized into his death (Rom. 6:4).  There is no other way of approach to the Father, unto life eternal.  There is none other name given under heaven whereby we must be saved.

All this is involved in the genealogical line that connects Christ and Adam.  Adam brought death into the line, and from the line Christ removes it, first in himself, and then in all whom he is pleased to accept in the administration of the judgment which God hath placed in his hand.  For these, Christ makes request in his capacity of priest over his own house; and God grants his request for the sake of Christ's own submission to the Father's mighty will in all the things.

**p. 556, Avoid Whatever Hinders**

As all wise men avoid whatever acts hinderingly to the result of any difficult or delicate process they may be conducting, the man who aims to have the will of God, as Biblically embodied, inscribed vitally and enduringly on his mind, will avoid all books and occupations and habits and friendships and companions, that tend to erase the Divine writing, or to interfere with the power of the heart to receive it.  This may seem a hard saying to some; but none can dispute its wisdom, and none will regret acting in harmony with it, when he comes into the actual presence of life's issues as determinable at the judgment seat.

**p. 562, Fear God**

A man is not to be trusted in the long run who fears not God.  He may be kept on the track for a while at the beginning, by the secondary influences that affect all men more or less; but as these, one by one, get worn away by the friction of time, if the fear of God be not the kernel of his mental composition, he will act the part of the natural man, and do those things only that are agreeable to himself, without reference to what Christ has required at his hands.

**p. 562, God’s Delight**

“He hath made all things for Himself."  Upon earth highest workmanship is man; and His highest delight in earth-direction is to receive man's adoration and obedience.  A man who does not fear Him is without interest to Him: a man who disobeys Him is an offence to Him.

**p. 563, Acquaint And Draw Nigh**

The fear of the Lord, which is rational and sincere, is to be found now as it ever has been found. How did men come to fear the Lord in the apostolic or prophetic ages? Not by inspiration, but by knowledge divinely revealed and acting upon their reason. Men love where they know. Acquaintance is the first condition of friendship. Hence the scriptural injunction: "Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace."  This process of acquaintance is further defined as a drawing nigh: “Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you."

**p. 569, A Spiritual Body**

He [Jesus Christ] is a living illustration of what a spiritual body is - a body living, not by blood, but by the incharged presence of the primal life - power of God in every atom - a body incorruptible in substance, glorious in aspect, powerful in faculty, honourable and holy in all its functions - perfect in its enjoyments.

**p. 576, Noble Impulse**

Noble impulse felt in ardent youth subsides with the advance of age, and with the increase of vain experience.  Nothing but the fear of God will keep it alive to the end of the day; because this brings with it a motive totally independent of our own feelings, or the attractiveness of our surroundings.  The spirit of obedience--the spirit of hope--the spirit of reverence--the spirit of love towards God and the Lord Jesus Christ, will bear us through all the weakness and discouragements of human experience, and keep us steady in that patient continuance in well-doing which God will honour at the last in the bestowment of everlasting life.

**p. 577, No Peace Without God**

There can be no peace where God is not.  The constitution of things cannot allow of it.

**p. 578, Faith In Christ**

Well may we hold on to the faith of Christ with all the tenacity of fully-formed and reasonable determination.  There is no hope in any other direction.  If Christ be not the Saviour, there is no Saviour.  We look in vain in any other direction for the excellency appertaining to the faith of Christ.  We need not look in any other direction.  It is not only that on all points the faith of  Christ meets our need; it is not only that it is exactly the thing we need; but we are able to go further and say, that in the state of the evidence, it is true and genuine and actual beyond all possibility of its being anything else.

**p. 583, Anglican Liturgy Not Ours**

When we think of Christ's readiness to intercede for his disciples, we must remember that his disciples were **not** men who could truthfully say of themselves what the sinners of this English nation are made to say every Sunday: "We have done those things which we ought not to have done, and we have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and there is no health is us."  On the contrary, they were men earnestly in love with Christ, and earnestly striving to observe the commandments delivered to them--failing sometimes in their endeavours, doubtless, but earnestly striving to be merciful, and forgiving, and just, and kind--earnestly devoted to the fear of God and the honour of Christ. This must be our case in the main, before we can hope for that forgiveness which will cover our sins and blot out all our failings, shortcomings, and offences.

**p. 584, Christ’s Mediation**

We see the position, then, brethren: that Christ's mediation will not be available for those who go on sinning, but only for those who walk in the fear of the Lord all the day long, striving against sin.

**p. 585, Rejoice**

We can look back to the time when creation was in a haze to our eyes, and life a mysterious thing of fretful impulse and vain desire.  If we can feel over again what we felt in those days of moral and intellectual abortion, we shall rejoice with unspeakable thankfulness for an emancipation which has cleared heaven and earth of all darkness, and redeemed life from its fatuity and gloom, and given us an exhilarating policy which changes the "vanity and spirit-vexation" of natural life into the light, beauty, and gladness of the perennial wisdom of God.

**p. 586, Life, Hope, Knowledge**

Men are born, grow, hope, strive, are disappointed, get weary of the struggle and die, and their children come after them with the same hopes and the same endeavour and the same end.  Yet behind all, there is a kind of radiance of promise as of far distant sunlight on the horizon.  The mind cannot but see boundless power and wisdom in the universe, and cannot but argue, however dimly, that there must be possibilities of life as much above present experience as heaven is high above the earth.  Yet the argument does not avail much, in the absence of knowledge.

**p. 588, How Can We Know**

As we read [the Bible], we find it contains the very guidance which distracted human life requires.  It tells why we are here, and how circumstances came into their present unhappy form.  It tells us that God made the earth for man and man for God, but that early after the appearance of man upon the earth, men set God aside, and sought to live for man himself alone, in consequence of which God hid His face from man, gave him over to the dominion of death, and scattered him all abroad on the earth to look after himself for a while till the situation should be ripe for God to realise His purpose in placing man upon the earth.

**p. 589, What Is So Great?**

What idea is so ennobling as the revelation that the Being in which all things subsist is an Eternal Person, embracing the universe in the effluence of His uncreated Spirit, and working all things after the counsel of His own will? What so calming and purifying as the fact that no distance can separate us from Him, but that in the subtle energy of His presence, "all things are naked and open, and no creature is hid from His sight?” What philosophy of man's evil state at once so rational and satisfactory as the dogmatic teaching of the Divine Spirit that death reigns because of sin, and that the affliction of man is due to the turning away of the countenance of the Almighty because of human insubordination? What solatium in the midst of the evil, so great as the assurance that God himself will apply a remedy, wipe tears from every eye and fill the earth with his glory? What tranquility of mind, in the presence of the distracted problems of human state and history that press themselves on every thoughtful mind that looks beyond the horizon of his immediate experience, can come from any source, like that which is imparted be the conviction that God has a plan which is being slowly worked out the course of the ages, and which will culminate in the re-appearance of Christ upon the earth to take the government with power, and bring all things into subjection to God?  What comfort of anticipation, what interest in life, what incentive to conformity with the ways of righteousness can compare with that which springs from the assurance that Christ will judge the living and the dead, and confer glory, honour, and immortality on all who please him by their faith and obedience? What prospect so attractive as that which the word of God opens out to us, of God becoming known and loved and praised in all the earth, with the fervour of David, and every heart filled with gladness, every life ennobled with heavenly gift? What satisfaction so perfect as that which springs from the fact of forgiveness and reconciliation to God through Christ, and the certain hope of ascending from the weak and grovelling and decaying nature we can now possess to a nature pure, incorruptible, capable, joyous and everlasting?

**……………………………………………………………………………………………………..**

**Bible Reading Thoughts**

(Saved under Boswell Ecclesia)

**Seasons – Bible Readings**

**Reading 1 - Job 13:15**

"Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him”

(Job 13:15).

"Though He slay me, I will trust Him,"
Said the sainted Job of old;
'Though He try me in the furnace,
I shall then come forth as gold.

Though the "worms of deep affliction"
Cause this body to decay,
In my flesh I shall behold Him --
My Redeemer -- some glad day.

Though He slay me -- can I say it
When I feel the searing fire,
When my fondest dreams lie shattered --
Gone my hope and fond desire?

Though He slay me, I will trust Him,
For He knows just how to mold,
How to melt and shape my spirit --
I shall then come forth as gold!

(Mary Kimbrough).

**1Pe 1:13**

"Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed" (1Pe 1:13).
 "Discipline yourself. Keep bringing yourself back very frequently to the basic purpose of your life. As far as practical, pause very briefly every hour on the hour for reorientation of your thoughts and activities. Put aside all passing problems for a moment alone with God and with His eternal peace. Our greatest problem is distraction and forgetfulness." (GV Growcott).

[**Malachi 3:2-3**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Malachi+3%3A2-3&version=NKJV)**(NKJV)**

There was a group of women in a Bible Study on the book of Malachi. As they were studying chapter three, they came across verse three, which says: "He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver. "This verse puzzled the women and they wondered what this statement meant about the character and nature of God.

One of the women offered to find out the process of refining silver and get back to the group at their next Bible Study. That week, this woman called up a silversmith and made an appointment to watch him at work.

She didn't mention anything about the reason for her interest beyond her curiosity about the process of refining silver. As she watched the silversmith, he held a piece of silver over the fire and let it heat up. He explained that in refining silver, one needed to hold the silver in the middle of the fire where the flames were hottest as to burn away all the impurities.

The woman thought about God holding us in such a hot spot then she thought again about the verse, that "He sits as a refiner and purifier of silver." She asked the silversmith if it was true that he had to sit there in front of the fire the whole time the silver was being refined. The man answered that yes, he not only had to sit there holding the silver, but he had to keep his eyes on the silver the entire time it was in the fire. If the silver was left a moment too long in the flames, it would be destroyed.

The woman was silent for a moment. Then she asked the silversmith, how do you know when the silver is fully refined? He smiled at her and answered, "Oh, that's easy - when I see my image in it."

If today you are feeling the heat of the fire, remember that God has His eye on you and will keep watching you until He sees His image in you.

Be blessed!

-Author Unknown

## Reading 3 - 2Pe 1:10,11

"Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2Pe 1:10,11).

**Bible Reading Thoughts and quotes**

(Saved under Boswell Ecclesia)

**Zec 4:7**

"What are you, O mighty mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become level ground. Then he will bring out the capstone to shouts of 'God bless it! God bless it!' " (Zec 4:7).

"There will exist contemporary with the resurrection, when Zerubbabel shall stand up again, 'a great mountain' in the political world, which is to be reduced to 'a plain.' But that this will not result by the power and strength of Israel under any organization they might constitute; for at that crisis their power and strength will have been utterly scattered; but it shall be accomplished by Jehovah's Spirit, which will raise Zerubbabel and his companions from among the dead, to be the captains of Israel together with the living believers; and will be the strength and power energizing them all to the complete reduction of the Great Political Mountain of the Gentiles to the level of a summer threshing-floor: even to cause to go forth the Head, or Chief Stone, with shoutings of 'Grace, grace unto him!' " (John Thomas, "Eureka" 1:65).

## Reading 1 - Job 35:9,10

"Men cry out under a load of oppression; they plead for relief from the arm of the powerful. But no one says, 'Where is God my Maker, who gives songs in the night?" (Job 35:9,10).

BUT NO ONE SAYS, 'WHERE IS GOD MY MAKER...?': "Why is God silent? Men cry for help, but God knows that what they are crying for is merely relief, that is all. They want to be taken out of the harmful, painful effects of their selfish ways and then allowed to go right back to being selfish. Nobody is concerned about God's glory and about being taught by God and learning at his hand and at his feet. Rather, they are simply crying out for deliverance, they want to use God, and to that kind of an appeal God is silent. " (Ray Stedman).

[Classic Putin: 'To Forgive The Terrorists Is Up To God, But To Send Them To Him Is Up To Me'](http://russia-insider.com/en/politics/classic-putin-forgive-terrorists-god-send-them-him-me/ri11258)

[Rudy Panko](http://russia-insider.com/en/rudy-panko) 215,007

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"In the race for life eternal, there are many things lawful enough in the abstract; but that viewed in relation to the object to be attained, are highly inexpedient, and to be 'laid aside', as Paul advises. It is a simple, and a safe and a reasonable, and a wise rule, and one that will give us much cause for joy at the last, to dispense with every habit or pleasure, or practice, or occupation, or friend that hinders our progress in the narrow way. This is but another way of saying what Christ said: 'If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out. It is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into the fire of Gehenna.' It is better to make our calling and election sure, at the expense of worldly friends and engagements and advantages, than to secure all these, in this present time, and find, at last, that we have cherished them at the expense of Christ's approbation, and have to pay for them with the loss of the kingdom of God"

(Robert Roberts,Vo. 1, "Seasons of Comfort" 61).

"Do not be like your forefathers, to whom the earlier prophets proclaimed: This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Turn from your evil ways and your evil practices.' But they would not listen or pay attention to me, declares the LORD" **(Zec 1:4).**

Zechariah was to warn the Israelites not to be like their forefathers -- who refused to respond to the preaching of earlier (pre-exilic) prophets who urged them to repent (eg, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Habakkuk). Their failure to do so resulted in the heaviest of punishments falling upon them: cp 2Ki 17:13,14; 2Ch 36:15-17; Jer 7:25,26.

TURN FROM YOUR EVIL WAYS...: "The world says, in its little, passing wisdom, that if you desire a better position in life: act and dress for it now. Live mentally in its atmosphere. Adopt all the ways and views constant with it. Eliminate from your life those things that are beneath its dignity and importance. Lift your conduct to comport yourself on its level. This is the world's meaningless 'advancement': but the principle is so true in eternal things. If we expect to be made 'equal to the angels' and 'stand in the presence of God' throughout eternity, we must start acting like it now. We must live in harmony with it. Many things must be put away which -- though not really 'bad' in themselves, and quite suitable for earthlings -- are quite out of place in the environment we seek, and for which we must prepare ourselves. Do not carelessly indulge yourself at present with things inconsistent with divinity, in the vain delusion they'll be miraculously and conveniently, at the last day, cleaned out of your mind and interests, to make you suitable for God's company. It will be too late then. It's your whole life's present purpose (and opportunity) to labor fervently on it now -- with, of course, God's offered and essential help. Time is short! Don't drift in fatal self-delusion" (GV Growcott).

**Mat 3**

"Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?' Jesus replied, 'Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.' Then John consented" (Mat 3:13-15).

Why was Jesus baptized? The most obvious answer is the Scriptural one: in the words of Jesus himself, "to fulfill all righteousness". This calls to mind Mat 5:17: "I am not come to destroy [the law], but to fulfill." The work of Jesus, in all its aspects, was to fulfill, or complete, the righteousness of the law of Moses. The law of Moses was a "shadow" (Heb 10:1), pointing forward to the substance, the reality, which was Jesus**. As Moses washed Aaron (Exo 30:20,21; 40:12), to sanctify and cleanse him for his work as a mediator, so John washed Jesus. If Aaron had entered the Most Holy without washing, he would have failed; if Jesus had offered himself as a sacrifice with no public baptism (signifying the denial of the flesh), he would likewise have failed. Although Jesus possessed the same nature as ours, he was absolutely without personal sin. The necessity of his baptism shows how far even sinful flesh alone separates man from God.**

"He had no life of sin to leave behind in the waters of Jordan, but there he did bring to an end the home life of Nazareth, the quiet, peaceful years of preparation, and did accept as the 'righteous will of God' the storm and strain and sacrifice of the work which he had come to do" (Erdman).

**Reading 3 - Mat 5**

**"The teaching and precepts of Jesus expressed in the clear symmetry of the Sermon on the Mount are not abstract ideals,** ~~as beautiful as mountain peaks and as remote, to be preserved and worshipped in devotional hours and ignored in the hurly-burly of daily living~~**~~.~~ They form a working philosophy of life which is the only road a disciple can tread. A steep and difficult road truly, but one which Jesus himself was treading. Nor did he demand that his disciples should tread it alone. He reached out his hand and led them towards its summit" (Melva Purkis, "Life of Jesus" 129).**

## Reading 3 - Mat 8:2

"A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, 'Lord, if you are willing, you can make

me clean' " (Mat 8:2).

"Looking into the eyes of Jesus, the leper found his confidence once more; he fell forward on his face, his cry of faith rang out, 'Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.' He waited a breathless eternity. Suddenly he felt firm, gentle hands close on his scaly flesh, the first human touch he had known for years, and then he heard the voice of Jesus. The leper's 'if' had moved the Lord. His response was, 'I will.' And then with a word of authority, the evil flesh melted under his touch, the scarred and wasted body glowed with health**. Would that the deeper leprosy of the soul could be so easily dismissed! But that is a slower work, a work in which Christ can only minister with the steady co-operation of the sufferer. Faith has to be joined by a dedication of the heart and the will. But the victory can be won if the desire for spiritual health is as great as was the leper's longing for physical perfection. For the Lord's 'I will' to the cry 'thou canst' has lost none of its effectiveness" (Melva Purkis, "Life of Jesus" p 108).**

**Reading 2 - Psa 21:13**

"Be exalted, O LORD, in your strength; we will sing and praise your might" (Psa 21:13).

"It is the mission of Christ, through the Gospel, to teach men to rejoice in God. And an unfailing source of joy is God, when once the mind opens to the great fact of His existence, excellence and power, for is not He beyond all minor causes of joy? Those minor causes fail; He, never. He is from everlasting. With Him is strength; not the strength that belongs to man: man owes his strength to the bread he eats; and the bread he eats with man himself is a perishable thing. Man dieth and wasteth away. But when we turn our eyes to God, we see the full meaning of the words: 'Be thou exalted in Thine own strength: so we will sing and praise Thy power' " (Robert Roberts, "Seasons of Comfort" 90).

**Reading 3 - Mat 12:36**

"But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken" (Mat 12:36).

"It comes out the worst when a man is half conscious of having a weak case and is making desperate efforts to convince himself that he does well to be angry. If he believes in the Bible he needs then to remember that all who watch for iniquity and make a man an offender for a word shall be cut off (Isa 29:20). It is usually an easy matter to collect reports derogatory to any man or any body of men. There is quite a temptation to use these 'make weights' in time of controversy, especially if the original cause of dispute is slight. One on the defensive can be kept busy chasing the false reports and unfair interpretations, but never succeeding in catching one before the next is on the wing.

"In a court of law a litigant is tied down to the actual charge. It is useless for him to try to fatten out his suit by all sorts of complaints remote from the original accusation. We are free from any such legal restrictions now, but it is well to remember that we have to go before a judgment seat far more searching than any ever set up by man, and for 'every idle word' that we have spoken we shall have to give account. Do not let us watch for iniquity, then, either in those we accuse of specific errors or in those who accuse us. Such watching inevitably leads to countless idle and evil words" (Islip Collyer, "Principles and Proverbs").

## Reading 3 - Mat 14:23,24,29

"After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it... Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus" (Mat 14:23,24,29).

**"Life can present a picture of a dark and turbulent sea with Jesus afar off. It is the slow triumph of faith to see him on the heights above in communion and intercession with his Father. Sometimes he comes to us in the midst of the storms and darkness, in unfamiliar form which we must learn to recognize. We are quick to appreciate, if we are slow to learn, that when we walk over the waters to meet him, we must not be dismayed by the darkness, the wind or the waves; we must believe that his power is greater far; that he can save even unto the uttermost: that faith can only be sustained by keeping our eyes fixed lovingly and obediently upon him" (Melva Purkis, Life of Jesus 193).**

**Reading 3 - Mat 15:22,23** -Comment by CH Spurgeon

"A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, 'Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is suffering terribly from demon-possession.' Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, 'Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us' " (Mat 15:22,23).

"Genuine seekers who as yet have not obtained the blessing, may take comfort from the story before us. The Saviour did not at once bestow the blessing, even though the woman had great faith in him. He intended to give it, but he waited awhile. 'He answered her not a word.' Were not her prayers good? Never better in the world. Was not her case needy? Sorrowfully needy. Did she not feel her need sufficiently? She felt it overwhelmingly. Was she not earnest enough? She was intensely so. Had she no faith? She had such a high degree of it that even Jesus wondered, and said, 'O woman, great is thy faith.' See then, although it is true that faith brings peace, yet it does not always bring it instantaneously. There may be certain reasons calling for the trial of faith, rather than the reward of faith. Genuine faith may be in the soul like a hidden seed, but as yet it may not have budded and blossomed into joy and peace. A painful silence from the Saviour is the grievous trial of many a seeking soul, but heavier still is the affliction of a harsh cutting reply such as this, 'It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.' Many in waiting upon the Lord find immediate delight, but this is not the case with all. Some, like the jailer [Act 16], are in a moment turned from darkness to light, but others are plants of slower growth" (CH Spurgeon).

A Baptist minister 1834 – 1892 – believed in heaven and hell and the immortality of the soul.

Robert Roberts 1839 – 1898

**Reading 3 - Mat 16:24**

"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Mat 16:24).

"The sentiment that Christ's righteousness alone is to be the basis of our acceptance, is one of the countless and pernicious corruptions of clerical theology. It doubtless originated in the misapplication of a certain element of apostolic truth, namely that which informs us that all are under sin, and that our salvation is not of works; but through the righteousness of faith that is in Christ. Men have long ceased to perceive that this principle applies only to unjustified sinners, and not to those who have been placed in a justified or forgiven position, through the obedience of faith. Christ is righteousness for sinners in this sense, that God offers to forgive them for Christ's sake, and to grant them a co-heirship with Christ, of what Christ, as a manifestation of God, has achieved for himself. But when sinners become saints, they come into relation to a new principle. They are responsible to him as servants to a master, and he will judge them according to their works" (Robert Roberts, "Seasons of Comfort" 164).

Gen 28:12

"Now the interval of time between the giving of the promise and the fulfilment of it was represented to Jacob by a ladder of extraordinary length, one end of which stood at Bethel, and the other end against the vault of heaven. Here were two points of contact, the land of Judah and heaven; and the connecting medium, the ladder, between them. This was a most expressive symbol, as will be perceived by considering the uses to which a ladder is applied. It is a contrivance to connect distant points, by which one at the lower end may reach a desired altitude. It is, then, a connecting medium between points of distance. Now if, instead of distant localities, distant epochs be substituted, the ages and generations which connect them will sustain a similar relation to the epochs as a ladder to the ground on which it rests, and the point of elevation against which it leans. The ladder, then, in Jacob's vision was representative of his seed in their generations and appointed times. One end of it was in his loins; the other, in the Lord Jesus when he should sit upon his throne, reigning over the land upon which Jacob was asleep" (John Thomas, "Elpis Israel" 270)

John 1:51: "I tell you the truth, you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man." That is, "UPON the son of man"; in other words, Christ IS the stairway, linking man to God, and vice versa

Mt. 18

"Nothing tends more to the keeping or the restoring of peace than the observance of this law; and no law is more constantly broken. The universal impulse, when anything is supposed to be wrong, is to tell the matter to third persons. From them it spreads, with the results of causing much bad feeling which, perhaps, the original cause does not warrant and would not have produced if the aggrieved person had taken the course prescribed by Christ, and told the fault 'between thee and him alone.' If good men, or those who consider themselves such, would adopt the rule of refusing to listen to an evil report privately conveyed, until it had been dealt with to the last stage according to the rule prescribed by Christ, much evil would be prevented" (Robert Roberts).

**Reading 1 - Gen 30:29,30**

"Jacob said to him [Laban]... 'The little you had before I came has increased greatly, and the LORD has blessed you wherever I have been' " (Gen 30:29,30).

Quite often in Scripture God blesses one person or group because of their attachment to the initial righteous person. God had been prepared to spare Sodom for the sake of ten righteous men; He blessed Potiphar and then the whole land of Egypt for Joseph's sake; the widow for Elijah; the shipload of men for Paul.

And -- wonder of wonders! -- for the sake of one man Jesus, God has gladly forgiven the sins of multitudes who have joined themselves to him.

## Reading 3 - Rom 6:17,18 (Agora website)

"But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness" (Rom 6:17,18).

Here is the "marketplace" or "agora" metaphor of Paul. Here "sin" is personified: "Sin" becomes the great ruler to whom all the world gives allegiance -- a slave-owner who owns all men. "I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin" (Rom 7:14). In this metaphor Paul is recalling the words of Jesus: "Everyone who sins is a slave to sin" (Joh 8:34).

The figure of speech may be heightened as we imagine an eastern "agora" or bazaar -- this marketplace was the meeting place of the ancient world; it was the center of commerce, entertainment, and social intercourse; it was the source of news and opinions. And always there was the slave-market, with its auction block. Approach that site in our minds, and the brutality, the callousness, and the fear wash over us. We imagine the smells and the sounds with revulsion -- and our memories are stirred in like manner as when we see the old newsreels of Auschwitz... for our modern times have also seen their own particularly ugly forms of slavery.

Here, at the auction block, we see women destined to be slaves to the basest passions of men. And men, doomed to lifelong drudgery to satisfy the greed of their fellow men. Here are wasted, broken lives, dashed hopes, families soon to be torn apart forever.

The slave-market: parable of our world; fleshly, carnal, unspiritual -- and sold as slaves to sin. Everyone who sins is a slave to sin. I sin; therefore I am a slave!

Into this scene comes a man who is obviously apart from others. Striding up to me, he speaks forcefully: "I have bought you; come, follow me." There are no chains, no threats, no blows -- just a simple command. And I follow him.

Right behind him, I walk through the milling and clamorous crowds, and then through the winding streets of the city, until we come to a beautiful house. "Here is where I live," my new master tells me. "And here is your room." It is lovely and wonderfully furnished. Never have I seen such a luxurious dwelling, and this will be my home!

The master excuses himself, but soon he is back. He has brought water, and he kneels to wash MY feet! I should be washing his feet! And he has brought me a new expensive garment. I can throw away my slave's rags; I won't need them any more. With healing oil he soothes the cruel wounds inflicted by my previous owner; and I know that they will never hurt again.

"Now you are as I am," he says; "you are no longer a slave. This is my Father's house, and you are one of His sons!"

A lifetime of fear and hate is washed away, miraculously, and in its place is the cry of a heart set free: "Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, 'Abba, Father.' So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir" (Gal 4:6,7).

Redemption from the slave-market was a concept that would particularly appeal to Paul's converts, so many of whom were themselves slaves (Tit 2:9,10). They might not be able to hope for redemption from their mortal bondage, but they could rejoice in being redeemed from sin: "He who was a slave when he was called by the Lord is the Lord's freedman" (1Co 7:22). And they could live accordingly. In their hearts and minds they were already free from the worst slave-master. And soon their bodies would follow, and they would be truly and absolutely free!

## Reading 3 - Rom 12:2

"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is -- his

good, pleasing and perfect will" (Rom 12:2).

"We must be able to feel, when we go to bed each night, that we have that day done our most and best: that all we have done was necessary and useful, and the most important thing to be done at the time, and that we have done it with all our heart, unto the Lord. We must not be satisfied with what we have done, but we must be reasonably satisfied that we have tried our best, and that we have noted, and learned something by, our slips and failures (GVG).

**Elpis Israel preface, by Brother Thomas**

When Russia makes its grand move for the building-up of its Image-empire then let the reader know that the end of all things, as presently constituted, is at hand. The long-expected, but stealthy, advent of the King of Israel will be on the eve of becoming a fact.

SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDON OF GOD”

I must paint my house, the wood is decaying

I haven’t time for reading and praying,

I must tend the garden, the weeds are springing,

No time for the hymn and anthem singing.

They that have gardens should surely tend them,

They that have houses should surely mend them,

But first comes the praying, reading, singing,

A far greater joy and gladness bringing.

Jobs must be done with willing duty,

But lovelier far and greater beauty,

Are words to the lonely, the sick, the grieving

Renewing of hope to the unbelieving

All have work in this world of sorrow,

But maybe the Lord will come tomorrow

Give Him love’s measure of time and labor

That He may look on us with favor.

O how we long for that glad word:

“Enter into the joy of thy Lord”

**Reading 1 - Exo 21:5,6**

"But if the servant declares, 'I love my master and my wife and children and do not want to go free,' then his master must take him before the judges [or 'before God']. He shall take him to the door or the doorpost and pierce his ear with an awl. Then he will be his servant for life" (Exo 21:5,6).

Christ is the servant of his master -- that is, Yahweh -- and because he is without sin, might have "gone free" from the penalty of sin, which is death (Rom 6:23). But because he loves his Master -- and because he loves his "family" (you and me!) -- he willingly and lovingly submits to the Father's service for his whole life, including the anguished death upon the cross. And all so

that you and I can belong to him, and he to us, forever.

Figuratively, then, Christ is the slave whose ear has been pierced, and whose life has been devoted, wholeheartedly and without reservation, to his Master (Psa 40:6; Heb 10:7-9).