

1	Andrew Murray
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32	Foreword

33

34 A few words with regard to the origin of this book and the
35 object with which it was written will help to put the reader into
36 the right position for understanding its teaching.

37

38 It was the outcome of a conference of ministers at
39 Stellenbosch, South Africa, April 11-14, 1912. The occasion of
40 the conference was as follows: Professor de Vos, of our
41 Theological Seminary, had written a letter to the ministers of
42 our church (Dutch Reformed Church) concerning the low state
43 of spiritual life which marked the Church (universal) generally,
44 which, (he said), ought to lead to the inquiry as to how far that
45 statement included our church too. What had been said in the
46 book, *The State of the Church*, called for deep searching of
47 heart. He thought there could be no doubt about the truth of the
48 statement in regard to the lack of spiritual power. He asked
49 whether it was not time for us to come together and in God's
50 presence to find out what might be the cause of the evil. He
51 wrote: 'If only we study the conditions in all sincerity, we shall
52 have to acknowledge that our unbelief and sin are the cause of
53 the lack of spiritual power; that this condition is one of sin and
54 guilt before God, and nothing less than a direct grieving of
55 God's Holy Spirit.'

56

57 His invitation met with a hearty response. Our four theological
58 professors, with more than two hundred ministers,
59 missionaries, and theological students, came together with the
60 above words as the keynote of our meeting. From the very
61 first, in the addresses there was the tone of confession as the
62 only way to repentance and restoration. At a subsequent
63 meeting the opportunity was given for testimony as to what
64 might be the sins which made the life of the Church so feeble.

65 Some began to mention failings that they had seen in other
66 ministers, either in conduct, or in doctrine, or in service. It was
67 soon felt that this was not the right way; each must
68 acknowledge that in which he himself was guilty.

69

70 The Lord graciously so ordered it that we were gradually led to
71 the sin of prayerlessness as one of the deepest roots of the evil.
72 No one could plead himself free from this. Nothing so reveals
73 the defective spiritual life in minister and congregation as the
74 lack of believing and unceasing prayer. Prayer is in very deed
75 the pulse of the spiritual life. It is the great means of bringing
76 to minister and people the blessing and power of heaven.
77 Persevering and believing prayer means a strong and an
78 abundant life.

79

80 When once the spirit of confession began to prevail, the
81 question arose as to whether it would be indeed possible to
82 expect to gain the victory over all that had in the past hindered
83 our prayer life. In smaller conferences held previously, it had
84 been found that many were most anxious to make a new
85 beginning and yet had not the courage to expect that they
86 would be able to maintain that prayer life which they saw to be
87 in accordance with the Word of God. They had often made the
88 attempt but had failed. They did not dare to make any promise
89 to the Lord to live and pray as he would have them; they felt it
90 impossible. Such confessions gradually led to the great truth,
91 that the only power for a new prayer life is to be found in an
92 entirely new relation to our blessed Saviour. It is as we see in
93 him the Lord who saves us from sin - the sin of prayerlessness
94 too - and our faith yields itself to a life of closer intercourse
95 with him, that a life in his love and fellowship will make
96 prayer to him the natural expression of our soul's life. Before

97 we parted, many were able to testify that they were returning
98 with new light and new hope to find in Jesus Christ strength
99 for a new prayer life.

100

101

102

103 Chapter 1

104

105 If conscience is to do its work, and the contrite heart is to feel
106 its misery, it is necessary that each individual should mention
107 his sin by name. The confession must be severely personal. In
108 a meeting of ministers there is probably no single sin which
109 each one of us ought to acknowledge with deeper shame -
110 'Guilty, verily guilty' - than the sin of prayerlessness.

111

112 What is it, then, that makes prayerlessness such a great sin? At
113 first it is looked upon merely as a weakness. There is so much
114 talk about lack of time and all sorts of distractions that the deep
115 guilt of the situation is not recognised. Let it be our honest
116 desire that, for the future, the sin of prayerlessness may be to
117 us truly sinful. Consider

118

119 1. What a reproach it is to God

120

121 There is the holy and most glorious God who invites us to
122 come to him, to hold converse with him, to ask from him such
123 things as we need, and to experience what a blessing there is in
124 fellowship with him. He has created him we might find our
125 highest glory and salvation.

126

127 What use do we make of this heavenly privilege? How many
128 there are who take only five minutes for prayer! They say that

129 they have no time and that the heart desire for prayer is
130 lacking; they do not know how to spend half an hour with
131 God! It is not that they absolutely do not pray; they pray every
132 day - but they have no joy in prayer, as a token of communion
133 with God which shows that God is everything to them.

134

135 If a friend comes to visit them, they have time, they make time,
136 even at the cost of sacrifice, for the sake of enjoying converse
137 with him. Yes, they have time for everything that really
138 interests them, but no time to practise fellowship with God and
139 delight themselves in him! They find time for a creature who
140 can be of service to them; but day after day, month after month
141 passes, and there is no time to spend one hour with God.

142

143 Do not our hearts begin to acknowledge what a dishonour,
144 what a despite of God this is, that I dare to say I cannot find
145 time for fellowship with him? If this sin begins to appear plain
146 to us, shall we not with deep shame cry out: 'Woe is me, for I
147 am undone, O God; be merciful to me, and forgive this awful
148 sin of prayerlessness.' Consider further

149

150 2. It is the cause of a deficient spiritual life

151

152 It is a proof that, for the most part, our life is still under the
153 power of 'the flesh'. Prayer is the pulse of life; by it the doctor
154 can tell what is the condition of the heart. The sin of
155 prayerlessness is a proof for the ordinary Christian or minister
156 that the life of God in the soul is in deadly sickness and
157 weakness.

158

159 Much is said and many complaints are made about the
160 feebleness of the Church to fulfill her calling, to exercise an

161 influence over her members, to deliver them from the power of
162 the world, and to bring them to a life of holy consecration to
163 God. Much is also spoken about her indifference to the
164 millions of heathen whom Christ entrusted to her that she
165 might make known to them his love and salvation. What is the
166 reason that many thousands of Christian workers in the world
167 have not a greater influence? Nothing save this - the
168 prayerlessness of their service. In the midst of all their zeal in
169 the study and in the work of the Church, of all their
170 faithfulness in preaching and conversation with the people,
171 they lack that ceaseless prayer which has attached to it the sure
172 promise of the Spirit and the power from on high. It is nothing
173 but the sin of prayerlessness which is the cause of the lack of a
174 powerful spiritual life! Consider further

175
176 3. The dreadful loss which the Church suffers as a result of the
177 prayerlessness of the minister

178
179 It is the business of a minister to train believers up to a life of
180 prayer; but how can a leader do this if he himself understands
181 little the art of conversing with God and of receiving from the
182 Holy Spirit, every day, out of heaven, abundant grace for
183 himself and for his work? A minister cannot lead a
184 congregation higher than he is himself. He cannot with
185 enthusiasm point out a way, or explain a work, in which he is
186 not himself walking or living.

187
188 How many thousands of Christians there are who know next to
189 nothing of the blessedness of prayer fellowship with God!
190 How many there are who know something of it and long for a
191 further increase of this knowledge, but in the preaching of the
192 Word they are not persistently urged to keep on till they obtain

193 the blessing! The reason is simply and only that the minister
194 understands so little about the secret of powerful prayer and
195 does not give prayer the place in his service which, in the
196 nature of the case and in the will of God, is indispensably
197 necessary. Oh, what a difference we should notice in our
198 congregations if ministers could be brought to see in its right
199 light the sin of prayerlessness and were delivered from it! Once
200 more consider

201

202 4. The impossibility of preaching the gospel to all men-as we
203 are commanded by Christ to do -so long as this sin is not
204 overcome and cast out.

205

206 Many feel that the great need of missions is the obtaining of
207 men and women who will give themselves to the Lord to strive
208 in prayer for the salvation of souls. It has also been said that
209 God is eager and able to deliver and bless the world he has
210 redeemed, if his people were but willing, if they were but
211 ready, to cry to him day and night But how can congregations
212 be brought to that unless there comes first an entire change in
213 ministers and that they begin to see that the indispensable thing
214 is not preaching, not pastoral visitation, not church work, but
215 fellowship with God in prayer till they are clothed with power
216 from on high?

217

218 Oh, that all thought and work and expectation concerning the
219 kingdom might drive us to the acknowledgement of the sin of
220 prayerlessness! God help us to root it out! God deliver us from
221 it through the blood and power of Christ Jesus! God teach
222 every minister of the Word to see what a glorious place he may
223 occupy if he first of all is delivered from this root of evils; so

224 that with courage and joy, in faith and perseverance, he can go
225 on with his God!

226
227 The sin of prayerlessness! The Lord lay the burden of it so
228 heavy on our hearts that we may not rest till it is taken far from
229 us through the name and power of Jesus He will make this
230 possible for us.

231
232 A witness from America

233
234 In 1898, there were two members of the Presbytery in New
235 York who attended the Northfield Conference for the
236 deepening of the spiritual life. They returned to their work with
237 the fire of a new enthusiasm. They endeavoured to bring about
238 a revival in the entire Presbytery. In a meeting which they
239 held, the chairman was guided to ask the brethren a question
240 concerning their prayer life: 'Brethren,' said he, 'let us today
241 make confession before God and each other. It will do us good.
242 Will everyone who spends half an hour every day with God in
243 connection with his work hold up a hand?' One hand was held
244 up. He made a further request: 'All who thus spend fifteen
245 minutes hold up a hand.' Not half of the hands were held up.
246 Then he said: 'Prayer, the working power of the Church of
247 Christ, and half of the workers make hardly any use of it! All
248 who spend five minutes hold up hands.' All hands went up. But
249 one man came later with the confession that he was not quite
250 sure if he spent five minutes in prayer every day. 'It is,' said he,
251 'a terrible revelation of how little time I spend with God.'

252
253 The cause of prayerlessness.

254

255 In an elder's prayer meeting, a brother put the question: 'What,
256 then, is the cause of so much prayerlessness? Is it not
257 unbelief?'

258

259 The answer was: 'Certainly; but then comes the question what
260 is the cause of that unbelief?' When the disciples asked the
261 Lord Jesus: 'Why could not we cast the devil out?' His answer
262 was: 'Because of your unbelief.' He went further and said:
263 'Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting'
264 (Matt. 17.19-21). If the life is not one of self-denial - of fasting
265 - that is, letting the world go; of prayer - that is, laying hold of
266 heaven, faith cannot be exercised. A life lived according to the
267 flesh and not according to the Spirit - it is in this that we find
268 the origin of the prayerlessness of which we complain. As we
269 came out of the meeting a brother said to me: 'That is the
270 whole difficulty; we wish to pray in the Spirit and at the same
271 time walk after the flesh, and this is impossible.'

272

273 If one is sick and desires healing, it is of prime importance that
274 the true cause of the sickness be discovered. This is always the
275 first step toward recovery. If the particular cause is not
276 recognised, and attention is directed to subordinate causes, or
277 to supposed but not real causes, healing is out of the question.
278 In like manner, it is of the utmost importance for us to obtain a
279 correct insight into the cause of the sad condition of deadness
280 and failure in prayer in the inner chamber, which should be
281 such a blessed place for us. Let us seek to realise fully what is
282 the root of this evil.

283

284 Scripture teaches us that there are but two conditions possible
285 for the Christian. One is a walk according to the Spirit, the
286 other a walk according to 'the flesh'. These two powers are in

287 irreconcilable conflict with each other. So it comes to pass, in
288 the case of the majority of Christians, that, while we thank God
289 that they are born again through the Spirit and have received
290 the life of God - yet their ordinary daily life is not lived
291 according to the Spirit but according to 'the flesh'. Paul writes
292 to the Galatians: 'Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit,
293 are ye now made perfect by the flesh?' (Gal. 3.3). Their service
294 lay in fleshly outward performances. They did not understand
295 that where 'the flesh' is permitted to influence their service of
296 God, it soon results in open sin.

297
298 So he mentions not only grave sins as the work of 'the flesh',
299 such as adultery, murder, drunkenness; but also the more
300 ordinary sins of daily life - wrath, strife, variance; and he gives
301 the exhortation: 'Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the
302 lust of the flesh... If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the
303 Spirit' (Gal. 5.16, 25). The Spirit must be honoured not only as
304 the author of a new life but also as the leader and director of
305 our entire walk. Otherwise we are what the apostle calls
306 'carnal'.

307
308 The majority of Christians have little understanding of this
309 matter. They have no real knowledge of the deep sinfulness
310 and godlessness of that carnal nature which belongs to them
311 and to which unconsciously they yield. 'God... condemned sin
312 in the flesh' (Rom. 8.3) - in the cross of Christ. 'They that are
313 Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts'
314 (Gal. 5.24). 'The flesh' cannot be improved or sanctified. 'The
315 carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the
316 law of God, neither indeed can be' (Rom. 8.7). There is no
317 means of dealing with 'the flesh' save as Christ dealt with it,
318 bearing it to the cross. 'Our old man is crucified with him'

319 (Rom. 6.6); so we by faith also crucify it, and regard and treat
320 it daily as an accursed thing that finds its rightful place on the
321 accursed cross.

322

323 It is saddening to consider how many Christians there are who
324 seldom think or speak earnestly about the deep and
325 immeasurable sinfulness of 'the flesh'-'In me (that is, in my
326 flesh) dwelleth no good thing'(Rom. 7.18). The man who truly
327 believes this may well cry out: 'I see another law in my
328 members ... bringing me into captivity to the law of sin... O
329 wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of
330 this death?' (Rom. 7.23, 24). Happy is he who can go further
331 and say: 'I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord... For the
332 law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from
333 the law of sin and death' (Rom. 7.25; 8.2).

334

335 Would that we might understand God's counsels of grace for
336 us! 'The flesh' on the cross - the Spirit in the heart and
337 controlling the life.

338

339 This spiritual life is too little understood or sought after; yet it
340 is literally what God has promised and will accomplish in
341 those who unconditionally surrender themselves to him for this
342 purpose.

343

344 Here then we have the deep root of evil as the cause of a
345 prayerless life. 'The flesh' can say prayers well enough, calling
346 itself religious for so doing and thus satisfying conscience. But
347 'the flesh' has no desire or strength for the prayer that strives
348 after an intimate knowledge of God; that rejoices in fellowship
349 with him; and that continues to lay hold of his strength. So,

350 finally, it comes to this, 'the flesh' must be denied and
351 crucified.

352

353 The Christian who is still carnal has neither disposition nor
354 strength to follow after God. He rests satisfied with the prayer
355 of habit or custom; but the glory, the blessedness of secret
356 prayer is a hidden thing to him, till some day his eyes are
357 opened, and he begins to see that 'the flesh', in its disposition to
358 turn away from God, is the archenemy which makes powerful
359 prayer impossible for him.

360

361 I had once, at a conference, spoken on the subject of prayer
362 and made use of strong expressions about the enmity of 'the
363 flesh' as a cause of prayerlessness. After the address, the
364 minister's wife said that she thought I had spoken too strongly.
365 She also had to mourn over too little desire for prayer, but she
366 knew her heart was sincerely set on seeking God. I showed her
367 what the word of God said about 'the flesh', and that everything
368 which prevents the reception of the Spirit is nothing else than a
369 secret work of 'the flesh'. Adam was created to have fellowship
370 with God and enjoyed it before his fall. After the fall, however,
371 there came immediately, a deep-seated aversion to God, and
372 he fled from him. This incurable aversion is the characteristic
373 of the unregenerate nature and the chief cause of our
374 unwillingness to surrender ourselves to fellowship with God in
375 prayer. The following day she told me that God had opened her
376 eyes; she confessed that the enmity and unwillingness of 'the
377 flesh' was the hidden hindrance in her defective prayer life.

378

379 O my brethren, do not seek to find in circumstances the
380 explanation of this prayerlessness over which we mourn; seek

381 it where God's word declares it to be, in the hidden aversion of
382 the heart to a holy God.

383

384 When a Christian does not yield entirely to the leading of the
385 Spirit - and this is certainly the will of God and the work of his
386 grace - he lives, without knowing it, under the power of 'the
387 flesh'. This life of 'the flesh' manifests itself in many different
388 ways. It appears in the hastiness of spirit, or the anger which so
389 unexpectedly arises in you, in the lack of love for which you
390 have so often blamed yourself; in the pleasure found in eating
391 and drinking, about which at times your conscience has
392 chidden you; in that seeking for your own will and honour, that
393 confidence in your own wisdom and power, that pleasure in
394 the world, of which you are sometimes ashamed before God.
395 All this is life 'after the flesh'. 'Ye are yet carnal' (1 Con 3.3)
396 that text, perhaps, disturbs you at times; you have not full
397 peace and joy in God.

398

399 I pray you take time and give an answer to the question: Have
400 I not found here the cause of my prayerlessness, of my
401 powerlessness to effect any change in the matter? I live in the
402 Spirit, I have been born again, but I do not walk after the
403 Spirit - 'the flesh' lords it over me. The carnal life cannot
404 possibly pray in the spirit and power. God forgive me. The
405 carnal life is evidently the cause of my sad and shameful
406 prayerlessness.

407

408 The storm centre on the battlefield

409

410 Mention was made in conference of the expression 'strategic
411 position' used so often in reference to the great strife between
412 the kingdom of heaven and the powers of darkness.

413

414 When a general chooses the place from which he intends to
415 strike the enemy, he pays most attention to those points which
416 he thinks most important in the fight. Thus there was on the
417 battlefield of Waterloo a farmhouse which Wellington
418 immediately saw was the key to the situation. He did not spare
419 his troops in his endeavours to hold that point: the victory
420 depended on it. So it actually happened. It is the same in the
421 conflict between the believer and the powers of darkness. The
422 inner chamber is the place where the decisive victory is
423 obtained.

424

425 The enemy uses all his power to lead the Christian and above
426 all the minister, to neglect prayer. He knows that however
427 admirable the sermon may be, however attractive the service,
428 however faithful the pastoral visitation, none of these things
429 can damage him or his kingdom if prayer is neglected. When
430 the Church shuts herself up to the power of the inner chamber,
431 and the soldiers of the Lord have received on their knees
432 'power from on high', then the powers of darkness will be
433 shaken and souls will be delivered. In the Church, on the
434 mission field, with the minister and his congregation,
435 everything depends on the faithful exercise of the power of
436 prayer.

437

438 In the week of conference I found the following in The
439 Christian:

440

441 Two persons quarrel over a certain point. We call them
442 Christian and Apollyon. Apollyon notices that Christian has a
443 certain weapon which would give him a sure victory. They
444 meet in deadly strife, and Apollyon resolves to take away the

445 weapon from his opponent and destroy it. For the moment the
446 main cause of the strife has become subordinate; the great
447 point now is who shall get possession of the weapon on which
448 everything depends? It is of vital importance to get hold of
449 that.

450

451 So it is in the conflict between Satan and the believer. God's
452 child can conquer everything by prayer. Is it any wonder that
453 Satan does his utmost to snatch that weapon from the
454 Christian, or to hinder him in the use of it?

455

456 How now does Satan hinder prayer? By temptation to postpone
457 or curtail it, by bringing in wandering thoughts and all sorts of
458 distractions; through unbelief and hopelessness. Happy is the
459 prayer hero who, through it all, takes care to hold fast and use
460 his weapon. Like our Lord in Gethsemane, the more violently
461 the enemy attacked the more earnestly he prayed and ceased
462 not till he had obtained the victory. After all the other parts of
463 the armour had been named, Paul adds: 'with all prayer and
464 supplication in the Spirit' (Eph. 6.18). Without prayer, the
465 helmet of salvation, and the shield of faith, and the sword of
466 the Spirit which is God's word, have no power. All depends on
467 prayer. God teach us to believe and hold this fast!

468

469

470

471 Chapter 2

472

473 As soon as the Christian becomes convinced of his sin in this
474 matter, his first thought is that he must begin to strive, with
475 God's help, to gain the victory over it. But alas, he soon
476 experiences that his striving is worth little, and the

477 discouraging thought comes over him, like a wave, that such a
478 life is not for him - he cannot continue faithful! At conferences
479 on the subject of prayer, held during the past years, many a
480 minister has openly said that it seemed impossible for him to
481 attain such a strict life.

482

483 Recently I received a letter from a minister, well known for his
484 ability and devotion, in which he writes, 'As far as I am
485 concerned, it does not seem to help me to hear too much about
486 the life of prayer, about the strenuous exertion for which we
487 must prepare ourselves, and about all the time and trouble and
488 endless effort it will cost us. These things discourage me - I
489 have so often heard them. I have time after time put them to
490 the test, and the result has always been sadly disappointing. It
491 does not help me to be told: "You must pray more, and hold a
492 closer watch over yourself, and become altogether a more
493 earnest Christian.

494

495 My reply to him was as follows: 'I think in all I spoke at the
496 conference or elsewhere, I have never mentioned exertion or
497 struggle, because I am so entirely convinced that our efforts
498 are futile unless we first learn how to abide in Christ by a
499 simple faith.'

500

501 My correspondent said further: 'The message I need is this:
502 "See that your relationship to your living Saviour is what it
503 ought to be. Live in his presence, rejoice in his love, rest in
504 him.---A better message could not be given, if it is only rightly
505 understood. 'See that your relationship to the living Saviour is
506 what it ought to be.' But this is just what will certainly make it
507 possible for one to live the life of prayer.

508

509 We must not comfort ourselves with the thought of standing in
510 a right relationship to the Lord Jesus while the sin of
511 prayerlessness has power over us, and while we, along with the
512 whole Church, have to complain about our feeble life which
513 makes us unfit to pray for ourselves, for the Church, or for
514 missions, as we ought. But if we recognise, in the first place,
515 that a right relationship to the Lord Jesus, above all else,
516 includes prayer, with both the desire and power to pray
517 according to God's will, then we have something which gives
518 us the right to rejoice in him and to rest in him.

519
520 I have related this incident to point out how naturally
521 discouragement will be the result of self-effort and will so shut
522 out all hope of improvement or victory. And this indeed is the
523 condition of many Christians when called on to persevere in
524 prayer as intercessors. They feel it is certainly something
525 entirely beyond their reach - they have not the power for the
526 self-sacrifice and consecration necessary for such prayer; they
527 shrink from the effort and struggle which will, as they suppose,
528 make them unhappy. They have tried in the power of the flesh
529 to conquer the flesh - a wholly impossible thing. They have
530 endeavoured by BeeIzebub to cast out BeeIzebub and this can
531 never happen. It is Jesus alone who can subdue the flesh and
532 the devil.

533
534 We have spoken of a struggle which will certainly result in
535 disappointment and discouragement. This is the effort made in
536 our own strength. But there is another struggle which will
537 certainly lead to victory. The Scripture speaks of 'the good
538 fight of faith', that is to say, a fight which springs from and is
539 carried on by faith. We must get right conceptions about faith
540 and stand fast in our faith. Jesus Christ is ever the author and

541 finisher of faith. It is when we come into right relationship
542 with him that we can be sure of the help and power he bestows.
543 Just, then, as earnestly as we must, in the first place, say: 'Do
544 not strive in your own strength; cast yourself at the feet of the
545 Lord Jesus, and wait upon him in the sure confidence that he is
546 with you, and works in you'; so do we, in the second place,
547 say: 'Strive in prayer; let faith fill your heart - so will you be
548 strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.'

549
550 An illustration will help us to understand this. A devoted
551 Christian woman who conducted a large Bible class with zeal
552 and success once came in trouble to her minister. In her earlier
553 years she had enjoyed much blessing in the inner chamber, in
554 fellowship with the Lord and his word. But this had gradually
555 been lost and, do what she would, she could not get right. The
556 Lord had blessed her work, but the joy had gone out of her life.
557 The minister asked what she had done to regain the lost
558 blessedness. 'I have done everything,' said she, 'that I can think
559 of, but all in vain.'

560
561 He then questioned her about her experience in connection
562 with her conversion. She gave an immediate and clear answer:
563 'At first I spared no pains in my attempt to become better, and
564 to free myself from sin, but it was all useless. At last I began
565 to understand that I must lay aside all my efforts, and simply
566 trust the Lord Jesus to bestow on me his life and peace, and he
567 did it.'

568
569 'Why then,' said the minister, 'do you not try this again? As you
570 go to your inner chamber, however cold and dark your heart
571 may be, do not try in your own might to force yourself into the
572 right attitude. Bow before him, and tell him that he sees in

573 what a sad state you are that your only hope is in him. Trust
574 him with a childlike trust to have mercy upon you, and wait
575 upon him. In such a trust you are in a right relationship to him.
576 You have nothing he has everything.' Some time later she told
577 the minister that his advice had helped her; she had learned
578 that faith in the love of the Lord Jesus is the only method of
579 getting into fellowship with God in prayer.

580
581 Do you not begin to see, my reader, that there are two kinds of
582 warfare - the first when we seek to conquer prayerlessness in
583 our own strength. In that case, my advice to you is: 'Give over
584 your restlessness and effort; fall helpless at the feet of the Lord
585 Jesus; he will speak the word, and your soul will live.' If you
586 have done this, then, second, comes the message: 'This is but
587 the beginning of everything. It will require deep earnestness,
588 and the exercise of all your power, and a watchfulness of the
589 entire heart - eager to detect the least backsliding. Above all, it
590 will require a surrender to a life of selfsacrifice that God really
591 desires to see in us and which he will work out for us.'

592

593

594

595 Chapter 3

596

597 The greatest stumbling-block in the way of victory over
598 prayerlessness is the secret feeling that we shall never obtain
599 the blessing of being delivered from it. Often have we put forth
600 effort in this direction, but in vain. Old habit and the power of
601 the flesh, our surroundings with their attractions, have been too
602 strong for us. What good is it to attempt that which our heart
603 assures us is out of our reach? The change needed in the entire
604 life is too great and too difficult. If the question is put: 'Is a

605 change possible?' our sighing heart says: 'Alas, for me it is
606 entirely impossible!' Do you know why that reply comes? It is
607 simply because you have received the call to prayer as the
608 voice of Moses and as a command of the law. Moses and his
609 law have never yet given anyone the power to obey.

610

611 Do you really long for the courage to believe that deliverance
612 from a prayerless life is possible for you and may become a
613 reality? Then you must learn the great lesson that such a
614 deliverance is included in the redemption that is in Christ
615 Jesus, that it is one of the blessings of the New Covenant
616 which God himself will impart to you through Christ Jesus. As
617 you begin to understand this you will find that the exhortation,
618 'Pray without ceasing', conveys a new meaning. Hope begins to
619 spring up in your heart that the Spirit - who has been bestowed
620 on you to cry constantly, 'Abba, Father'- will make a true life
621 of prayer possible for you. Then you will hearken, not in the
622 spirit of discouragement, but in the gladness of hope, to the
623 voice that calls you to repentance.

624

625 Many a one has turned to his inner chamber, under bitter
626 selfaccusation that he has prayed so little, and has resolved for
627 the future to live in a different manner. Yet no blessing has
628 come - there was not the strength to continue faithful, and the
629 call to repentance had no power, because his eyes had not been
630 fixed on the Lord Jesus, If he had only understood, he would
631 have said: 'Lord, thou seest how cold and dark my heart is: I
632 know that I must pray, but I feel I cannot do so; I lack the
633 urgency and desire to pray.'

634

635 He did not know that at that moment the Lord Jesus in his
636 tender love was looking down upon him and saying: 'You

637 cannot pray; you feel that all is cold and dark: why not give
638 yourself over into my hands? Only believe that I am ready to
639 help you in prayer; I long greatly to shed abroad my love in
640 your heart, so that you, in the consciousness of weakness, may
641 confidently rely on me to bestow the grace of prayer. Just as I
642 will cleanse you from all other sins, so also will I deliver from
643 the sin of prayerlessness - only do not seek the victory in your
644 own strength. Bow before me as one who expects everything
645 from his Saviour. Let your soul keep silence before me
646 however sad you feel your state to be. Be assured of this - I will
647 teach you how to pray.'

648

649 Many a one will acknowledge: 'I see my mistake; I had not
650 thought that the Lord Jesus must deliver and cleanse me from
651 this sin also. I had not understood that he was with me every
652 day in the inner chamber, in his great love ready to keep and
653 bless me, however sinful and guilty felt myself to be. I had not
654 supposed that just as he will give all other grace in answer to
655 prayer, so, above all and before all, he will bestow the grace of
656 a praying heart. What folly to think that all other blessings
657 must come from him, but that prayer, whereon everything else
658 depends, must be obtained by personal effort! Thank God I
659 begin to comprehend - the Lord Jesus is himself in the inner
660 chamber watching over me, and holding himself responsible to
661 teach me how to approach the Father. This only he demands -
662 that I, with childlike confidence, wait upon him and glorify
663 him.'

664

665 Brethren, have we not seriously forgotten this truth? From a
666 defective spiritual life nothing better can be expected than a
667 defective prayer life. It is vain for us, with our defective
668 spiritual life, to endeavour to pray more or better. It is an

669 impossibility. Nothing less is necessary than that we should
670 experience that he who is in Christ Jesus is a new creature: old
671 things have passed away; behold, all things are become new.'
672 This is literally true for the man who understands and
673 experiences what it is to be in Jesus Christ.

674
675 Our whole relationship to the Lord Jesus must be a new thing.
676 I must believe in his infinite love, which really longs to have
677 communion with me every moment and to keep me in the
678 enjoyment of his fellowship. I must believe in his divine
679 power, which has conquered sin and will truly keep me from it.
680 I must believe in him who, as the great intercessor, through the
681 Spirit, will inspire each member of his body with joy and
682 power for communion with God in prayer. My prayer life must
683 be brought entirely under the control of Christ and his love.
684 Then, for the first time, will prayer become what it really is,
685 the natural and joyous breathing of the spiritual life, by which
686 the heavenly atmosphere is inhaled and then exhaled in prayer.

687
688 Do you not see that, just as this faith possesses us, the call to a
689 life of prayer which pleases God will be a welcome call? The
690 cry, 'Repent of the sin of prayerlessness', will not be responded
691 to by a sigh of helplessness, or by the unwillingness of the
692 flesh. The voice of the Father will be heard as he sets before us
693 a widely opened door and receives us into blessed fellowship
694 with himself. Prayer for the help of the Spirit to pray will no
695 longer be in fear of an effort too great for our power; it will be
696 but falling down in utter weakness at the feet of the Lord Jesus,
697 to find there that victory comes through the might and love
698 which stream from his countenance.
699

700 If the question arises in our mind: 'will this continue?' and the
701 fear comes: 'You know how often you have tried and been
702 disappointed', faith will find its strength, not in the thought of
703 what you will, or do, but in the changeless faithfulness and
704 love of Christ, who afresh has succoured you and assured you
705 that those who wait on him shall not be ashamed.

706

707 If fear and hesitation still remain, I pray you by the mercies of
708 God in Jesus Christ, and by the unspeakable faithfulness of his
709 tender love, dare to cast yourselves at his feet. Only believe
710 with your whole heart that there is deliverance from the sin of
711 prayerlessness. 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to
712 forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness'
713 (1 John 1.9). In his blood and grace there is complete
714 deliverance from all unrighteousness and from all
715 prayerlessness, Praised be his name for ever!

716

717 How deliverance from prayerlessness may continue

718

719 What we have said about deliverance from the sin of
720 prayerlessness has also application as answer to the question:
721 'How may the experience of deliverance be maintained?'
722 Redemption is not granted to us piecemeal, or as something of
723 which we may make use from time to time. It is bestowed as a
724 fullness of grace stored up in the Lord Jesus, which may be
725 enjoyed in a new fellowship with him every day. It is so
726 necessary that this great truth should be driven home and
727 fastened in our minds that I will once more mention it. Nothing
728 can preserve you from carelessness, or make it possible for you
729 to persevere in living, powerful prayer, but a daily close
730 fellowship with Jesus our Lord.

731

732 He said to his disciples: 'Ye believe in God, believe also in
733 me... Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me
734 ...He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also;
735 and greater works than these shall he do' (John 14.1, 11, 12).
736

737 The Lord wished to teach his disciples that all they had learned
738 from the Old Testament concerning the power and holiness
739 and love of God must now be transferred to him. They must
740 not believe merely in certain written documents but in him
741 personally. They must believe that he was in the Father, and
742 the Father in him, in such a sense that they had one life, one
743 glory. All that they knew about Christ they would find in God.
744 He laid much emphasis on this because it was only through
745 such a faith in him and his divine glory that they could do the
746 works which he did, or even greater works. This faith would
747 lead them to know that just as Christ and the Father are one, so
748 also they were in Christ and Christ was in them.
749

750 It is this intimate, spiritual, personal, uninterrupted relationship
751 to the Lord Jesus which manifests itself powerfully in our
752 lives, and especially in our prayer lives. Let us consider this
753 and see what it means: that all the glorious attributes of God
754 are in our Lord Jesus Christ. Think of-

755

756 1. God's omnipresence

757

758 God fills the world and every moment is present in everything.
759 Just as it is with the Father, so now our Lord Jesus is
760 everywhere present, above all with each of his redeemed ones.
761 This is one of the greatest and most important lessons which
762 our faith must learn. We can clearly understand this from the
763 example of our Lord's disciples. What was the peculiar

764 privilege of the disciples, who were always in fellowship with
765 him? It was uninterrupted enjoyment of the presence of the
766 Lord Jesus. It was because of this they were so sorrowful at the
767 thought of his death. They would be deprived of that presence.
768 He would be no longer with them. How, under these
769 circumstances, did the Lord Jesus comfort them? He promised
770 that the Holy Spirit from heaven should so work in them a
771 sense of the fullness of his life and of his personal presence
772 that he would be even more intimately near and have more
773 unbroken fellowship with them than ever they experienced
774 while he was upon earth.

775

776 This great promise is now the inheritance of every believer,
777 although so many of them know little about it. Jesus Christ, in
778 his divine personality, in that eternal love which led him to the
779 cross, longs to have fellowship with us every moment of the
780 day and to keep us in the enjoyment of that fellowship. This
781 ought to be explained to every new convert: 'The Lord loves
782 you so that he would have you near him without a break, that
783 you may have experience of his love.' This is what every
784 believer must learn who has felt his powerlessness for a life of
785 prayer, of obedience, and of holiness. This alone will give us
786 power as intercessors to conquer the world and to win souls
787 out of it for our Lord.

788

789 2. The omnipotence of God

790

791 How wonderful is God's power! We see it in creation; we see it
792 in the wonders of redemption recorded in the Old Testament.
793 We see it in the wonderful works of Christ which the Father
794 wrought in him, and above all in his resurrection from the
795 dead. We are called on to believe in the Son, just as we believe

796 in the Father. Yes, the Lord Jesus who, in his love, is so
797 unspeakably near us, is the almighty one with whom nothing is
798 impossible. Whatever may be in our hearts or flesh, which will
799 not submit to us, he can and will conquer. Everything that is
800 promised in God's word, all that is our inheritance as children
801 of the New Covenant, the almighty Jesus can bestow upon us.
802 If I bow before him in my inner chamber, then I am in contact
803 with the eternal, unchanging power of God. If I commit myself
804 for the day to the Lord Jesus, then I may rest assured that it is
805 his eternal almighty power which has taken me under its
806 protection and which will accomplish everything for me.

807
808 Oh, if we would only take time for the inner chamber so that
809 we might experience in full reality the presence of this
810 almighty Jesus! What a blessedness would be ours through
811 faith! An unbroken fellowship with an omnipresent and
812 almighty Lord.

813

814 3. The holy love of God

815

816 This means that he, with his whole heart, offers all his divine
817 attributes for our service and is prepared to impart himself to
818 us. Christ is the revelation of his love. He is the Son of his love
819 - the gift of his love - the power of his love; and this Jesus,
820 who has sought on the cross to give an overwhelming proof of
821 his love in his death and blood-shedding, so as to make it
822 impossible for us not to believe in that love - this Jesus is he
823 who comes to meet us in the inner chamber, and gives the
824 positive assurance that unbroken fellowship with him is our
825 inheritance, and will, through him, become our experience.
826 The holy love of God which sacrificed everything to conquer

827 sin and bring it to naught, comes to us in Christ to save us from
828 every sin.

829

830 Brethren, take time to think over that word of our Lord: 'Ye
831 believe in God, believe also in me'...Believe me that I am in the
832 Father ... and ye in me, and I in you' (John 14. 1, 11, 20). That
833 is the secret of the life of prayer. Take time in the inner
834 chamber to bow down and worship; and wait on him till he
835 unveils himself, and takes possession of you, and goes out with
836 you to show how a man may live and walk in abiding
837 fellowship with an unseen Lord.

838

839 Do you long to know how you may always experience
840 deliverance from the sin of prayerlessness? Here you have the
841 secret. Believe in the Son of God, give him time in the inner
842 chamber to reveal himself in his ever present nearness, as the
843 eternal and almighty one, the eternal love who watches over
844 you. You will experience what, up till now, you have perhaps
845 not known - that it has not entered into the heart of man what
846 God can do for those who love him.

847

848

849

850 Chapter 4

851

852 If now we are delivered from the sin of prayerlessness, and
853 understand how this deliverance may continue to be
854 experienced, what will be the fruit of our liberty? He who sees
855 this aright will, with renewed earnestness and perseverance,
856 seek after this liberty. His life and experience will indeed be an
857 evidence that he has obtained something of unspeakable worth.

858 He will be a living witness of the blessing which victory has
859 brought.

860
861 Consider -

862
863 1. The blessedness of unbroken fellowship with God

864
865 Think of the confidence in the Father which will take the place
866 of the reproach and self-condemnation which was the earlier
867 characteristic of our lives. Think of the deep consciousness that
868 God's almighty grace has effected something in us, to prove
869 that we really bear his image and are fitted for a life of
870 communion with him and prepared to glorify him. Think how
871 we, notwithstanding our conviction of our nothingness, may
872 live as true children of a King, in communion with their
873 Father, and may manifest something of the character of our
874 Lord Jesus in the holy fellowship with his Father which he had
875 when on earth. Think how in the inner chamber the hour of
876 prayer may become the happiest time in the whole do for us,
877 and how God may use us to take a share in the carrying out of
878 his plans, and make us fountains of blessing for the world
879 around us.

880
881 2. The power which we may have for the work to which we are
882 called

883
884 The preacher will learn to receive his message really from
885 God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, and t deliver it in
886 that power to the congregation. He will know where he can be
887 filled with the love and zeal which will enable him, in his
888 rounds of pastoral visiting, t meet and help each individual in a
889 spirit of tender com passion. He will be able to say with Paul: 'I

890 can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me' (Ph
891 4.13). 'We are more than conquerors through him that loved us'
892 (Rom. 8.37). 'We are ambassadors for Christ ... we pray you in
893 Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God' (2 Cor. 5.20). These are
894 no vain dreams or pictures of a foolish imagination. God has
895 given us Paul an illustration, so that, however we may differ
896 from him in gifts or calling, yet in inner experience we may
897 know the all-sufficiency of grace which can do all things for as
898 it did for him.

899

900 3. The prospect which opens before us for the future

901

902 This is to be consecrated to take part as intercessors in great
903 work of bearing on our hearts the need of the en Church and
904 world. Paul sought to arouse men to pray all saints, and he tells
905 us what a conflict he had for those who had not yet seen his
906 face. In his personal presence he was subject to conditions of
907 time and place, but in Spirit he had power in the name of
908 Christ to pray blessing on those who had not yet heard of the
909 Saviour.

910

911 In addition to his life in connection with men here on earth, far
912 or near, he lived another, a heavenly life - one of love and of a
913 wonderful power in prayer which he continually exercised. We
914 can hardly form a conception of the power God will bestow, if
915 only we get freed from the sin of prayerlessness and pray with
916 the daring which reaches heaven and brings down blessing in
917 the almighty name of Christ.

918

919 What a prospect! Minister and missionaries brought by God's
920 grace to pray, let us say twice as much as formerly, with
921 twofold faith and joy! What a difference it would make in the

922 preaching, in the prayer meeting, in the fellowship with others!
923 What a gentle power would come down in an inner chamber,
924 sanctified by communion with God and his love in Christ!
925 What an influence would be exercised on believers, in urging
926 them forward to the work of intercession! How greatly would
927 this influence be felt in the Church and among the heathen!
928 What power might be exercised over ministers of other
929 churches, and who knows how God might use us for his
930 Church through the whole world! Is it not worth while to
931 sacrifice everything, and to beseech God without ceasing to
932 give us real and full victory over the prayerlessness which has
933 covered us with such shame?

934
935 Why do I now write these things and extol so highly the
936 blessedness of victory over 'the sin which doth so easily beset
937 us' and which has so terribly robbed us of the power which
938 God has intended for us? I can give an answer. I know all too
939 well what low thoughts we have concerning the promises and
940 the power of God and how prone we are always to backslide,
941 to limit God's power, and to deem it impossible for him to do
942 greater things than we have seen. It is a glorious thing to get to
943 know God in a new way in the inner chamber. That, however,
944 is but the beginning. It is something still greater and more
945 glorious to know God as the all sufficient One and to wait on
946 his Spirit to open our hearts and minds wide to receive the
947 great things, the new things which he really longs to bestow on
948 those who wait for him.

949
950 God's object is to encourage faith and to make his children and
951 servants see that they must take trouble to understand and rely
952 upon the unspeakable greatness and omnipotence of God, so
953 that they may take literally and in a childlike spirit this word:

954 'Unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all
955 that we ask or think ... be glory ... throughout all ages' (Eph.
956 3.20, 21). Oh, that we knew what a great and glorious God we
957 have!

958
959 Someone may ask: 'May not this note of certain victory
960 become a snare and lead to levity and pride?' Undoubtedly.
961 That which is the highest and best on earth is always liable to
962 abuse. How, then, can we be saved from this? Through nothing
963 so surely as through true prayer, which brings us really into
964 contact with God. The holiness of God, sought for in persistent
965 prayer, will cover our sinfulness. The omnipotence and
966 greatness of God will make us feel our nothingness.
967 Fellowship with God in Jesus Christ will lead us to the
968 experience that there is in us no good thing, and that we can
969 have fellowship with God only as our faith become a humbling
970 of ourselves as Christ humbled himself, and we truly live in him
971 as he is in the Father.

972
973 Prayer is not merely coming to God to ask something from
974 him. It is above all fellowship with God and being brought
975 under the power of his holiness and love, till he takes
976 possession of us and stamps our entire nature with the
977 lowliness of Christ, which is the secret of all true worship.

978
979 Yes, it is in Christ Jesus that we draw near to the Father, as
980 those who have died with Christ and have entirely done with
981 their own life, as those in whom lives and whom he enables to
982 say: 'Christ liveth in me' What we have said about the work that
983 the Lord Jesus does in us to deliver us from prayerlessness is
984 true not only of the beginning of the life of prayer, and of the
985 joy which a new experience of power to pray causes us, it true

986 for the whole life of prayer all the day lot 'Through him' we
987 have access to the Father. In this always, as in the whole
988 spiritual life, 'Christ is all. "They saw no man save Jesus only'
989 (Matt. 17.8).

990

991 May God strengthen us to a belief that there is certain victory
992 prepared for us, and that the blessing will be what the heart of
993 man has not conceived! God will do this for those who love
994 him.

995

996 This does not come to us all at once. God has great patience
997 with his children. He bears with us in our slow progress with
998 fatherly patience. Let each child of God rejoice in all that
999 God's word promises. The stronger our faith, the more
1000 earnestly will we persevere to the end.

1001

1002 The more abundant life

1003

1004 Our Lord spoke this word concerning the more abundant life
1005 when he said that he had come to give his life for his sheep: 'I
1006 am come that they might have life, and that they might have it
1007 more abundantly' (John 10. 10). A man may have life, and yet,
1008 through lack of nourishment, or through illness, there may be
1009 no abundance of life or power. This was the distinction
1010 between the Old Testament and the New. In the former there
1011 was indeed life, under the law, but not the abundance of grace
1012 of the New Testament. Christ had given life to his disciples,
1013 but they could receive the abundant life only through his
1014 resurrection and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

1015

1016 All true Christians have received life from Christ. The greater
1017 portion of them, however, know nothing about the more

1018 abundant life which he is willing to bestow. Paul speaks
1019 constantly of this. He says about himself that the grace of God
1020 was 'exceeding abundant' (1 Tim. 1.14). 'I can do all things
1021 through Christ which strengtheneth me' (Phil. 4.13). 'Thanks be
1022 unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ' (2.
1023 Cor. 2.14). 'We are more than conquerors through him that
1024 loved us' (Rom. 8.37).

1025
1026 We have spoken of the sin of prayerlessness, and the means of
1027 deliverance, and how to be kept free from that sin. What has
1028 been said on these points is all included in that expression of
1029 Christ: 'I am come that they might have life, and that they
1030 might have it more abundantly.' It is of the utmost importance
1031 for us so to understand this more abundant life, that we may
1032 clearly see that for a true life of prayer nothing less is
1033 necessary than that we should walk in an ever increasing
1034 experience of that overflowing life.

1035
1036 It is possible for us to commence this conflict against
1037 prayerlessness in dependence on Christ, and looking to him to
1038 be assisted and kept in it, and yet to be disappointed. This is
1039 the case when prayerlessness is looked upon as the one sin
1040 against which we must strive. It must be recognised as part of
1041 the whole life of the flesh and as closely connected with other
1042 sins which spring from the same source. We forget that the
1043 entire flesh with all its affections, whether manifested in the
1044 body or soul, must be regarded as crucified, and be handed
1045 over to death. We must not be satisfied with a feeble life, but
1046 must seek for an abundant life. We must surrender ourselves
1047 entirely, that the Spirit may take full possession of us, so
1048 manifesting that life in us that there may come an entire

1049 transformation in our spiritual being, by which the complete
1050 mastery of Christ and the Spirit is recognised.

1051

1052 What is it, then, which peculiarly constitutes this abundant
1053 life? We cannot too often repeat, or in different ways too often
1054 set it forth - the abundant life is nothing less than the full Jesus
1055 having the full mastery over our entire being, through the
1056 power of the Holy Spirit. As the Spirit makes known in us the
1057 fullness of Christ, and the abundant life which he gives, it will
1058 be chiefly in three aspects:

1059

1060 1. As the crucified one

1061

1062 Not merely as the one who died for us, to atone for our sins;
1063 but as he who has taken us up with himself on the cross to die
1064 with him, and who now works out in us the power of his cross
1065 and death. You have the true fellowship with Christ when you
1066 can say: 'I have been crucified with Christ - he, the crucified
1067 one, lives in me.' The feelings and the disposition which were
1068 in him, his lowliness and obedience even to the death of the
1069 cross - these were what he referred to when he said of the Holy
1070 Spirit: 'He shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you' (John
1071 16.15) - not as an instruction, but as childlike participation of
1072 the same life which was in him.

1073

1074 Do you desire that the Holy Spirit should take full possession
1075 of you, so as to cause the crucified Christ to dwell in you?
1076 Understand then, that this is just the end for which he has been
1077 given, and this he will surely accomplish in all who yield
1078 themselves to him.

1079

1080 2. As the risen one

1081

1082 The Scripture frequently mentions the resurrection in
1083 connection with the wonder-working power of God, by which
1084 Christ was raised from the dead; and from which comes the
1085 assurance of 'the exceeding greatness of his power to usward
1086 who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,
1087 which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead'
1088 (Eph. 1.19, 20). Do not pass hastily from these words. Turn
1089 back and read them once more, and learn the great lesson that,
1090 however powerless and weak you feel, the omnipotence of
1091 God is working in you; and, if you only believe, will give you
1092 in daily life a share in the resurrection of his Son.

1093

1094 Yes, the Holy Spirit can fill you with the joy and victory of the
1095 resurrection of Christ, as the power of your daily life, here in
1096 the midst of the trials and temptations of this world. Let the
1097 cross humble you to death. God will work out the heavenly life
1098 in you through his Spirit. Ah, how little have we understood
1099 that it is entirely the work of the Holy Spirit to make us
1100 partakers of the crucified and risen Christ, and to conform us to
1101 his life and death!

1102

1103 3. As the glorified one

1104

1105 The glorified Christ is he who baptises with the Holy Spirit.
1106 When the Lord Jesus himself was baptised with the Spirit, it
1107 was because he had humbled himself and offered himself to
1108 take part in John's baptism of repentance - a baptism for
1109 sinners - in Jordan. Even so, when he took upon himself the
1110 work of redemption, he received the Holy Spirit to fit him for
1111 his work from that hour till on the cross he 'offered himself
1112 without spot to God' (Heb. 9.14). Do you desire that this

1113 glorified Christ should baptise you with the Holy Spirit? Offer
1114 yourself then to him for his service, to further his great work of
1115 making known to sinners the love of the Father.

1116
1117 God help us to understand what a great thing it is to receive the
1118 Holy Spirit with power from the glorified Jesus! It means a
1119 willingness - a longing of the soul - to work for him, and, if
1120 need be, to suffer for him. You have known and loved your
1121 Lord, and have worked for him, and have had blessing in that
1122 work; but the Lord has more than that to bestow. He can so
1123 work in us, and in our brethren around us, and in the ministers
1124 of the church, by the power of the Holy Spirit, as to fill our
1125 hearts with adoring wonder.

1126
1127 Have you laid hold of it, my reader? The abundant life is
1128 neither more nor less than the full life of Christ as the
1129 crucified, the risen, the glorified one, who baptises with the
1130 Holy Ghost and reveals himself in our hearts and lives as Lord
1131 of all within us.

1132
1133 I read not long since an expression - 'Live in what must be.' 'Do
1134 not live in your human imagination of what is possible. Live in
1135 the word - in the love and infinite faithfulness of the Lord
1136 Jesus. Even though it is slow, and with many a stumble, the
1137 faith that always thanks him not for experiences, but for the
1138 promises on which it can rely - goes on from strength to
1139 strength, still increasing in the blessed assurance that God
1140 himself will perfect his work in us.

1141

1142

1143

1144 Chapter 5

1145

1146 The connection between the prayer life and the Spirit life is
1147 close and indissoluble. It is not merely that we receive the
1148 Spirit through prayer, but the Spirit life requires, as an
1149 indispensable thing, a continuous prayer life. I can be led
1150 continually by the Spirit only as I continually give myself to
1151 prayer.

1152

1153 This was very evident in the life of our Lord. A study of his
1154 life will give us a wonderful view of the power and holiness of
1155 prayer. Consider his baptism. It was when he was baptised and
1156 prayed that heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit came down
1157 upon him. God desired to crown Christ's surrender of himself
1158 to the sinner's baptism in Jordan (which was also a surrender of
1159 himself to the sinner's death), with the gift of the Spirit for the
1160 work that he must accomplish. But this could not have taken
1161 place had he not prayed. In the fellowship of worship the Spirit
1162 was bestowed on him to lead him out into the desert to spend
1163 forty days there in prayer and fasting. Turn to Mark 1.32-35:
1164 'And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all
1165 that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils.
1166 And all the city was gathered together at the door... And in the
1167 morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and
1168 departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.'

1169

1170 The work of the day and evening had exhausted him. In his
1171 healing of the sick and casting out devils, power had gone out
1172 of him. While others still slept, he went away to pray and to
1173 renew his strength in communion with his Father, He had need
1174 of this, otherwise he would not have been ready for the new
1175 day. The holy work of delivering souls demands constant
1176 renewal through fellowship with God.

1177

1178 Think again of the calling of the apostles as given in Luke
1179 6.12,13-. 'And it came to pass in those days, that he went out
1180 into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to
1181 God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples:
1182 and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles.' Is
1183 it not clear that if anyone wishes to do God's work, he must
1184 take time for fellowship with him, to receive his wisdom and
1185 power? The dependence and helplessness of which this is an
1186 evidence, open the way and give God the opportunity of
1187 revealing his power. How great was the importance of the
1188 choosing of the apostles for Christ's own work, for the early
1189 Church, and for all time! It had God's blessing and seal; the
1190 stamp of prayer was on it.

1191

1192 Read Luke 9.18, 20: 'And it came to pass, as he was alone
1193 praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them
1194 saying, Whom say the people that I am? ... Peter answering
1195 said, The Christ of God.' The Lord had prayed that the Father
1196 might reveal to them who he was. It was in answer to prayer
1197 that 'he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles'. And
1198 when Peter said: 'The Christ of God' the Lord said to him,
1199 'Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father
1200 which is in heaven' (Matt. 16.17). This great confession was
1201 the fruit of prayer.

1202

1203 Read further Luke 9.28-35: 'He took Peter and John and James,
1204 and went up into a mountain to pray. And as he prayed, the
1205 fashion of his countenance was altered ... And there came a
1206 voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear
1207 him.' Christ had desired that, for the strengthening of their
1208 faith, God might give them an assurance from heaven that he

1209 was the Son of God. Prayer obtained for our Lord Jesus
1210 himself, as well as for his disciples, what happened on the
1211 Mount of Transfiguration.

1212

1213 Does it not become still more clear that what God wills to
1214 accomplish on earth needs prayer as its indispensable
1215 condition? And there is but one way for Christ and believers. A
1216 heart and mouth open toward heaven in believing prayer will
1217 certainly not be put to shame.

1218

1219 Read Luke 11. 1-13: 'As he was praying in a certain plain,
1220 when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach
1221 us to pray...' And then he gave them that inexhaustible prayer:
1222 'Our Father who art in heaven'. In this he showed what was
1223 going on in his heart, when he prayed that God's name might
1224 be hallowed, and his kingdom come, and his will be done, and
1225 all of this 'on earth as it is in heaven'. How will this ever come
1226 to pass? Through prayer. This prayer has been uttered through
1227 the ages by countless millions, to their unspeakable comfort.
1228 But forget not this - it was born out of the prayer of our Lord
1229 Jesus. He had been praying, and therefore was able to give that
1230 glorious answer.

1231

1232 Read John 14.16: 'I will pray the Father, and he shall give you
1233 another Comforter. 'The entire dispensation of the New
1234 Testament, with the wonderful outpouring of the Holy Spirit, is
1235 the outcome of the prayer of the Lord Jesus. It is as though
1236 God had impressed on the gift of the Holy Spirit this seal - in
1237 answer to the prayer of the Lord Jesus, and later of his
1238 disciples, the Holy Spirit will surely come. But it will be in
1239 answer to prayer like that of our Lord, in which he took time to

1240 be alone with God and in that prayer offered himself wholly to
1241 God.

1242
1243 Read John 17, the high priestly, most holy prayer! Here the
1244 Son prays first for himself, that the Father will glorify him by
1245 giving him power for the cross, by raising him from the dead,
1246 by setting him at his right hand. These great things could not
1247 take place save through prayer. Prayer had power to obtain
1248 them.

1249
1250 Afterward he prayed for his disciples, that the Father might
1251 preserve them from the evil one, might keep them from the
1252 world, and might sanctify them. And then, further, he prayed
1253 for all those who through their word might believe on him, that
1254 all might be one in love, even as the Father and the Son were
1255 one. This prayer gives us a glimpse into the wonderful
1256 relationship between the Father and the Son, and teaches us,
1257 that all the blessings of heaven come continually through the
1258 prayer of him who is at God's right hand and ever prays for us.
1259 But it teaches us, also, that all these blessings must in the same
1260 manner be desired and asked for by us. The whole nature and
1261 glory of God's blessings consist in this - they must be obtained
1262 in answer to prayer, by hearts entirely surrendered to him, and
1263 hearts that believe in the power of prayer.

1264
1265 Now we come to the most remarkable instance of all. In
1266 Gethsemane we see that our Lord, according to his constant
1267 habit, consulted and arranged with the Father the work he had
1268 to do on earth. First he besought him in agony and bloody
1269 sweat to let the cup pass from him; when he understood that
1270 this could not be, then he prayed for strength to drink it, and
1271 surrendered himself with the words: 'Thy will be done.' He was

1272 able to meet the enemy full of courage and in the power of
1273 God gave himself over to the death of the cross. He had
1274 prayed.

1275
1276 Oh, why is it that God's children have so little faith in the glory
1277 of prayer, as the great power for subjecting our own wills to
1278 that of God, as well as for the confident carrying out of the
1279 work of God in spite of our great weakness? Would that we
1280 might learn from our Lord Jesus how impossible it is to walk
1281 with God, to obtain God's blessing or leading, or to do his
1282 work joyously and fruitfully, apart from close unbroken
1283 fellowship with him who is ever a living fountain of spiritual
1284 life and power!

1285
1286 Let every Christian think over this simple study of the prayer
1287 life of our Lord Jesus and endeavour from God's word, with
1288 prayer for the leading of the Holy Spirit, to learn what the life
1289 is which the Lord Jesus Christ bestows upon him and supports
1290 in him. It is nothing else than a life of daily prayer. Let each
1291 minister especially recognise how entirely vain it is to attempt
1292 to do the work of our Lord in any other way than that in which
1293 he did it. Let us, as workers, begin to believe that we are set
1294 free from the ordinary business of the world, that we may,
1295 above everything, have time, in our Saviour's name, and with
1296 his Spirit, and in oneness with him, to ask for and obtain
1297 blessing for the world.

1298

1299

1300

1301 Chapter 6

1302

1303 Is it not sad that our thoughts about the Holy Spirit are so often
1304 coupled with grief and self-reproach? Yet he bears the name of
1305 Comforter, and is given to lead us to find in Christ our chief
1306 delight and joy. But there is something still more sad: he who
1307 dwells within us to comfort us is often grieved by us because
1308 we will not permit him to accomplish his work of love. What a
1309 cause of inexpressible pain to the Holy Spirit is all this
1310 prayerlessness in the Church! It is the cause also of the low
1311 vitality and utter impotence which are so often found in us,
1312 because we are not prepared to permit the Holy Spirit to lead
1313 us.

1314

1315 God grant that our meditation on the work of the Holy Spirit
1316 may be matter for rejoicing and for the strengthening of our
1317 faith!

1318

1319 The Holy Spirit is 'the Spirit of prayer'. He is definitely called
1320 by this name in Zechariah 12, 10: 'The spirit of grace and of
1321 supplications. 'Twice in Paul's epistles there is a remarkable
1322 reference to him in the matter of prayer. 'Ye have received the
1323 Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father' (Rom. 8.15).
1324 'God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts,
1325 crying, Abba, Father' (Gal. 4.6). Have you ever meditated on
1326 these words: 'Abba, Father'? In that name our Saviour offered
1327 his greatest prayer to the Father, accompanied by the entire
1328 surrender and sacrifice of his life and love. The Holy Spirit is
1329 given for the express purpose of teaching us, from the very
1330 beginning of our Christian life onward, to utter that word in
1331 childlike trust and surrender. In one of these passages we read:
1332 'We cry'; in the other: 'He cries.' What a wonderful blending of
1333 the divine and human cooperation in prayer. What a proof that
1334 God - if I may say so - has done his utmost to make prayer as

1335 natural and effectual as though it were the cry of a child to an
1336 earthly Father, as he says: 'Abba, Father'.

1337

1338 Is it not a proof that the Holy Spirit is to a great extent a
1339 stranger in the Church, when prayer, for which God has made
1340 such provisions, is regarded as a task and a burden? And does
1341 not this teach us to seek for the deep root of prayerlessness in
1342 our ignorance of, and disobedience to, the divine instructor
1343 whom the Father has commissioned to teach us to pray?

1344

1345 If we desire to understand this truth still more clearly we must
1346 notice what is written in Romans 8.26, 27: 'Likewise the Spirit
1347 also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should
1348 pray for as we ought: but the Spirit himself maketh
1349 intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.
1350 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of
1351 the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints
1352 according to the will of God.' Is it not clear from this that the
1353 Christian if left to himself does not know how to pray; or how
1354 he ought to pray; and that God has stooped to meet us in this
1355 helplessness of ours by giving us the Holy Spirit himself to
1356 pray for us; and that his operation is deeper than our thought or
1357 feeling, but is noticed and answered by God?

1358

1359 Our first work, therefore, ought to be to come into God's
1360 presence not with our ignorant prayers, not with many words
1361 and thoughts, but in the confidence that the divine work of the
1362 Holy Spirit is being carried on within us. This confidence will
1363 encourage reverence and quietness, and will also enable us, in
1364 dependence on the help which the Spirit gives, to lay our
1365 desires and heart-needs before God. The great lesson for every
1366 prayer is - see to it, first of all, that you commit yourself to the

1367 leading of the Holy Spirit, and with entire dependence on him,
1368 give him the first place; for through him your prayer will have
1369 a value you cannot imagine, and through him also you will
1370 learn to speak out your desires in the name of Christ.

1371
1372 What a protection this faith would be against deadness and
1373 despondency in the inner chamber! Only think of it! In every
1374 prayer the triune God takes a part - the Father who hears: the
1375 Son in whose name we pray; the Spirit who prays for us and in
1376 us. How important it is that we should be in right relationship
1377 to the Holy Spirit and understand his work!

1378
1379 The following points demand serious consideration.

1380
1381 1. Let us firmly believe, as a divine reality, that the Spirit of
1382 God's Son, the Holy Spirit, is in us. Do not imagine that you
1383 know this and have no need to consider it. It is a thought so
1384 great and divine that it can gain an entrance to our hearts and
1385 be retained there only by the Holy Spirit himself. 'The Spirit
1386 itself beareth witness with our -spirit' (Rom. 8.16). Our
1387 position ought to be that of reckoning with full assurance of
1388 faith that our heart is his temple, yes, that he dwells within us
1389 and rules soul and body. Let us thank God heartily as often as
1390 we pray, that we have his Spirit in us to teach us to pray.
1391 Thanksgiving will draw our hearts out to God and keep us
1392 engaged with him; it will take our attention from ourselves and
1393 give the Spirit room in our hearts.

1394
1395 Oh, it is no wonder that we have been prayerless, and have felt
1396 this work too heavy for us, if we have sought to hold
1397 fellowship with the eternal God apart from his Spirit, who
1398 reveals the Father and the Son.

1399

1400 2. In the practice of this faith in the certainty that the Spirit
1401 dwells and works in us, there must also be the understanding of
1402 all that he desires to accomplish in us. His work in prayer is
1403 closely connected with his other work. We have seen in an
1404 earlier chapter that his first and greatest work is to reveal
1405 Christ in his omnipresent love and power. So the Holy Spirit
1406 will in prayer constantly remind us of Christ, of his blood and
1407 name, as the sure ground of our being heard.

1408

1409 He will, further, as 'the Spirit of holiness', teach us to
1410 recognise, and hate, and have done with sin. He is 'the Spirit of
1411 light and wisdom' who leads us into the heavenly secret of
1412 God's overflowing grace. He is 'the Spirit of love and power'
1413 who teaches us to witness for Christ and to labour for souls
1414 with tender pity. The more closely I associate all these
1415 blessings with the Spirit, the more shall I be convinced of his
1416 deity and shall be the more ready to commit myself to his
1417 guidance, as I give myself to prayer. What a different life mine
1418 would be if I knew the Spirit as the Spirit of prayer! There is
1419 still another thing which I need constantly to learn afresh, that -

1420

1421 3. The Spirit desires to have full possession of my life. We
1422 pray for more of the Spirit, and we pray well, if alongside this
1423 prayer we set the truth that the Spirit wants more of me. The
1424 Spirit would possess me entirely. Just as my soul has my whole
1425 body for its dwelling-place and service, so the Holy Spirit
1426 would have my body and soul as his dwelling-place, entirely
1427 under his control. No one can continue long and earnestly in
1428 prayer without beginning to perceive that the Spirit is gently
1429 leading to an entirely new consecration, of which previously he
1430 knew nothing. 'I seek Thee with my whole heart.' The Spirit

1431 will make such words more and more the motto of our lives.
1432 He will cause us to recognise that what remains in us of
1433 double-mindedness is truly sinful. He will reveal Christ as the
1434 almighty deliverer from all sin, who is always near to defend
1435 us. He will lead us in this way in prayer, to forget ourselves
1436 and make us willing to offer ourselves for training as
1437 intercessors, to whom God can entrust the carrying out of his
1438 plans, and who day and night cry to him to avenge his church
1439 of her adversary.

1440
1441 God help us to know the Spirit and to reverence him as the
1442 Spirit of prayer!

1443

1444

1445

1446 Chapter 7

1447

1448 To understand grace, to understand Christ aright, we must
1449 understand what sin is. And how otherwise can we come to
1450 this understanding than through the light of God and his word?

1451

1452 Come with me to the beginning of the Bible. See there man
1453 created by God, after his image, and pronounced by his creator
1454 to be very good. Then sin entered, as rebellion against God.
1455 Adam was driven out of paradise and was brought along with
1456 the untold millions of following generations under curse and
1457 ruin. That was the work of sin. Here we learn its nature and
1458 power.

1459

1460 Come further on and see the ark of Noah on Ararat. So terrible
1461 had godlessness become among men, God saw nothing for it

1462 but to destroy man from off the earth. That was the work of
1463 sin.

1464

1465 Come once more with me to Sinai. God wished to establish his
1466 covenant with a new nation - with the people of Israel. But
1467 because of man's sinfulness, he could do this only by appearing
1468 in darkness and lightning so terrible that Moses said: 'I
1469 exceedingly fear and quake' (Heb. 12.2 1). And before the end
1470 of the giving of the law that awful message came: 'Cursed is
1471 every one that continueth not in all things which are written in
1472 the book of the law to do them' (Gal. 3. 10). It was sin which
1473 made that necessary.

1474

1475 Come once more with me, and this time to Calvary There see
1476 what sin is, and the hatred and enmity with which the world
1477 cast out and crucified the Son of God. There sin reached its
1478 climax. There Christ was, by God himself, made sin, and
1479 became a curse, as the only way to destroy sin. In the agony in
1480 which he prayed in Gethsemane, that he might not drink the
1481 terrible cup, and in the agony in which on the cross, in the deep
1482 darkness of desertion, he cried out: 'My God, my God, why
1483 hast thou forsaken me?' we obtain at least some faint idea of
1484 the curse and indescribable suffering which sin brings. If
1485 anything can make us hate and detest sin, it is Christ on the
1486 cross.

1487

1488 Come once again with me to the judgment seat of the Great
1489 Day, and see the bottomless pit of darkness wherein countless
1490 souls will be plunged under the sentence: 'Depart from me, ye
1491 cursed, into everlasting fire' (Matt. 25.41). Oh, will not these
1492 words soften our hearts and fill us with a never-to-be-forgotten
1493 horror of sin, so that we may hate it with a perfect hatred?

1494

1495 And now is there anything else that can help us to understand
1496 what sin is? Yes, there is. Turn your eyes inward, and behold
1497 your own heart, and see sin there. Remember that all you have
1498 already seen of the hatefulness and godlessness of sin should
1499 teach you what sin in your own heart means - all the enmity
1500 against God, all the ruin of men, all of its inner nature of
1501 hatefulness, lie hidden in the sin you have committed, guilt of
1502 every transgression against God. And when you remember that
1503 you are a child of God, and yet commit sin and allow it
1504 sometimes to fulfill its lusts, is it not fitting that you should cry
1505 out with shame: 'Woe is me, because of my sin'? 'Depart from
1506 me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord' (Luke 5:8).

1507

1508 One great power of sin is that it blinds men so that they do not
1509 recognise its true character. Even the Christian himself finds an
1510 excuse in the thought that he can never be perfect and that
1511 daily sin is a necessity. He is so accustomed to the thought of
1512 sinning that he has almost lost the power and ability of
1513 mourning over sin. And yet there can be no real progress in
1514 grace apart from an increased consciousness of the sin and
1515 guilt of every transgression against God. And there cannot be a
1516 more important question than this: 'How can I regain the lost
1517 tenderness of conscience and become prepared really to offer
1518 to God the sacrifice of a broken heart?'

1519

1520 Scripture teaches us the way. Let the Christian remember what
1521 God thinks about sin - the hatred with which his holiness bums
1522 against it, the solemn sacrifice which he made to conquer sin,
1523 and deliver us from it. Let him tarry in God's presence till his
1524 holiness shines upon him, and he cries out with Isaiah: 'Woe is
1525 me! for I am undone' (Isa. 6.5).

1526

1527 Let him remember the cross, and what the love of Christ had to
1528 endure there, through the unspeakable pain which sin caused
1529 him; and let him ask if this will not teach him to hearken to the
1530 voice which says: 'Oh, do not this abominable thing which I
1531 hate' (Jer. 44.4). Let him take time, so that the blood and love
1532 of the cross may exercise their full influence on him, and let
1533 him think of sin as nothing less than giving his hand to Satan
1534 and to his power. Is not this a terrible result of our
1535 prayerlessness, and of our short and hasty tarrying before God
1536 - that the true knowledge of sin is almost lost?

1537

1538 Let the believer think not only of what redemption has cost
1539 Christ, but also of the fact that Christ is offered to him, by the
1540 Holy Spirit, as a gift of inconceivable grace, through whom
1541 divine forgiveness and purification and renewing have taken
1542 possession of him; and let him ask himself with what return
1543 such love should be repaid. If only time were taken to tarry in
1544 God's presence and ask such questions, the Spirit of God
1545 would accomplish his work of conviction of sin in us and
1546 would teach us to take an entirely new standpoint, and would
1547 give us a new view of sin. The thought would begin to arise in
1548 our hearts that we have in very deed been redeemed, so that in
1549 the power of Christ we may live every day as partners in the
1550 great victory which Christ obtained over sin on the cross, and
1551 manifest it in our walk.

1552

1553 What think you? Do you not begin to see that the sin of
1554 prayerlessness has had a more terrible effect than you at first
1555 supposed? It is because of this hasty and superficial converse
1556 with God that the sense of sin is so weak and that no motives
1557 have power to help you to hate and flee from sin as you ought.

1558 Nothing, nothing except the hidden, humble, constant
1559 fellowship with God can teach you, as a child of God, to hate
1560 sin as God wants you to hate it. Nothing, nothing but the
1561 constant nearness and unceasing power of the living Christ can
1562 make it possible for you rightly to understand what sin is and
1563 to detest it. And without this deeper understanding of sin, there
1564 will be no thought of appropriating the victory which is made
1565 possible for you in Christ Jesus, and will be wrought in you by
1566 the Spirit.

1567
1568 O my God, cause me to know my sin and teaching me to tarry
1569 before thee and to wait on thee till thy Spirit causes something
1570 of thy holiness to rest upon me! O my God, cause me to know
1571 my sin, and let this drive me to listen to the promise: 'He that
1572 abideth in him sinneth not,' and to expect the fulfillment from
1573 Thee!

1574
1575 The Holiness of God

1576
1577 It has often been said that the conception of sin and of the
1578 holiness of God has been lost in the Church. In the inner
1579 chamber we have the place where we may team again how to
1580 give God's holiness the position it should have in our faith and
1581 life. If you do not know how to spend half an hour in prayer,
1582 take up the subject of God's holiness. Bow before him. Give
1583 yourself time, and give God also time, that he and you may
1584 come into touch with one another. It is a great work, but one
1585 fraught with great blessing.

1586
1587 If you wish to strengthen yourself in the practice of this holy
1588 presence, take up the holy word. Take, for instance, the book
1589 of Leviticus and notice how God seven times gives the

1590 command: 'Ye shall be holy, for I am holy' (11.44, 45; 19.2;
1591 20.7, 26; 21.8; 22.32). Still more frequent is the expression: 'I
1592 am the Lord that doth sanctify you.' This great thought is taken
1593 over into the New Testament. Peter says (1 Pet. 1. 15, 16): 'Be
1594 ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be
1595 ye holy; for I am holy.' Paul writes in his first epistle (1 Thess.
1596 3.13; 4.7; 5.24): 'he may stablish your hearts unblameable in
1597 holiness.... God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto
1598 holiness... Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.'

1599
1600 Nothing but the knowledge of God, as the holy one, will make
1601 us holy. And how are we to obtain that knowledge of God,
1602 save in the inner chamber? It is a thing utterly impossible
1603 unless we take time and allow the holiness of God to shine on
1604 us. How can any man on earth obtain intimate knowledge of
1605 another man of remarkable wisdom, if he does not associate
1606 with him, and place himself under his influence? And how can
1607 God himself sanctify us, if we do not take time to be brought
1608 under the power of the glory of his holiness? Nowhere can we
1609 get to know the holiness of God, and come under its influence
1610 and power, save in the-inner chamber. It has been well said:
1611 'No man can expect to make progress in holiness who is not
1612 often and long alone with God.'

1613
1614 And what now is this holiness of God? It is the highest and
1615 most glorious and most all-embracing of all the attributes of
1616 God. Holiness is the most profound word in the Bible. It is a
1617 word that is at home in heaven. Both the Old and New
1618 Testaments tell us this. Isaiah heard the seraphs with veiled
1619 faces cry out: 'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts' (6.3). John
1620 heard the four living creatures say: 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God
1621 Almighty' (Rev. 4. 8). This is the highest expression of God's

1622 glory in heaven, by beings who live in his immediate presence
1623 and bow low before him. And dare we imagine that we, by
1624 thinking, and reading, and bearing, can understand or become
1625 partakers of the holiness of God? What folly! Oh, that we
1626 might begin to thank God that we have a place in the inner
1627 chamber, a place where we can be alone with him, and take
1628 time for the prayer: 'Let thy holiness, O Lord, shine more and
1629 more into our hearts, that they may become holy.'

1630
1631 And let our hearts be deeply ashamed of our prayerlessness,
1632 through which we have made it impossible for God to impart
1633 his holiness to us. Let us beseech God fervently to forgive us
1634 this sin, and to allure us by his heavenly grace, and to
1635 strengthen us to have fellowship with him, the holy God.

1636
1637 I have said that the meaning of the words, 'The holiness of
1638 God', is not easily expressed. But we may begin by saying that
1639 they imply the unspeakable aversion and hatred with which
1640 God regards sin. And if you wish to understand what that
1641 means, remember that he preferred to see his Son die, rather
1642 than that sin should reign. Think of the Son of God, who gave
1643 up his life rather than act in the least matter against the will of
1644 the Father. Still further, he had such a hatred of sin that he
1645 preferred to die rather than that men should be held in its
1646 power. That is something of the holiness of God, which is a
1647 pledge that he will do everything for us - for you and me - to
1648 deliver us from sin. Holiness is the fire of God that will
1649 consume sin in us and make us holy sacrifices, pure and
1650 acceptable before him. It was for this reason that the Spirit
1651 came down as fire. He is the Spirit of God's holiness, the Spirit
1652 of sanctification in us.
1653

1654 Oh, think over the holiness of God, and bow in lowliness
1655 before him, till your heart is filled with the assurance of what
1656 the holy one will do for you. Take a week, if necessary, to read
1657 and re-read the words of God on this great truth, till your heart
1658 is brought under the conviction: 'This is the glory of the inner
1659 chamber, to converse with God the holy one; to bow down in
1660 deep humility and shame before him, because we have so
1661 despised him and his love through our prayerlessness.' There
1662 we shall receive the assurance that he will again take us into-
1663 fellowship with himself. No one can expect to understand and
1664 receive the holiness of God who is not often and long alone
1665 with God.

1666
1667 Someone has said that the holiness of God is the expression of
1668 the unspeakable distance by which he in his righteousness is
1669 separated from us, and yet also of the unspeakable nearness in
1670 which he in his love longs to hold fellowship with us and dwell
1671 in us. Bow in humble reverence, as you think of the
1672 immeasurable distance between you and God. Bow in childlike
1673 confidence in the unspeakable desire of his love to be united
1674 with you in the deepest intimacy; and reckon most confidently
1675 on him to reveal something of his holiness to the soul which
1676 thirst after him and waits upon him and is quiet before him.

1677
1678 Notice how the two sides of the holiness of God are united in
1679 the cross. So terrible was the aversion and anger of God
1680 against our sin that Christ was left in the thick darkness,
1681 because God, when sin was laid upon him, had to hide his face
1682 from him. And yet so deep was the love of God toward us and
1683 he so desired to be united to us that he spared not his Son but
1684 gave him over to unutterable sufferings, that so he might
1685 receive us, in union with Christ, into his holiness, and press us

1686 to his heart as his beloved children. It was of this suffering that
1687 our Lord Jesus said: 'I sanctify myself, that they also might be
1688 sanctified through the truth' (John 17.19). Thus he is become of
1689 God our sanctification, and we are holy in him.

1690

1691 I beseech you, think not little of the grace that you have a holy
1692 God who longs to make you holy. Think not little of the voice
1693 of God which calls you to give time to him in the stillness of
1694 the inner chamber, so that he may cause his holiness to rest on
1695 you. Let it be your business every day, in the secrecy of the
1696 inner chamber, to meet the holy God. You will be repaid for
1697 the trouble it may cost you. The reward will be sure and rich.
1698 You will learn to hate sin, and to regard it as accursed and
1699 conquered. 'Me new nature will give you a horror of sin. The
1700 living Jesus, the holy God, will, as conqueror, be your power
1701 and strength; and you will begin to believe the great promise
1702 contained in 1 Thessalonians 5.23, 24: 'The very God of peace
1703 sanctify you wholly... Faithful is he that calleth you, who also
1704 will do it.'

1705

1706

1707

1708 Chapter 8

1709

1710 In opposition to sin stands obedience. 'For as by one man's
1711 disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of
1712 one shall many be made righteous... Ye became the servants of
1713 righteousness' (Rom. 5.19; 6.18). In connection with all that
1714 has been said about sin, and the new life, and the reception of
1715 the Holy Spirit, we must always give to obedience the place
1716 assigned to it by God.

1717

1718 It was because Christ humbled himself and became obedient
1719 unto death, yea, the death of the cross, that God so highly
1720 exalted him. And Paul, in this connection, exhorts us: 'Let this
1721 mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus' (Phil. 2.5). We
1722 see, above everything else, that the obedience of Christ, which
1723 was so pleasing to God, must become really the characteristic
1724 of our disposition and of our entire walk. Just as a servant
1725 knows that he must first obey his master in all things, so the
1726 surrender to an implicit and unquestioning obedience must
1727 become the essential characteristic of our lives.
1728

1729 How little this is understood by Christians! How many there
1730 are who allow themselves to be misled, and rest satisfied with
1731 the thought that sin is a necessity, that one must sin every day!
1732 It would be difficult to say how great the harm is which has
1733 been done by this mistake. It is one of the chief causes why the
1734 sin of disobedience is so little recognised. I have myself heard
1735 Christians, speaking about the cause of darkness and weakness,
1736 say, half laughingly: 'Yes, it is just disobedience again.' We try
1737 to get rid of a servant as speedily as possible who is habitually
1738 disobedient, but it is not regarded as anything extraordinary
1739 that a child of God should be disobedient every day.
1740 Disobedience is daily acknowledged, and yet there is no
1741 turning away from it.
1742

1743 Have we not here the reason why so much prayer for the power
1744 of the Holy Spirit is offered, and yet so few answers come? Do
1745 we not see from Acts 5.32 that God has given his Holy Spirit
1746 to them that obey him? Every child of God has received the
1747 Holy Spirit- If he uses the measure of the Holy Spirit which he
1748 has, with the definite purpose of being obedient to the utmost,
1749 then God can and will favour him with further manifestations

1750 of the Spirit's power. But if he permits disobedience to get the
1751 upper hand, day by day, he need not wonder if his prayer for
1752 more of the Spirit remains unanswered.

1753
1754 We have already said that we must not forget that the Spirit
1755 desires to possess more of us. How can we wholly surrender
1756 ourselves to him otherwise than by being obedient? The
1757 Scripture says that we must be led by the Spirit, that we must
1758 walk by the Spirit. My right relationship to the Holy Spirit is
1759 that I allow myself to be guided and ruled by him. Obedience
1760 is the great factor in our whole relationship to God. 'Obey my
1761 voice, and I will be your God' (Jer. 7.23; 11.4).

1762
1763 Mark how the Lord Jesus, on the last night, when giving his
1764 great promise about the Holy Spirit, lays emphasis on this
1765 point. 'If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray
1766 the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter' (John
1767 14.15, 16). Obedience was essential as a preparation for the
1768 reception of the Spirit. And this thought is often repeated by
1769 him. 'He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it
1770 is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my
1771 Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him'
1772 (John 14.21). So also in verse 23: 'If a man love me, he will
1773 keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will
1774 come unto him, and make our abode with him.' 'If ye abide in
1775 me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and
1776 it shall be done unto you' (15.7). 'If ye keep my
1777 commandments, ye shall abide in my love' (verse 10). 'Ye are
1778 my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you' (verse 14).

1779
1780 Can words more plainly or impressively declare that the whole
1781 life, in the new dispensation, following the resurrection of

1782 Christ, depends on obedience? That is the Spirit of Christ. He
1783 lived to do not his own will, but the will of the Father. And he
1784 cannot with his Spirit make an abiding home in the heart of
1785 one who does not surrender himself utterly to a life of
1786 obedience.

1787

1788 Alas, how few there are who are truly concerned because of
1789 this disobedience! How little it is believed that Christ really
1790 asks for and expects this from us because he has undertaken to
1791 make it possible for us. How much is it manifested in prayer,
1792 or walk, or in the depths of the soul-life, that we really
1793 endeavour to be well-pleasing to the Lord in all things? We say
1794 too little in regard to our disobedience. 'I will be sorry for my
1795 sin.'

1796

1797 But is obedience really possible? It is certain for the man who
1798 believes that Christ Jesus is his sanctification and relies on
1799 him.

1800

1801 Just as it is impossible for a man whose eyes have not yet been
1802 opened to see that Christ can at once forgive his sin, so is it
1803 also with faith in the assurance that there is in Christ a sure
1804 promise of power to accomplish all that God desires from his
1805 child. Just as, through faith, we found the fullness of
1806 forgiveness; so through a new act of faith, a real deliverance
1807 from the dominion of the sin which has so easily beset us is
1808 obtained, and the abiding blessing of the continuous
1809 experience of the keeping power of Christ becomes ours. This
1810 faith obtains a new insight into promises the meaning of which
1811 was not previously understood: 'The God of peace ... make you
1812 perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that
1813 which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ' (Heb.

1814 13.20, 21). 'Unto him that is able to keep you from falling ... be
1815 glory and majesty' (Jude 24, 25). 'Give diligence to make your
1816 calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall
1817 never fall' (2 Pet. 1. 10). 'To the end he may stablish your
1818 hearts unblameable in holiness' (1 Thess. 3.13). 'But the Lord
1819 is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil' (2
1820 Thess. 3.3).

1821

1822 When the soul understands that the fulfilment of these and
1823 other promises is secured for us in Christ, and that, as certainly
1824 as the forgiveness of sin is assured to us in him, so also is
1825 power against new or fresh attacks of sin assured to us. Then
1826 for the first time is the lesson learned aright that faith can
1827 confidently rely upon a full Christ and his abiding protection.

1828

1829 This faith sheds a wholly new light on the life of obedience.
1830 Christ holds himself responsible to work this out in me every
1831 moment if I only trust him for it. Then I begin to understand
1832 the important phrase with which Paul begins and closes his
1833 epistle to the Romans (Rom. 1.5; 16.26): 'The obedience of
1834 faith.' Faith brings me to the Lord Jesus, not only to obtain the
1835 forgiveness of sin, but also that I may every moment enjoy the
1836 power which will make it possible for me, as a child of God, to
1837 abide in him and to be numbered among his obedient children
1838 of whom it is written that, as he who has called them is holy, as
1839 they also may be holy in all manner of conversation.
1840 Everything depends on whether or not I believe on the whole
1841 Christ, with the fullness of his grace, that he will, not now and
1842 then but every moment, be the strength of my life. Such faith
1843 will lead to an obedience which will enable me to 'walk worthy
1844 of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good

1845 work... strengthened with all might, according to his glorious
1846 power' (Col. 1.10, 11).

1847

1848 The soul which feeds on such promises will experience now,
1849 instead of the disobedience of self-effort, what the obedience
1850 of faith means. All such promises have their measure, their
1851 certainty, and their strength in the living Christ.

1852

1853 The victorious life

1854

1855 In the chapter on 'The More Abundant Life', we viewed the
1856 matter chiefly from the side of our Lord Jesus. We saw that
1857 there is to be found in him - the crucified, and the risen, and
1858 the glorified one who baptises with the Holy Spirit - all that is
1859 needful for a life of abundant grace. In speaking of the
1860 victorious life, we shall now look at the matter from another
1861 standpoint. We want to see how a Christian can live really as a
1862 victor. We have already often said that the prayer life is not
1863 something which can be improved by itself. It is so intimately
1864 bound up with the entire spiritual life that it is only when that
1865 whole life (previously marked by lack of prayer) becomes
1866 renewed and sanctified that prayer can have its rightful place
1867 of power. We must not be satisfied with less than the
1868 victorious life to which God calls his children.

1869

1870 You remember how our Lord, in the seven epistles in the
1871 Revelation of John, concludes with a promise to those who
1872 overcome. Take the trouble of going over that seven-times
1873 repeated 'him that overcometh'; and notice what unspeakably
1874 glorious promises are there given. And they were given even to
1875 churches like Ephesus, that had lost its first love; and Sardis, to
1876 whom it was said, 'thou hast a name that thou livest, and art

1877 dead' (Rev. 3.1); and Laodicea, with her lukewarmness and self
1878 satisfaction - as proof that, if only they would repent, they
1879 might win the crown of victory. The call comes to every
1880 Christian to strive for the crown. It is impossible to be a
1881 healthy Christian, still more impossible to be a preacher in the
1882 power of God, if everything is not sacrificed to gain the
1883 victory.

1884
1885 The answer to the question, of how we attain to it, is simple.
1886 All is in Christ. 'Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us
1887 to triumph in Christ' (2 Cor. 2.14). 'In all these things we are
1888 more than conquerors through him that loved us' (Rom. 8.37).
1889 All depends on our right relationship to Christ, our entire
1890 surrender, perfect faith, and unbroken fellowship with him. But
1891 you wish to know how to attain to all this. Listen once more to
1892 the simple directions as to the way by which the full enjoyment
1893 of what is prepared for you in Christ may be yours. These are -
1894 a new discovery of sin; a new surrender to Christ; a new faith
1895 in the power which will make it possible for you to persevere.

1896
1897 1. A new discovery of sin

1898
1899 In Romans 3, you find described the knowledge of sin which is
1900 necessary, in repentance, for forgiveness 'That every mouth
1901 may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before
1902 God' (verse 19). There you took your stand, you recognised
1903 your sin more or less consciously, and confessed it, and you
1904 obtained mercy. But if you would lead the victorious life,
1905 something more is needful. This comes with the experience
1906 that in you, that is, in your flesh, there 'dwelleth no good thing'
1907 (Rom. 7.18). You have a delight in the law of God after the
1908 inner man, but you see another law in your members bringing

1909 you into captivity to the law of sin and compelling you to cry
1910 out: 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the
1911 body of this death?' (verse 24). It is not, as it was at
1912 conversion, when you thought over your few or many sins.
1913 This work goes much deeper. You find that, as a Christian, you
1914 have no power to do the good that you wish to do. You must
1915 be brought to a new and deeper insight into the sin of your
1916 nature and into your utter weakness, even though you are a
1917 Christian, to live as you ought. And you will learn to cry out:
1918 'Who shall deliver me; I, wretched man, a prisoner bound
1919 under the law of sin?'

1920

1921 The answer to this question is: 'I thank God through Jesus
1922 Christ our Lord' (Rom. 7.25). Then follows the revelation of
1923 what there is in Christ. It is not just as given in Romans 3. It is
1924 more: I am in Christ Jesus, and 'the law of the Spirit of life in
1925 Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death',
1926 (Rom. 8.2) under which I was bound. It is the experience that
1927 the law or power of the life of the Spirit in Christ has made me
1928 free and now calls on me, in a new sense and by a new
1929 surrender, to acknowledge Christ as the bestower of the
1930 victory.

1931

1932 2. A new surrender to Christ

1933

1934 You may have used these words 'surrender' and 'consecration'
1935 many times, but without rightly understanding what they mean.
1936 As you have been brought by the teaching of Romans 7 to a
1937 complete sense of the hopelessness of leading a true Christian
1938 life, or a true prayer life, by your own efforts, so you feel that
1939 the Lord Jesus must take you up, by his own power, in an
1940 entirely new way; and must take possession of you, by his

1941 Spirit, in an entirely new measure. This alone can preserve you
1942 from constantly sinning afresh. This only can make you really
1943 victorious. This leads you to look away from yourself, really to
1944 get free from yourself, and to expect everything from the Lord
1945 Jesus.

1946

1947 If we begin to understand this, we are prepared to admit that in
1948 our nature there is nothing good, that it is under a curse, and is
1949 nailed with Christ to his cross. We come to see what Paul
1950 means when he says that we are dead to sin by the death of
1951 Christ. Thus do we obtain a share of the glorious resurrection
1952 life there is in him. By such an insight we are encouraged to
1953 believe that Christ, through his life in us, through his continual
1954 indwelling, can keep us. Just as, at our conversion, we had no
1955 rest till we knew he had received us so now we feel the need of
1956 coming to him, to receive from him the assurance that he has
1957 really undertaken to keep us by the power of his resurrection
1958 life. And we feel then that there must be an act as definite as
1959 his reception of us at conversion, by which he gives us the
1960 assurance of victory. And although it appears to us to be too
1961 great and too much, yet the man who casts himself, without
1962 plea, into the arms of Christ will experience that he does
1963 indeed receive us into such a fellowship as will make us, from
1964 the beginning onwards, 'more than conquerors'.

1965

1966 3. A new faith in the power which will make it possible for you
1967 to persevere in your surrender

1968

1969 You have heard of Keswick, and the truth for which it stands.
1970 It is that Christ is prepared to take upon himself the care and
1971 preservation of our lives every day, and all the day long, if we
1972 trust him to do it. In the testimony given by many, this thought

1973 is emphasised. They have told us that they felt themselves
1974 called to a new surrender, to an entire consecration of life to
1975 Christ, reaching to the smallest things, but they were hindered
1976 by the fear of failure. The thirst after holiness, after an
1977 unbroken fellowship with Jesus, after a life of persevering
1978 childlike obedience, drew them one way. But the question
1979 arose: 'Shall I continue faithful?' And to this question there
1980 came no answer, till they believed that the surrender must be
1981 made, not in their own strength, but in a power which was
1982 bestowed by a glorified Lord. He would not only keep them for
1983 the future, but he must first make possible for them the
1984 surrender of faith which expects that future grace. It was in the
1985 power of Christ himself that they were able to present
1986 themselves to him.

1987
1988 O Christian, only believe that there is a victorious life! Christ,
1989 the victor, is your Lord, who will undertake for you in
1990 everything and will enable you to do all that the Father expects
1991 from you. Be of good courage. Will you not trust him to do
1992 this great work for you who has given his life for you and has
1993 forgiven your sins? Only dare, in his power, to surrender
1994 yourself to the life of those who are kept from sin by the power
1995 of God. Along with the deepest conviction that there is no
1996 good in you, confess that you see in the Lord Jesus all the
1997 goodness of which you have need, for the life of a child of
1998 God; and begin literally to live 'by the faith of the Son of God,
1999 who loved me, and gave himself for me' (Gal. 2.20).

2000
2001 Let me, for your encouragement, give the testimony of Bishop
2002 Monte, a man of deep humility and tender piety. When he first
2003 heard of Keswick he was afraid of 'perfectionism' and would
2004 have nothing to do with it. Unexpectedly, during a vacation in

2005 Scotland, he came in contact with some friends at a small
2006 convention. There he heard an address by which he was
2007 convinced how entirely the teaching was according to
2008 Scripture. There was no word about sinlessness in the flesh or
2009 in man. It was a setting forth of how Jesus can keep from sin a
2010 man with a sinful nature. The light shone into his heart. He
2011 who had always been counted a tender Christian came into
2012 touch now with a new experience of what Christ is willing to
2013 do for one who gives himself entirely to him Listen to what he
2014 says on the text: 'I can do all things through Christ which
2015 strengtheneth me' (Phil. 4.13). I dare to say that it is possible
2016 for those who really are willing to reckon on the power of the
2017 Lord, for keeping and victory, to lead a life in which his
2018 promises are taken as they stand, and are found to be true. It is
2019 possible to cast all our care on him daily, and to enjoy deep
2020 peace in doing it. It is possible to have the thoughts and
2021 imaginations of our hearts purified in the deepest meaning of
2022 the word, through faith. It is possible to see the will of God in
2023 everything, and to receive it, not with sighing, but with
2024 singing. It is possible, in the inner life of desire and feeling, to
2025 lay aside all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and evil-
2026 speaking, every day and every hour. It is possible, by taking
2027 complete refuge in divine power, to become strong through
2028 and through; and where previously our greatest weakness lay,
2029 to find that the things which formerly upset all our resolves to
2030 be patient, or pure, or humble, furnish today an opportunity -
2031 through him who loved us, and works in us an agreement with
2032 his will, and a blessed sense of his presence and his power to
2033 make sin powerless. These things are divine possibilities, and
2034 because they are his work, the true experience of them will
2035 always cause us to bow lower at his feet and to learn to thirst
2036 and long for more. We cannot possibly be satisfied with

2037 anything less than - each day, each hour, each moment, in
2038 Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit - to walk with
2039 God.'

2040

2041 Thank God, a life of victory is sure for those who have a
2042 knowledge of their inward ruin and are hopeless in themselves,
2043 but who, in 'the confidence of despair', have looked to Jesus,
2044 and, in faith in his power to make the act of surrender possible
2045 for them, they have done it, in his might, and now rely on him
2046 alone every day and every hour.

2047

2048

2049

2050 Chapter 9

2051

2052 At the conference, a brother who had earnestly confessed his
2053 neglect of prayer, but who was able, later, to declare that his
2054 eyes had been opened to see that the Lord really supplied grace
2055 for all that he required from us, asked if some hints could not
2056 be given as to the best way of spending time profitably in the
2057 inner chamber. There was no opportunity then for giving an
2058 answer. Perhaps the following thoughts may be of help:

2059

2060 1. As you enter the inner chamber let your first work be to
2061 thank God for the unspeakable love which invites you to come
2062 to him and to converse freely with him. If your heart is cold
2063 and head, remember that religion is not a matter of feeling, but
2064 has to do first with the will. Raise your heart to God and thank
2065 him for the assurance you have that he looks down on you and
2066 will bless you. Through such an act of faith you honour God
2067 and draw your soul away from being occupied with itself.
2068 Think also of the glorious grace of the Lord Jesus, who is

2069 willing to teach you to pray and to give you the disposition to
2070 do so. Think, too, of the Holy Spirit who was purposely given
2071 to cry, 'Abba, Father', in your heart, and to help your weakness
2072 in prayer. Five minutes spent thus will strengthen your faith for
2073 your work in the inner chamber. Once more I say, begin with
2074 an act of thanksgiving and praise God for the inner chamber
2075 and the promise of blessing there.

2076
2077 2. You must prepare yourself for prayer by prayerful Bible
2078 study. The great reason why the inner chamber is not attractive
2079 is that people do not know how to pray. Their stock of words is
2080 soon exhausted and they do not know what further to say,
2081 because they forget that prayer is not a soliloquy, where
2082 everything comes from one side; but it is a dialogue, where
2083 God's child listens to what the Father says, and replies to it,
2084 and then asks for the things he needs.

2085
2086 Read a few verses from the Bible. Do not concern yourself
2087 with the difficulties contained in them. You can consider these
2088 later; but take what you understand, apply it to yourself, and
2089 ask the Father to make his word light and power in your heart.
2090 Thus you will have material enough for prayer from the word
2091 which the Father speaks to you; you will also have the liberty
2092 to ask for things you need. Keep on in this way, and the inner
2093 chamber will become at length, not a place where you sigh and
2094 struggle only, but one of living fellowship with the Father in
2095 heaven. Prayerful study of the Bible is indispensable for
2096 powerful prayer.

2097
2098 3. When you have thus received the word into your heart, turn
2099 to prayer. But do not attempt it hastily or thoughtlessly, as
2100 though you knew well enough how to pray. Prayer in our own

2101 strength brings no blessing. Take time to present yourself
2102 reverently and in quietness before God. Remember his
2103 greatness and holiness and love. Think over what you wish to
2104 ask from him. Do not be satisfied with going over the same
2105 things every day. No child goes on saying the same thing day
2106 after day to his earthly father .

2107

2108 Converse with the Father is coloured by the needs of the day.
2109 Let your prayer be something definite, arising either out of the
2110 word which you have read, or out of the real soul-needs which
2111 you long to have satisfied. Let your prayer be so definite that
2112 you can say as you go out, 'I know what I have asked from my
2113 Father, and I expect an answer.' It is a good plan sometimes to
2114 take a piece of paper and write down what you wish to pray
2115 for. You might keep such a paper for a week or more, and
2116 repeat the prayers till some new need arises.

2117

2118 4. What has been said is in reference to your own needs. But
2119 you know that we are allowed to Pray that we may help also in
2120 the needs of others. One great reason why prayer in the inner
2121 chamber does not bring more joy and blessing is that it is too
2122 selfish, and selfishness is the death of prayer.

2123

2124 Remember your family; your congregation, with its interests;
2125 your own neighbourhood; and the church to which you belong.
2126 Let your heart be enlarged and take up the interests of missions
2127 and of the church through the whole world. Become an
2128 intercessor, and you will experience for the first time the
2129 blessedness of prayer, as you find out that God will make use
2130 of you to share his blessing with others through prayer. You
2131 will begin to feel that there is something worth living for, as
2132 you find that you have something to say to God, and that he

2133 from heaven will do things in answer to your prayers which
2134 otherwise would not have been done.

2135

2136 A child can ask his father for bread. A full-grown son
2137 converses with him about all the interests of his business, and
2138 about his further purposes. A weak child of God prays only for
2139 himself, but a full-grown man in Christ understands how to
2140 consult with God over what must take place in the kingdom.
2141 Let your prayer list bear the names of those for whom you pray
2142 - your minister, and all other ministers, and the different
2143 missionary affairs with which you are connected. Thus the
2144 inner chamber will really become a wonder of God's goodness
2145 and a fountain of great joy. It will become the most blessed
2146 place on earth. It is a great thing to say, but it is the simple
2147 truth, that God will make it a Bethel, where his angels shall
2148 ascend and descend, and where you will cry out: 'The Lord
2149 shall be my God.' He will make it also Peniel, where you will
2150 see the face of God, as a prince of God, as one who wrestled
2151 with the angel and overcame him.

2152

2153 5. Do not forget the close bond between the inner chamber and
2154 the outer world. The attitude of the inner chamber must remain
2155 with us all the day. The object of the inner chamber is so to
2156 unite us to God that we may have him always abiding with us.
2157 Sin, thoughtlessness, and yielding to the flesh, or to the world
2158 unfit us for the inner chamber and bring a cloud over the soul.
2159 If you have stumbled, or fallen, return to the inner chamber; let
2160 your first work be to invoke the blood of Jesus and to claim
2161 cleansing by it. Rest not till by confession you have repented
2162 of and put away your sin. Let the precious blood really give
2163 you a fresh freedom of approach to God. Remember that the
2164 roots of your life in the inner chamber strike far out in body

2165 and soul so as to manifest themselves in business life. Let 'the
2166 obedience of faith', in which you pray in secret, rule you
2167 constantly. The inner chamber is intended to bind man to God,
2168 to supply him with power from God, to enable him to live for
2169 God alone. God be thanked for the inner chamber and for the
2170 blessed life which he will enable us there to experience and
2171 nourish.

2172
2173 Time

2174
2175 Before the creation of the world time did not exist. God lived
2176 in eternity in a way which we little understand. With creation,
2177 time began, and everything was placed under its power. God
2178 has placed all living creatures under a law of slow growth.
2179 Think of the length of time it takes for a child to become a man
2180 in body and mind. In learning, in wisdom, in business, in
2181 handicraft, and in politics, everything somehow depends on
2182 patience and perseverance. Everything needs time.

2183
2184 It is just the same in religion. There can be no converse with a
2185 holy God, no fellowship between heaven and earth, no power
2186 for the salvation of the souls of others, unless much time is set
2187 apart for it. Just as it is necessary for a child for long years to
2188 eat and learn every day, so the life of grace entirely depends on
2189 the time men are willing to give to it day by day.

2190
2191 The minister is appointed by God to teach and help those who
2192 are engaged in the ordinary avocations of life to find time and
2193 to use it aright for the preservation of the spiritual life. The
2194 minister cannot do this unless he himself has a living
2195 experience of a life of prayer. His highest calling is not
2196 preaching, or speaking, or parochial visitation, but it is to

2197 cultivate the life of God daily, and to be a witness of what the
2198 Lord teaches him and accomplishes in him.

2199

2200 Was it not so with the Lord Jesus? Why must he, who had no
2201 sin to confess, sometimes spend all night in prayer to God?
2202 Because the divine life had to be strengthened in intercourse
2203 with his Father. His experience of a life in which he took time
2204 for fellowship with God has enabled him to share that life with
2205 us.

2206

2207 Oh, that each minister might understand that he has received
2208 his time from God with a servitude on it! God must have for
2209 fellowship with himself the first and the best of your time.
2210 Without this, your preaching and labour have little power.
2211 Here on earth I may spend my time for the money or the
2212 learning which I receive in exchange. The minister can
2213 exchange his time for the divine power and the spiritual
2214 blessings to be obtained from heaven. That, and nothing else,
2215 makes him a man of God and ensures that his preaching will be
2216 in the demonstration of the Spirit and power.

2217

2218

2219

2220 Chapter 10

2221

2222 'Be Ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.' I
2223 Corinthians 11. 1

2224

2225 1. Paul was a minister who prayed much for his congregation

2226

2227 Let us read his words prayerfully and calmly so that we may
2228 hear the voice of the Spirit.

2229

2230 'Night and day praying exceedingly that we ... might perfect
2231 that which is lacking in your faith... The Lord make you to
2232 increase ... to the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable
2233 in holiness' (1 Thess. 3.10-13). 'The very God of peace sanctify
2234 you wholly' (I Thess. 5.23).

2235

2236 What food for meditation!

2237

2238 'Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself ... comfort your hearts, and
2239 stablish you in every good word and work' (2 Thess. 2.16, 17).

2240

2241 'Without ceasing, I make mention of you always in my prayers;
2242 Making request...that I may impart unto you some spiritual
2243 gift, to the end ye may be established' (Rom. 1.9-11).

2244

2245 'My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they
2246 might be saved' (Rom. 10. 1).

2247

2248 'I ... cease not ... making mention of you in my prayers; that
2249 God ... may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation
2250 in the knowledge of him ... that ye may know ... what is the
2251 exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe'
2252 (Eph. 1. 16-19).

2253

2254 'For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father ... that he would
2255 grant you ... to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the
2256 inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that
2257 ye, being rooted ... in love ... might be filled with all the
2258 fullness of God' (Eph. 3:14-19).

2259

2260 'Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request
2261 with joy ... I pray, that your love may abound yet more and
2262 more ... that ye may be sincere ... filled with the fruits of
2263 righteousness' (Phil. 1.4, 9-11).

2264
2265 'But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches
2266 in glory by Christ Jesus' (Phil. 4.19).

2267
2268 'We ... do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might
2269 be filled with the knowledge of his will ... that ye might walk
2270 worthy of the Lord ... strengthened with all might according to
2271 his glorious power' (Col. 1.9-11). 'I would that ye knew what
2272 great conflict I have for you ... as many as have not seen my
2273 face in the flesh; that their hearts might be comforted, being
2274 knit together in love' (Col. 2.1, 2).

2275
2276 What a study for the inner chamber! These passages teach us
2277 that unceasing prayer formed a large part of Paul's service in
2278 the gospel; we see the high spiritual aim which he set before
2279 himself, in his work on behalf of believers; and the tender and
2280 self-sacrificing love with which he ever continued to think of
2281 the Church and its needs. Let us ask God to bring each one of
2282 us, and all the ministers of his word, to a life of which such
2283 prayer is the healthy and natural outflow. We shall need to turn
2284 again and again to these pages if we would really be brought
2285 by the Spirit to the apostolic life which God has given us as an
2286 example.

2287
2288 2. Paul was a minister who asked his congregation to pray
2289 much

2290
2291 Read again with prayerful attention:

2292

2293 'I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and
2294 for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in
2295 your prayers to God for me; that I may be delivered from them
2296 that do not believe in Judea' (Rom. 15.30,31). 'We ... trust ... in
2297 God ... that he will yet deliver us; Ye also helping together by
2298 prayer for us' (2 Cor. 1.9-11).

2299

2300 'Praying always, with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit,
2301 and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication
2302 for all saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me,
2303 that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery
2304 of the gospel ... as I ought to speak' (Eph. 6.18-20).

2305

2306 'For I know that this shall turn to my salvation, through your
2307 prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ' (Phil. 1.
2308 19).

2309

2310 'Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;
2311 withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door
2312 of utterance, to speak ... as I ought to speak' (Col. 4.2-4).

2313

2314 'Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may
2315 have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you' (2
2316 Thess. 3. 1).

2317

2318 What a deep insight Paul had as to the unity of the body of
2319 Christ and the relation of the members one to another! It is as
2320 we permit the Holy Spirit to work powerfully in us that he will
2321 reveal this truth to us, and we too shall have this insight. What
2322 a glimpse he gives us of the power of the spiritual life among
2323 these Christians, by the way in which he reckoned that at

2324 Rome, and Corinth, and Ephesus, and Colossae, and Philippi,
2325 there were men and women on whom he could rely for prayer
2326 that would reach heaven and have power with God! And what
2327 a lesson for all ministers, to lead them to inquire if they truly
2328 appreciate the unity of the body at its right value; if they are
2329 endeavouring to train up Christians as intercessors; and if they
2330 indeed understand that Paul had that confidence because he
2331 was himself so strong in prayer for the congregation! Let us
2332 learn the lesson and beseech God that ministers and
2333 congregations together may grow in the grace of prayer, so that
2334 their entire service and Christian life may witness that the
2335 Spirit of prayer rules them. Then we may be confident that
2336 God will avenge his own elect which cry out day and night
2337 unto him.

2338
2339 Ministers of the Spirit

2340
2341 What is the meaning of the expression: the minister of the
2342 gospel is a minister of the Spirit (see 2 Cor. 3.6, 8)? It means:

2343
2344 1. That the preacher is entirely under the power and control of
2345 the Spirit, so that he may be led and used by the Spirit as he
2346 wills.

2347
2348 2. Many pray for the -Spirit, that they may make use of him
2349 and his power for their work. This is certainly wrong. It is he
2350 who must use you. Your relationship toward him must be one
2351 of deep dependence and utter submission. The Spirit must have
2352 you entirely, and always, and in all things under his power.

2353
2354 3. There are many who think they must preach the word only,
2355 and that the Spirit will make the word fruitful. They do not

2356 understand that it is the Spirit in and through the preacher who
2357 will bring the word to the heart. I must not be satisfied with
2358 praying to God to bless, through the operation of his Spirit, the
2359 word that I preach. The Lord wants me to be filled with the
2360 Spirit: then I shall speak aright and my preaching will be in the
2361 manifestation of the Spirit and power.

2362

2363 4. We see this on the day of Pentecost. They were filled with
2364 the Spirit and began to speak, and spoke with power through
2365 the Spirit who was in them.

2366

2367 5. Thus we learn what the relationship of the minister toward
2368 the Spirit should be. He must have a strong belief that the
2369 Spirit is in him, that the Spirit will teach him in his daily life
2370 and will strengthen him to bear witness to the Lord Jesus in his
2371 preaching and visiting; he must live in ceaseless prayer that he
2372 may be kept and strengthened by the power of the Spirit.

2373

2374 6. When the Lord promised the apostles that they should
2375 receive power when the Holy Spirit had come upon them and
2376 commanded them to wait for him, it was as though he had said:
2377 'Do not dare to preach without this power. It is the
2378 indispensable preparation for your work. Everything depends
2379 on it.'

2380

2381 7. What then is the lesson we may learn from the phrase
2382 'ministers of the Spirit'? Alas, how little we have understood
2383 this! How little have we lived in it! How little have we
2384 experienced of the power of the Holy Spirit! What must we do
2385 then? There must be deep confession of guilt, that we have so
2386 constantly grieved the Spirit, because we have not lived daily
2387 as his ministers; and simple childlike surrender to his leading

2388 in sure confidence that the Lord will work a change in us; and
2389 further, daily fellowship with the Lord Jesus in ceaseless
2390 prayer. He will bestow on us the Holy Spirit as rivers of living
2391 water.

2392

2393

2394

2395

2396 Chapter 11

2397

2398 Little of the word with little prayer is death to the spiritual life.
2399 Much of the word with little prayer gives a sickly life. Much
2400 prayer with little of the word gives more life, but without
2401 steadfastness. A full measure of the word and prayer each day
2402 gives a healthy and powerful life. Think of the Lord Jesus. In
2403 his youth and manhood he treasured the word in his heart. In
2404 the temptation in the wilderness, and on every opportunity that
2405 presented itself - till he cried out on the cross in death, 'My
2406 God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' (Matt. 27.46). He
2407 showed that the word of God filled his heart. And in his prayer
2408 life he manifested two things: first, that the word supplies us
2409 with material for prayer and encourages us in expecting
2410 everything from God. The second is that it is only by prayer
2411 that we can live such a life that every word of God can be
2412 fulfilled in us. And how then can we come to this, so that the
2413 word and prayer may each have its undivided right over us?
2414 There is only one answer. Our lives must be wholly
2415 transformed. We must get a new, a healthy, a heavenly life, in
2416 which the hunger after God's word and the thirst after God
2417 express themselves in prayer as naturally as do the needs of
2418 our earthly life. Every manifestation of the power of the flesh
2419 in us and the weakness of our spiritual life must drive us to the

2420 conviction that God will, through the powerful operation of his
2421 Holy Spirit, work out a new and strong life in US.

2422
2423 Oh, that we but understood that the Holy Spirit is essentially
2424 the Spirit of the word and the Spirit of prayer! He will cause
2425 the word to become a joy and a light in our souls, and he will
2426 also most surely help us in prayer to know the mind and will of
2427 God, and find in it our delight. If we as ministers wish to
2428 explain these things and to train God's people for the
2429 inheritance which is prepared for them, then we must commit
2430 ourselves from this moment forward to the leading of the Holy
2431 Spirit; must, in faith in what he will do in us, appropriate the
2432 heavenly life of Christ as he lived it here on earth, with certain
2433 expectation that the Spirit, who filled him with the word and
2434 prayer, will also accomplish that work in us,

2435
2436 Yes, let us believe that the Spirit who is in us is the Spirit of
2437 the Lord Jesus, and that he is in us to make us truly partakers
2438 of his life. If we firmly believe this and set our hearts upon it,
2439 then there will come a change in our intercourse with the word
2440 and prayer such as we could not have thought possible. Believe
2441 it firmly; expect it surely.

2442
2443 We are familiar with the vision of the valley of dry bones. We
2444 know that the Lord said to the prophet: 'Prophesy upon these
2445 bones ... Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye
2446 shall live' (Ezek. 37.4, 5). And we know how, when he had
2447 done this, there was a noise, and bone came together to its
2448 bone, and flesh came up, and skin covered them - but there was
2449 no breath in them. The prophesying to the bones - the
2450 preaching of the word of God - had a powerful influence. It
2451 was the beginning of the great miracle which was about to

2452 happen, and there lay an entire army of men newly made. It
2453 was the beginning of the work of life in them, but there was no
2454 spirit there.

2455
2456 How then the Lord said to the prophet: 'Prophesy unto the
2457 wind ... Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O
2458 breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live' (verse
2459 9). And when the prophet had done this, the Spirit came upon
2460 them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a very great army.
2461 Prophesying to the bones, that is, preaching, has accomplished
2462 a great work. There lay the beautiful new bodies. But the
2463 prophesying to the Spirit, 'Come, O Spirit', that is, prayer,
2464 accomplished a far more wonderful thing. The power of the
2465 Spirit was revealed through prayer.

2466
2467 Is not the work of our ministers mostly this prophesying to dry
2468 bones in making known the promises of God? This is followed
2469 sometimes by great results. Everything which belongs to the
2470 form of godliness has been brought to perfection; a careless
2471 congregation becomes regular and devout, but it remains true
2472 for the most part: 'There is no life in them. 'Preaching must be
2473 followed by prayer. The preacher must come to see that his
2474 preaching is comparatively powerless to bring in a new life till
2475 he begins to take time for prayer and, according to the teaching
2476 of God's word, strives and labours and continues in prayer, and
2477 takes no rest, and gives God no rest, till he bestows the Spirit
2478 in overflowing power.

2479
2480 Do you not feel that a change must come in our work? We
2481 must learn from Peter to continue in prayer in our ministry of
2482 the word. Just as we are zealous preachers, we must be zealous
2483 in prayer. We must, with all our power, constantly like Paul,

2484 pray unceasingly. For the prayer: 'Come, breathe on these slain'
2485 (Ezek. 37.9), the answer is sure.

2486

2487 Wholeheartedness

2488

2489 Experience teaches us that if anyone is engaged in a work in
2490 which he is not wholehearted, he will seldom succeed. Just
2491 think of a student, or his teacher, a man of business, or a
2492 warrior. He who does not give himself wholeheartedly to his
2493 calling is not likely to succeed. And that is still more true of
2494 religion, and above all of the high and holy task of intercourse
2495 in prayer with a holy God and of being always well pleasing to
2496 him. It is because of this that God has said so impressively: 'Ye
2497 shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with
2498 all your heart' (Jer. 29.13).

2499

2500 As also more than one of God's servants has said: 'I seek thee
2501 with my whole heart.' Have you ever thought how many
2502 Christians there are of whom it is all too plain that they do not
2503 seek God with the whole heart? When they were in trouble
2504 over their sins, they seemed to seek God with the whole heart.
2505 But when they knew that they had been pardoned one could
2506 see by their lives that they were religious, it is true but no one
2507 would think: 'This man has surrendered himself with his whole
2508 heart to follow God, and to serve him as the supreme work of
2509 his life.'

2510

2511 How is it with you? What does your heart say? While you, as
2512 minister, for instance, have given yourself up with
2513 wholehearted devotion to fulfil your office faithfully and
2514 zealously, will you not perhaps acknowledge: 'I fear, or rather
2515 I am convinced, that my unsatisfactory prayer life is to be

2516 attributed to nothing else than that I have not lived with a
2517 wholehearted surrender of all on earth that could hinder me in
2518 fellowship with God.' What a deeply important question to
2519 consider in the inner chamber and to give the answer to God!
2520 How important to arrive at a plain answer and to utter it all
2521 before God! Prayerlessness cannot be overcome as an isolated
2522 thing. It is in the closest relationship to the state of the heart.
2523 True prayer depends on an undivided heart.

2524
2525 But I cannot give myself that undivided heart which can enable
2526 me to say: 'I seek God with my whole heart.' No, that is
2527 impossible for you, but God will do it. 'I will give them an
2528 heart to know me' (Jer. 24.7). 'I will ... write it [my law] [as a
2529 power of life] in their hearts' (Jer. 31.33; Heb. 8. 10). Such
2530 promises serve to awaken desire. How ever weak the desire
2531 may be, if there is but the sincere determination to strive after
2532 what God holds out to us, then he will himself work in our
2533 hearts both to will and to do. It is the great work of the Holy
2534 Spirit in us to make us willing and to enable us to seek God
2535 with the whole heart. May there not be found in us confusion
2536 of face because, while we have given ourselves to so many
2537 earthly things with all our heart and strength, yet if anything is
2538 said about fellowship with our glorious God it so little affects
2539 us that we have not sought him with the whole heart.

2540

2541

2542

2543 Chapter 12

2544

2545 The Lord did not speak these words to all who believed on
2546 him, or who hoped to be blessed by him, but to those whom he
2547 would make fishers of men. He said this not only at the first

2548 calling of the apostles, but also later on to Peter: 'Henceforth
2549 thou shalt catch men' (Luke 5. 10). The holy art of winning
2550 souls, of loving and saving them, can be learned only in close
2551 and persistent intercourse with Christ. What a lesson for
2552 ministers and for Christian workers and others! This
2553 intercourse was the great and peculiar privilege of his
2554 disciples. The Lord chose them that they might be always with
2555 and near him. We read of the choice of the twelve apostles in
2556 Mark 3.14: 'And he ordained twelve, that they should be with
2557 him, and that he might send them forth to preach. 'So also our
2558 Lord said on the last night (John 15.27): 'And ye also shall bear
2559 witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.'

2560

2561 This fact was noticed by outsiders. Thus, for instance, the
2562 woman who spoke to Peter: 'This fellow was also with Jesus'
2563 (Matt. 26.71). So in the Sanhedrin: 'They took knowledge of
2564 them, that they had been with Jesus' (Acts 4.13). The chief
2565 characteristic and indispensable qualification for the man who
2566 will bear witness to Christ is that he has been with him.
2567 Continuous fellowship with Christ is the only school for the
2568 training of ministers of the Holy Spirit. What a lesson for all
2569 ministers! It is only he who, like Caleb, follows the Lord fully,
2570 who will have power to teach other souls the art of following
2571 Jesus. But what an unspeakable grace that the Lord Jesus
2572 himself would train us after his own likeness, so that others
2573 may learn from us! Then we might say with Paul to our
2574 converts: 'Ye became followers of us, and of the Lord...' (I
2575 Thess. 1. 6), 'Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of
2576 Christ' (1 Cor. 11.1).

2577

2578 Never was there a teacher who took such trouble with his
2579 scholars as Jesus Christ will with us who preach his word. He

2580 will spare no pains; no time will be too precious or too long for
2581 him. In the love which brought him to the cross, he would hold
2582 intercourse, converse with us, fashion us, sanctify us, and
2583 make us fit for his holy service. Dare we still complain that it
2584 is too much for us to spend so much time in prayer? Shall we
2585 not commit ourselves entirely to the love which gave up all for
2586 us, and look upon it as our greatest happiness now to hold
2587 fellowship with him daily? Oh, all you who long for blessing
2588 in your ministry, he calls you to be with him. Let this be the
2589 greatest joy of your life; it will be the surest preparation for
2590 blessing in your service. O my Lord, draw me, help me, hold
2591 me fast, and teach me how daily to live in thy fellowship by
2592 faith.

2593
2594 The Holy Trinity

2595
2596 1. God is an ever flowing fountain of pure love and
2597 blessedness.

2598
2599 2. Christ is the reservoir wherein the fullness of God was made
2600 visible as grace, and has been opened for us.

2601
2602 3. The Holy Spirit is the stream of living water that flows from
2603 under the throne of God and of the Lamb.

2604
2605 4. The redeemed, God's believing children, are the channels
2606 through which the love of the Father, the grace of Christ, and
2607 the powerful operation of the Spirit are brought to the earth,
2608 there to be imparted to others.

2609
2610 5. What an impression we gain here of the wonderful
2611 partnership into which God takes us up, as dispensers of the

2612 grace of God! Prayer, when we chiefly pray for ourselves, is
2613 but the beginning of the life of prayer. The glory of prayer is
2614 that we have power as intercessors to bring the grace of Christ,
2615 and the energising power of the Spirit, upon those souls which
2616 are still in darkness.

2617

2618 6. The more surely the channel is connected with the reservoir,
2619 the more certainly will the water flow unhindered through it.
2620 The more we are occupied in prayer with the fullness of Christ,
2621 and with the Spirit who proceeds from him, and the more
2622 firmly we abide in fellowship with him, the more surely will
2623 our lives be happy and strong. This, however, is still only a
2624 preparation for the reality. The more we give ourselves up to
2625 fellowship and converse with the triune God, the sooner shall
2626 we receive the courage and ability to pray down blessing on
2627 souls, on ministers, and on the Church around us.

2628

2629 7. Are you truly a channel which is always open, so that the
2630 water may flow through you to the thirsty ones in the dry land?
2631 Have you offered yourself unreservedly to God, to become a
2632 bearer of the energising operations of the Holy Spirit?

2633

2634 8. Is it not, perhaps, because you have thought only of yourself
2635 in prayer that you have experienced so little of the power of
2636 prayer? Do understand that the new prayer life into which you
2637 have entered in the Lord Jesus can be sustained and
2638 strengthened only by the intercession in which you labour for
2639 the souls around you, to bring them to know the Lord? Oh,
2640 meditate on this--God an ever flowing fountain of love and
2641 blessing, and I his child, a living channel through which every
2642 day the Spirit and life can be brought to the earth!

2643

2644 Life and Prayer

2645

2646 Our life has a great influence on our prayer, just as our prayer
2647 influences our life. The entire life of man is a continuous
2648 prayer, to nature or to the world, to provide for his wants and
2649 make him happy. This natural prayer and desire can be so
2650 strong in a man who also prays to God that the words of prayer
2651 which his mouth utters cannot be heard. God cannot at times
2652 hear the prayer of your lips because the desires of your heart
2653 after the world cry out to him much more strongly and loudly.

2654

2655 The life exercises a mighty influence over prayer. A worldly
2656 life, a self-seeking life, makes prayer powerless and an answer
2657 impossible. With many Christians there is a conflict between
2658 the life and prayer, and the life holds the upper hand. But
2659 prayer can also exercise a mighty influence over the life. If I
2660 give myself entirely to God in prayer, then prayer can conquer
2661 the life of the flesh and sin. The entire life may be brought
2662 under the control of prayer. Prayer can change and renew the
2663 whole life, because prayer calls in and receives the Lord Jesus
2664 and the Holy Spirit to purify and sanctify the life.

2665

2666 Many think that they must, with their defective spiritual life,
2667 work themselves up to pray more. They do not understand that
2668 only in proportion as the spiritual life is strengthened can the
2669 prayer life increase. Prayer and life are inseparably connected.
2670 What do you think? Which has the stronger influence over
2671 you, prayer for five or ten minutes, or the whole day spent in
2672 the desires of the world? Let it not surprise you if your prayers
2673 are not answered. The reason may easily lie here; your life and
2674 your prayer are at strife with each other; your heart is more
2675 wholly devoted to living than to prayer. Learn this great

2676 lesson: my prayer must rule my whole life. What I request
2677 from God in prayer is not decided in five or ten minutes. I
2678 must learn to say: 'I have prayed with my whole heart. 'What I
2679 desire from God must really fill my heart the whole day; then
2680 the way is open for a certain answer.

2681

2682 Oh, the sacredness and power of prayer, if it takes possession
2683 of the heart and life! It keeps one constantly in fellowship with
2684 God. We can then literally say, 'On thee do I wait all the day'
2685 (Ps. 25.5). Let us be careful to consider not only the length of
2686 the time we spend with God in prayer, but the power with
2687 which our prayer takes possession of our whole life.

2688

2689 Perseverance in Prayer

2690

2691 'It is not reason,' said Peter, 'that we should leave the word of
2692 God, and serve tables' (Acts 6.2). For that work deacons were
2693 chosen. And this word of Peter serves for all time and for all
2694 who are set apart as ministers. 'But we will give ourselves
2695 continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word' (Acts
2696 6.4). Dr Alexander Whyte, in an address, once said: 'I think
2697 sometimes, when my salary is paid to me so faithfully and
2698 punctually: the deacons have performed faithfully their part of
2699 the agreement; have I been so faithful in my part, in
2700 persevering in prayer and the ministry of the word?' Another
2701 minister has said: 'How surprised people would be if I
2702 proposed to divide my time between these two equally, one
2703 half given to prayer, the other to the ministry of the word!'

2704

2705 Notice, in the case of Peter, what perseverance in prayer
2706 meant. He went up on the roof to pray. There, in prayer, he
2707 received heavenly instruction as to his work among the

2708 heathen. There, the message from Cornelius came to him.
2709 There, the Holy Spirit said to him: 'Behold, three men seek
2710 thee. Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them'
2711 (Acts 10. 19-20). And from there he went to Caesarea, where
2712 the Spirit was so unexpectedly outpoured on the heathen. All
2713 this is to teach us that it is through prayer God will give the
2714 instruction of his Spirit to make us understand his will, to let us
2715 know with whom we are to speak, to give us the assurance that
2716 his Spirit will make his word powerful through us.

2717
2718 Have you ever earnestly thought over why it is that you have a
2719 salary and a parsonage, and are set free from the need of
2720 following earthly business? It is for nothing else than that you
2721 should continue in prayer and the ministry of the word. That
2722 will be your wisdom and power. That will be the secret of a
2723 blessed service of the gospel.

2724
2725 No wonder that there is complaint about the ineffective
2726 spiritual life in minister and congregation, while that which is
2727 of prime importance, perseverance in prayer, does not hold its
2728 rightful place-the first place.

2729
2730 Peter was able to speak and act as he did because he was filled
2731 with the Spirit. Let us not be satisfied with anything less than
2732 hearty surrender to and undivided appropriation of the Spirit,
2733 as leader and Lord of our lives. Nothing less will help us.
2734 Then, for the first time, we shall be able to say that God 'hath
2735 made us able ministers ... of his Spirit' (2 Cor. 3.6).

2736
2737 Carnal or Spiritual?
2738

2739 There is a great difference between those two states which is
2740 but little understood or pondered. The Christian who 'walks in
2741 the Spirit' and has 'crucified the flesh' (Gal. 5.24) is spiritual.
2742 The Christian who walks after the flesh and wishes to please
2743 the flesh is carnal (see Rom. 13.14). The Galatians, who had
2744 begun in the Spirit, were ending in the flesh. Yet there were
2745 among them some spiritual members who were able to restore
2746 the wandering with meekness.

2747
2748 What a difference between the carnal and the spiritual
2749 Christian (I Cor. 3.1-3)! With the carnal Christian there may be
2750 much religion and much zeal for God, and for the service of
2751 God. But it is for the most part in human power. With the
2752 spiritual, on the other hand, there is a complete subjection to
2753 the leading of the Spirit, a deep sense of weakness and entire
2754 dependence on the work of Christ-it is a life of abiding
2755 fellowship with Christ, wrought out by the Spirit.

2756
2757 How important for me it is to find out and plainly to
2758 acknowledge before God whether I am spiritual or carnal! A
2759 minister may be very faithful in his orthodoxy, and be most
2760 zealous in his service, and yet be so, chiefly, in the power of
2761 human wisdom and zeal. And one of the signs of this is that
2762 there is little pleasure or perseverance in fellowship with Christ
2763 through prayer. Love of prayer is one of the marks of the
2764 Spirit.

2765
2766 What a change is necessary for a Christian who is chiefly
2767 carnal to become truly spiritual! At first he cannot understand
2768 what must happen, or how it can come to pass. The more the
2769 truth dawns upon him, the more he is convinced that it is
2770 impossible, unless God does it. Yet to believe truly that God

2771 will do it requires earnest prayer. Quiet retirement and
2772 meditation are indispensable, along with the death of all
2773 confidence in ourselves. But along this road there ever comes
2774 the faith that God can, God is willing, God will do it. The soul
2775 which earnestly clings to the Lord Jesus will be led by the
2776 Spirit to this faith.

2777

2778 How will you be able to say to others: I brethren, could not
2779 speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as
2780 unto babes in Christ? (1 Cor. 3. 1). It is impossible unless you
2781 yourself have the experience of having passed from the one
2782 state to the other. But God will teach you. Persevere in prayer
2783 and faith.

2784

2785

2786

2787 Chapter 13

2788

2789 Just as God gave the apostle Paul as an example in his prayer
2790 life for Christians of all time, so he has also given George
2791 Mueller in these latter days as a proof to his church how
2792 literally and wonderfully he still always hears prayer. It is not
2793 only that he gave him in his lifetime over a million pounds
2794 sterling to support his orphanages, but Mr Mueller also stated
2795 that he believed that the Lord had given him more than thirty
2796 thousand souls in answer to prayer. And that not only from
2797 among orphans, but also many others for whom he (in some
2798 cases for fifty years) had prayed faithfully every day, in the
2799 firm faith that they would be saved. When he was asked on
2800 what ground he so firmly believed this, his answer was: "There
2801 are five conditions which I always endeavour to fulfil, in
2802 observing which I have the assurance of answer to my prayer:

2803

2804 1. I have not the least doubt because I am assured that it is the
2805 Lord's will to save them, for he willeth that all men should be
2806 saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (see 1 Tim. 2.4);
2807 and we have the assurance 'that, if we ask anything according
2808 to his will, he heareth us' (1 John 5.14).

2809

2810 2. I have never pleaded for their salvation in my own name, but
2811 in the blessed name of my precious Lord Jesus, and on his
2812 merits alone (see John 14.14).

2813

2814 3. I always firmly believed in the willingness of God to hear
2815 my prayers (see Mark 11.24).

2816

2817 4. I am not conscious of having yielded to any sin, for 'if I
2818 regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me' when I
2819 call (Ps. 66.18).

2820

2821 5. I have persevered in believing prayer for more than fifty-two
2822 years for some, and shall continue till the answer comes: 'Shall
2823 not God avenge his own elect which cry day and night unto
2824 him?' (Luke 18.7).

2825

2826 Take these thoughts into your hearts and practice prayer
2827 according to these rules. Let prayer be not only the utterance of
2828 your desires, but a fellowship with God, till we know by faith
2829 that our prayer is heard. The way George Mueller walked is the
2830 new and living way to the throne of grace, which is open for us
2831 all.

2832

2833 Hudson Taylor

2834

2835 When Hudson Taylor, as a young man, had given himself over
2836 unreservedly to the Lord, there came to him a strong
2837 conviction that God would send him to China. He had read of
2838 George Mueller and how God had answered his prayers for his
2839 own support and that of his orphans, and he began to ask the
2840 Lord to teach him also so to trust him. He felt that if he would
2841 go to China with such faith, he must first begin to live by faith
2842 in England. He asked the Lord to enable him to do this. He had
2843 a position as a doctor's dispenser, and asked God to help him
2844 not to ask for his salary, but to leave it to God to move the
2845 heart of the doctor to pay him at the right time. The doctor was
2846 a good-hearted man, but very irregular in payment. This cost
2847 Taylor much trouble and struggle in prayer because he
2848 believed, as did George Mueller, that the word, 'Owe no man
2849 any thing' (Rom. 13.8), was to be taken literally, and that debt
2850 should not be incurred.

2851
2852 So he learned the great lesson to move men through God - a
2853 thought of deep meaning, which later on became an
2854 unspeakably great blessing to him in his work in China. He
2855 relied on that - in the conversion of the Chinese, in the
2856 awakening of Christians to give money for the support of the
2857 work, in the finding of suitable missionaries who would hold
2858 as faith's rule of conduct that we should make our desires
2859 known to God in prayer and then rely on God to move men to
2860 do what he would have done.

2861
2862 After he had been for some years in China, he prayed that God
2863 would give twenty-four missionaries, two for each of the
2864 eleven provinces and Mongolia, each with millions of souls
2865 and with no missionary. God did it. But there was no society to
2866 send them out. He had indeed learned to trust God for his own

2867 support, but he dared not take upon himself the responsibility
2868 of the twenty-four, if possibly they had not sufficient faith.
2869 This cost him severe conflict, and he became very ill under it,
2870 till at last he saw that God could as easily care for the twenty-
2871 four as for himself. He undertook it in a glad faith. And so God
2872 led him, through many severe trials of faith, to trust him fully.
2873 Now these twenty-four have increased, in course of time, to a
2874 thousand missionaries who rely wholly on God for support.
2875 Other missionary societies have acknowledged how much they
2876 have learned from Hudson Taylor, as a man who stated and
2877 obeyed this law. Faith may rely on God to move men to do
2878 what his children have asked of him in prayer.

2879

2880 Read the book, Hudson Taylor's Early Years by Dr and Mrs
2881 Howard Taylor. There will be found in it a treasure of spiritual
2882 thought and experience concerning a close walk with God in
2883 the inner chamber and in mission work.

2884

2885 Light from the Inner Chamber

2886

2887 'But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when
2888 thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret;
2889 and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly'
2890 (Matt. 6.6).

2891

2892 Our Lord had spoken of the prayer of the hypocrites who
2893 desire to be seen of men and also of the prayer of the heathen
2894 who trust in the multitude of their words. They do not
2895 understand that prayer has no value except it is addressed to a
2896 personal God who sees and hears. In the text our Lord teaches
2897 us a wonderful lesson concerning the inestimable blessing
2898 which the Christian may have in his inner chamber. If we

2899 would understand the lesson aright we must notice the light
2900 that the inner chamber sheds on

2901

2902 1. The wonderful love of God

2903

2904 Think of God, his greatness, his holiness, his unspeakable
2905 glory, and then on the inestimable privilege to which he invites
2906 his children, that each one of them, however sinful or feeble he
2907 may be, every hour of the day, may have access to him and
2908 hold converse with him as long as he wishes. If he enters his
2909 inner chamber, then God is ready to meet him, to have
2910 fellowship with him, to give him the joy and strength which he
2911 needs with the living assurance in his heart that he is with him
2912 and will undertake for him in everything. In addition he
2913 promises that he will enrich him in his outward life and work
2914 with those things which he has asked for in secret. Ought we
2915 not to cry out with joy? What an honour! What a salvation!
2916 What an overflowing supply for every need!

2917

2918 One may be in the greatest distress, or may have fallen into the
2919 deepest sin, or may in the ordinary course of life desire
2920 temporal or spiritual blessing; he may desire to pray for
2921 himself or for those belonging to him, or for his congregation
2922 or church; he may even become an intercessor for the whole
2923 world - the promise for the inner chamber covers all: 'Pray to
2924 thy Father which is in secret; he will reward thee openly.'

2925

2926 We might well suppose that there would be no place on earth
2927 so attractive to the child of God as the inner chamber with the
2928 presence of God promised, where he may have unhindered
2929 intercourse with the Father. The happiness of a child on earth if
2930 he enjoys the love of his father; the happiness of a friend as he

2931 meets a beloved benefactor; the happiness of a subject who has
2932 free access to his king and may stay with him as long as he
2933 wishes; these are as nothing compared with this heavenly
2934 promise. In the inner chamber you can converse with your God
2935 as long and as intimately as you desire; you can rely on his
2936 presence and fellowship.

2937

2938 Oh, the wonderful love of God in the gift of an inner chamber
2939 sanctified by such a promise! Let us thank God every day of
2940 our lives for it as the gift of his wonderful love. In this sinful
2941 world he could devise nothing more suitable for our needs than
2942 a fountain of unspeakable blessing.

2943

2944 2. The deep sinfulness of man

2945

2946 We might have thought that every child of God would have
2947 availed himself with joy of such an invitation. But, see! What
2948 is the response? There comes a cry from all lands that prayer in
2949 the inner chamber is, as a general rule, neglected by those who
2950 call themselves believers - . Many make no use of it; they go to
2951 church, they confess Christ, but they know little of personal
2952 intercourse with God. Many make a little use of it, but in a
2953 spirit of haste, and more as a matter of custom, or for the
2954 easing of conscience, so that they cannot speak of any joy or
2955 blessing in it. And, what is more sad, many who know
2956 something of its blessedness confess that they know little about
2957 faithful, regular, and happy fellowship with the Father, all the
2958 day, as something which is as necessary as their daily bread.

2959

2960 Oh, what is it, then, that makes the inner chamber so
2961 powerless? Is it not the deep sinfulness of man, and the
2962 aversion of his fallen nature for God, which make the world

2963 with its fellowship more attractive than being alone with the
2964 heavenly Father?

2965

2966 Is it not that Christians do believe the word of God, where that
2967 word declares that 'the flesh' which is in them, 'is enmity
2968 against God', and that they walk too much after 'the flesh', so
2969 that the Spirit cannot strengthen them for prayer? Is it not that
2970 Christians allow themselves to be deprived by Satan of the use
2971 of the weapon of prayer, so that they are powerless to
2972 overcome him? Oh, the deep sinfulness of man! We have no
2973 greater proof of it than this despite that is done to the
2974 unspeakable love which has given us the inner chamber.

2975

2976 And what is still more sad is that even ministers of Christ
2977 acknowledge that they know they pray too little. The word tells
2978 them that their only power lies in prayer: through that only, but
2979 through that certainly, they can be clothed with power from on
2980 high for their work. But it seems as though the power of the
2981 world and the flesh has bewitched them. While they devote
2982 time to and manifest zeal in their work, that which is the most
2983 necessary of all is neglected, and there is not the desire or
2984 strength for prayer to obtain the indispensable gift of the Holy
2985 Spirit to make their work fruitful. God give us grace to
2986 understand in the light of the inner chamber the deep sinfulness
2987 of our nature.

2988

2989 3. The glorious grace of Christ Jesus

2990

2991 Is there, then, no hope of a change? Must it be always thus? Or
2992 is there a means of recovery? Thank God! There is.

2993

2994 The man through whom God has made known to us the
2995 message of the inner chamber is no other than our Lord Jesus
2996 Christ, who saves us from our sins. He is able and willing to
2997 deliver us from this sin, and will deliver. He has not
2998 undertaken to redeem us from all our other sins and left us to
2999 deal with the sin of prayerlessness in our own strength. No, in
3000 this also we may come to him and cry out, 'Lord, if thou wilt
3001 thou canst make me clean' (Matt. 8.2). 'Lord, I believe; help
3002 thou mine unbelief' (Mark 9.24).

3003

3004 Do you wish to know how you may experience this
3005 deliverance? By none other than the well-known way along
3006 which every sinner must come to Christ. Begin by
3007 acknowledging, by confessing before him, in a childlike and
3008 simple manner, the sin of neglecting and desecrating the inner
3009 chamber. Bow before him in deep shame and sorrow. Tell him
3010 that your heart has deceived you by the thought that you could
3011 pray as you ought. Tell him that through the weakness of 'the
3012 flesh', and the power of the world, and self-confidence, you
3013 have been led astray and that you have no strength to do better.
3014 Let this be done heartily. You cannot by your resolution and
3015 effort put things right.

3016

3017 Come in your sin and weakness to the inner chamber, and
3018 begin to thank God, as you have never thanked him, that the
3019 grace of the Lord Jesus will surely make it possible for you to
3020 converse with your Father as a child ought to do. Hand over
3021 afresh to the Lord Jesus all your sin and misery, as well as your
3022 whole life and will, that he may cleanse and take possession of
3023 you and rule over you as his very own.

3024

3025 Even though your heart be cold and dead, persevere in the
3026 exercise of faith that Christ is an almighty and faithful Saviour.
3027 You may be sure that deliverance will come. Expect it, and
3028 you will begin to understand that the inner chamber is the
3029 revelation of the glorious grace of the Lord Jesus, which makes
3030 it possible for one to do what he could not do himself; that is,
3031 to hold fellowship with God, and to experience that the desire
3032 and power are received which fit a man for walking with God.
3033
3034
3035

3036 Chapter 14

3037
3038 We seek sometimes for the operation of the Spirit, with the
3039 object of obtaining more power for work, more love in the life,
3040 more holiness in the heart, more light on Scripture or on our
3041 path. And yet all these gifts are only subordinate to what is the
3042 great purpose of God. The Father has bestowed the Spirit on
3043 the Son, and the Son has given him to us, with the one great
3044 object of revealing and glorifying Christ Jesus himself in us.
3045

3046 The heavenly Christ must become for us a real living
3047 personality, always with us and in us. Our life on earth must be
3048 every day lived in the unbroken and holy fellowship of our
3049 Lord Jesus in heaven. This must be the first and the greatest
3050 work of the Holy Spirit in believers, that they should know and
3051 experience Christ as the life of their life. God desires that we
3052 should become strengthened with might by his Spirit in the
3053 inner man, that Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith,
3054 and that so we may be filled with his love unto all the fullness
3055 of God.
3056

3057 This was the secret of the joy of the first disciples. They had
3058 received the Lord Jesus, whom they feared they had lost, as the
3059 heavenly Christ into their hearts.

3060

3061 And this was their preparation for Pentecost: they were entirely
3062 taken up with him. He was literally their all. Their hearts were
3063 empty of everything, so that the Spirit might fill them with
3064 Christ. In the fullness of the Spirit they had power for a life
3065 and service such as the Lord desired. Is this, now, with us, the
3066 great object in our desires, in our prayers, in our experience?
3067 'Me Lord teach us to know that the blessing for which we have
3068 so earnestly prayed can be preserved and increased in no other
3069 way than through intimate fellowship with Christ in the inner
3070 chamber, every day practised and cultivated.

3071

3072 And yet it has seemed to me that there was a still deeper secret
3073 of Pentecost to be discovered. The thought came that perhaps
3074 our conception of the Lord Jesus in heaven was limited. We
3075 think of him in the splendour, the glory of God's throne. We
3076 also think of the unsearchable love which moved him to give
3077 himself for us. But we forgot too often that, above all, it is as
3078 the crucified one he was known here on earth; and that, above
3079 all, it is as the crucified one he has his place on the throne of
3080 God. 'And, lo, in the midst of the throne ... stood a Lamb as it
3081 had been slain' (Rev. 5.6).

3082

3083 Yes, it is as the crucified one that he is the object of the
3084 Father's eternal good pleasure and of the worship of the entire
3085 creation. And it is, therefore, of the first importance, that we
3086 here on earth should know and have experience of him as the
3087 crucified one, so that we may make men see what his

3088 disposition and ours is, and what the power is that can make
3089 them partakers of salvation.

3090

3091 I feel deeply that, as the cross is Christ's highest glory, and as
3092 the Holy Spirit neither has done nor can do anything greater or
3093 more glorious than he did when he 'through the eternal Spirit
3094 offered himself without spot to God' (Heb. 9.14); so it is
3095 evident that the Holy Spirit can do nothing greater or more
3096 glorious for us than to take us up into the fellowship of that
3097 cross, and to work out also in us the same spirit of the cross
3098 which was seen in our Lord Jesus. In a word, the question
3099 arose whether this was not the real reason why our prayers for
3100 the powerful operation of the Holy Spirit could not be
3101 answered, because we had sought too little to receive the
3102 Spirit, in order that we might know and become like the
3103 glorified Christ in the fellowship of his cross.

3104

3105 Have we not here the deepest secret of Pentecost? The Spirit
3106 comes to us from the cross, where he strengthened Christ to
3107 offer himself to God. He comes from the Father, who looked
3108 down with unspeakable good pleasure on the humiliation and
3109 obedience and self-sacrifice of Christ, as the highest proof of
3110 his surrender to him. He comes from Christ, who through the
3111 cross was prepared to receive from the Father the fullness of
3112 the Spirit, that he might share it with the world. He comes to
3113 reveal Christ to our hearts, as the Lamb slain, in the midst of
3114 the throne, so that we on earth may worship him as they do in
3115 heaven. He comes, chiefly,- to impart to us the life of the
3116 crucified Christ, so that we may be able to say truly, 'I am
3117 crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ
3118 liveth in me' (Gal. 2.20).

3119

3120 To understand this secret in any way, we must first meditate on
3121 what the meaning and what the worth of the cross is.

3122
3123 The mind that was in the crucified Christ

3124
3125 The cross must necessarily be viewed from two standpoints.
3126 First, the work it has accomplished - the pardon and conquest
3127 of sin. This is the first message with which the cross comes to
3128 the sinner. It proclaims to him free and full deliverance from
3129 the power of sin. And then the second, the spirit or disposition
3130 which was there manifested. We find this expressed in
3131 Philippians 2.8: 'He humbled himself, and became obedient
3132 unto death, even the death of the cross.' Here we see self-
3133 abasement to the lowest place which could be found under the
3134 burden of our sin and curse; obedience to the uttermost to all
3135 the will of God; self-sacrifice to the death of the cross these
3136 three words reveal to us the holy perfection of his person and
3137 work. Therefore God hath so greatly exalted him. It was the
3138 spirit of the cross which made him the object of his Father's
3139 good pleasure, of the worship of the angels, of the love and
3140 confidence of all the redeemed. The self-abasement of Christ,
3141 his obedience to the will of God even to death, his self-
3142 sacrifice even to the death of the cross - these made him to be
3143 'the Lamb, as it had been slain, standing in the midst of the
3144 throne'.

3145
3146 The spirit of the cross in us

3147
3148 All that Christ was, he was for us and desires to become in us.
3149 The spirit of the cross was his blessedness and glory. It should
3150 be this even more for us. He desires to manifest his likeness in
3151 us and to give us a full share of all that is his. Thus Paul writes

3152 the words we have so often quoted: 'Let this mind be in you,
3153 which was also in Christ Jesus' (Phil. 2.5). Elsewhere he
3154 writes: 'We have the mind of Christ' (1 Cor. 2.16). The
3155 fellowship of the cross is not only a holy duty for us, but an
3156 unspeakably blessed privilege, which the Holy Spirit himself
3157 will make ours according to the promise: 'He shall take of
3158 mine, and shall shew it unto you' (John 16.15); 'He shall
3159 glorify me' (John 16.14). The Holy Spirit wrought this
3160 disposition in Christ and will also work it in us.

3161

3162

3163

3164 Chapter 15

3165

3166 When the Lord told his disciples that they must take up the
3167 cross to follow him, they could have little understanding of his
3168 meaning. He wished to rouse them to earnest thought and so
3169 prepare them for the time when they should see him carrying
3170 his cross. From the Jordan, where he had presented himself to
3171 be baptised and reckoned among sinners, onward, he carried
3172 the cross always in his heart. That is to say, he was always
3173 conscious that the sentence of death, because of sin, rested on
3174 him, and that he must bear it to the uttermost. As the disciples
3175 thought on this and wondered what he meant by it, one thing
3176 only helped them - it was the thought of a man who was
3177 sentenced to death, and carried his cross to the appointed place.

3178

3179 Christ had said at the same time: 'He that loseth his life for my
3180 sake shall find it' (Matt. 10.39). He taught them that they must
3181 hate their own life. Their nature was so sinful that nothing less
3182 than death could meet their need; it deserved nothing less than
3183 death. So the conviction gradually dawned upon them that the

3184 taking up of the cross meant: 'I am to feel that my life is under
3185 sentence of death, and that under the consciousness of this
3186 sentence I must constantly surrender my flesh, my sinful
3187 nature, to death.' So they were slowly prepared to see later on
3188 that the cross which Christ had carried was the one power to
3189 deliver truly from sin, and that they must first receive from him
3190 the true cross spirit. They must learn from him what self-
3191 humiliation in their weakness and unworthiness was to mean;
3192 what the obedience was which crucified their own will in all
3193 things, in the greatest as well as in the least; what the self-
3194 denial was which did not seek to please the flesh or the world.
3195 'Take thy cross and follow me' (see Matt. 16.24; Mark 8.34;
3196 10.21; Luke 9.23) - that was the word with which Jesus
3197 prepared his disciples for the great thought that his mind and
3198 disposition might become theirs, that his cross might in very
3199 deed become their own.

3200

3201 Crucified with Christ

3202

3203 The lesson which the Lord wished his disciples to learn from
3204 his statement concerning the taking up of the cross and the
3205 losing of their life finds its expression in the words of Paul,
3206 after Christ had died on the cross and had been exalted on
3207 high, and the Spirit had been poured out. Paul says: 'I am
3208 crucified with Christ'; 'God forbid that I should glory, save in
3209 the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is
3210 crucified unto me, and I unto the world' (Gal. 2.20; 6.14). He
3211 wished every believer to live so as to prove that he was
3212 crucified with Christ. He wished us to understand that the
3213 Christ who comes to dwell in our hearts is the crucified Christ,
3214 who will himself, through his life, impart to us the true mind of
3215 the cross. He tells us that 'our old man is crucified with him'

3216 (Rom. 6.6). Yea, more, that 'they that are Christ's have
3217 crucified the flesh' (Gal. 5.24). When they received by faith the
3218 crucified Christ, they gave over the flesh to the death sentence
3219 which was executed to the full on Calvary. Paul says 'we have
3220 been planted together in the likeness of his death' (Rom. 6.5),
3221 and that therefore we must reckon that we are dead to sin in
3222 Christ Jesus.

3223
3224 These words of the Holy Spirit, through Paul, teach us that we
3225 must abide constantly in the fellowship of the cross, in
3226 fellowship with the crucified and living Lord Jesus. It is the
3227 soul that lives ever under the cover and shelter and deliverance
3228 of the cross that alone can expect constantly to glory in Christ
3229 Jesus and in his abiding nearness.

3230
3231 The fellowship of the cross

3232
3233 There are many who place their hope for salvation in the
3234 redemption of the cross who understand little about the
3235 fellowship of the cross. They rely on what the cross has
3236 purchased for them, on forgiveness of sin and peace with God;
3237 but they can often live for a length of time without fellowship
3238 with the Lord himself. They do not know what it means to
3239 strive every day after heart communion with the crucified Lord
3240 as he is seen in heaven -'A Lamb in the midst of the throne'.
3241 Oh, that this vision might exercise its spiritual power upon us,
3242 that we might really experience every day that as truly as the
3243 Lamb is seen there on the throne, so we may have the power
3244 and experience of his presence here!

3245
3246 Is it possible? Without doubt it is. Why did that great miracle
3247 happen, and why was the Holy Spirit given from heaven, if it

3248 were not to make the glorified Jesus -'the Lamb standing, as
3249 slain, in the midst of the throne'- present with us here in our
3250 earthly surroundings? Let us endeavour to make this more
3251 plain in our further meditations.

3252

3253

3254

3255 Chapter 16

3256

3257 The Holy Spirit ever leads us to the cross. It was so with
3258 Christ. The Spirit taught him and enabled him to offer himself
3259 without spot to God.

3260

3261 It was so with the disciples. The Spirit, with whom they were
3262 filled, led them to preach Christ as the crucified one. Late on
3263 he led them to glory in the fellowship of the cross when they
3264 were deemed worthy to suffer for Christ's sake.

3265

3266 And the cross directed them again to the Spirit. When Christ
3267 had borne the cross, he received the Spirit from the Father, that
3268 he might be poured out. When the three thousand bowed
3269 before the crucified one, they received the promise of the Holy
3270 Spirit. When the disciples rejoiced in their experience of the
3271 fellowship of the cross, they received the Holy Spirit afresh.
3272 The union between the Spirit and the cross is indissoluble; they
3273 belong inseparably to one another. We see this especially in
3274 the epistles of Paul. 'Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth,
3275 crucified among you... Received ye the Spirit by the works of
3276 the law, or by the hearing of faith?' (Gal. 3.1, 2).

3277

3278 'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law ... that we
3279 might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith' (Gal.

3280 3.13, 14). 'God sent forth his Son ... To redeem them that were
3281 under the law ... and ... hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into
3282 your hearts' (Gal. 4.4-6). 'And they that are Christ's have
3283 crucified the flesh If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk
3284 in the Spirit' (Gal. 5.24, 25). 'Ye also are become dead to the
3285 law by the body of Christ ... that we should serve in newness of
3286 spirit' (Rom. 7.4-6). 'For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ
3287 Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For ...
3288 God ... condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of
3289 the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh,
3290 but after the Spirit' (Rom. 8.24).

3291

3292 In everything and always the Spirit and the cross are
3293 inseparable. Yes, even in heaven. The Lamb, as it had been
3294 slain, standing in the midst of the throne had 'seven eyes,
3295 which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth'
3296 (Rev. 5.6). Again: 'He shewed me a pure river of water of life,
3297 clear as crystal [Is this other than the Holy Spirit?] proceeding
3298 out of the throne of God and of the Lamb' (Rev. 22. 1). When
3299 Moses smote the rock, the water streamed out and Israel drank.
3300 When the Rock Christ was actually smitten and he had taken
3301 his place as the slain Lamb on the throne of God, there flowed
3302 out from under the throne the fullness of the Holy Spirit for the
3303 whole world.

3304

3305 How foolish it is to pray for the fullness of the Spirit if we
3306 have not first placed ourselves under the full power of the
3307 cross! Just think of the one hundred and twenty disciples. The
3308 crucifixion of Christ had touched, broken, and taken
3309 possession of their entire hearts. They could speak or think of
3310 nothing else, and when the crucified one had shown them his
3311 hands and his feet, he said unto them: 'Receive ye the Holy

3312 Ghost' (John 20.22). And so also, with their hearts full of the
3313 crucified Christ, now received up into heaven, they were
3314 prepared to be filled with the Spirit. They dared to proclaim to
3315 the people: 'Repent and believe in the crucified one'; and they
3316 also received the Holy Spirit.

3317

3318 Christ gave himself up entirely to the cross. 'The disciples also
3319 did the same. The cross demands this also from us; it would
3320 have our entire life. To comply with this demand requires
3321 nothing less than a powerful act of the will, for which we are
3322 unfit, and a powerful act of God of which he may be assured
3323 who casts himself, in helplessness, but unreservedly on God.

3324

3325 The Spirit and the Cross

3326

3327 Why are there not more men and women who can witness, in
3328 the joy of their hearts, that the Spirit of God has taken
3329 possession of them and given them new power to witness for
3330 him? Yet more urgently arises the heart-searching question to
3331 which an answer must be given: what is it that hinders? The
3332 Father in heaven is more willing than an earthly father to give
3333 bread to his child, and yet the cry arises: 'Is the Spirit
3334 straitened? Is this his work?'

3335

3336 Many will acknowledge that the hindrance undoubtedly lies in
3337 the fact that the Church is too much under the sway of the flesh
3338 and the world. They understand too little of the heart-piercing
3339 power of the cross of Christ. So it comes to pass that the Spirit
3340 has not the vessels into which he can pour his fullness.

3341

3342 Many complain that the subject is too high or too deep for
3343 them. This is a proof of how little we have appropriated and

3344 brought into practice the teaching of Paul and Christ about the
3345 cross. I bring you a message of joy. The Spirit who is in you,
3346 in however limited a measure, is prepared to take you under his
3347 teaching, to lead you to the cross, and by his heavenly
3348 instruction to make you now something of what the crucified
3349 Christ wills to do for you and in you.

3350

3351 But then he wants you to take time, so that he may reveal the
3352 heavenly mysteries to you. He wants to make you see how the
3353 neglect of the inner chamber has hindered fellowship with
3354 Christ, the knowledge of the cross, and the powerful operations
3355 of the Spirit. He will teach you what is meant by the denial of
3356 self, the taking up of your cross, the losing of your life, and
3357 following him.

3358

3359 In spite of all that you have felt of your ignorance, and lack of
3360 spiritual insight and fellowship with the cross, he is able and
3361 willing to take you under his teaching and to make known to
3362 you the secret of the spiritual life above all your expectations.

3363

3364 Begin at the beginning. Be faithful in the inner chamber.
3365 Thank him that you can reckon on him to meet you there.
3366 Although everything appears cold, and dark, and strained, bow
3367 in silence before the loving Lord Jesus, who so longs after you.
3368 Thank the Father that he has given you the Spirit. And be
3369 assured that all you do not yet know, and still must know -
3370 about 'the flesh', and 'the world', and the cross - the Spirit of
3371 Christ, who is in you, will surely make known to you. O soul,
3372 only believe that this blessing is for you! Christ belongs
3373 entirely to you. He longs to obtain full possession of you. He
3374 can and will possess you through the Holy Spirit. But for this,
3375 time is necessary. Oh, give him time in the inner chamber

3376 every day. You can rest assured that he will fulfil his promise
3377 in you. 'He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he
3378 it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my
3379 Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him'
3380 (John 14.21).

3381

3382 Persevere, in addition to all that you ask for yourself, in prayer
3383 for your congregation, your church, your minister; for all
3384 believers; for the whole Church of God, that God may
3385 strengthen them with power through his Spirit, so that Christ
3386 may dwell in their hearts by faith. Blessed time when the
3387 answer comes! Continue in prayer. The Spirit will reveal and
3388 glorify Christ and his love, Christ and his cross 'as the Lamb
3389 slain standing in the midst of the throne'.

3390

3391 The Cross and the Flesh

3392

3393 These two are deadly enemies. The cross desires to condemn
3394 and put to death 'the flesh'. 'The flesh' desires to cast aside and
3395 conquer the cross. Many, as they hear of the cross as the
3396 indispensable preparation for the fullness of the Holy Spirit,
3397 will find out what there is in them which must yet be crucified.
3398 We must understand that our entire nature is sentenced to death
3399 and must become dead by the cross, so that the new life in
3400 Christ may come to rule in us. We must obtain such an insight
3401 into the fallen condition of our nature and its enmity against
3402 God that we become willing, nay desirous, to be wholly freed
3403 from it.

3404

3405 We must learn to say with Paul: 'In me (that is, in my flesh,)
3406 dwelleth no good thing' (Rom. 7.18). 'The carnal mind is
3407 enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God,

3408 neither indeed can be' (Rom. 8.7). It is its very essence to hate
3409 God and his holy law. This is the wonder of redemption, that
3410 Christ has borne on the cross the judgment and curse of God
3411 on 'the flesh', and has forever nailed it to the cursed tree. If a
3412 man only believes God's word about this 'cursed mind of the
3413 flesh', and then longs to be delivered from it, he learns to love
3414 the cross as his deliverer from the power of the enemy.

3415
3416 'Our old man is crucified' with Christ, and our one hope is to
3417 receive this by faith and to hold it fast. 'They that are Christ's
3418 have crucified the flesh' (Gal. 5.24). They have willingly
3419 declared that they will daily regard 'the flesh' which is in them
3420 as the enemy of God, the enemy of Christ, the enemy of their
3421 soul's salvation, and will treat it as having received its deserved
3422 reward in being nailed to the cross.

3423
3424 This is one part of the eternal redemption which Christ has
3425 brought to us. It is not something which we can grasp with our
3426 understanding or accomplish with our strength. It is something
3427 which the Lord Jesus himself will give us if we are willing to
3428 abide in his fellowship day by day, and to receive everything
3429 from him. It is something which the Holy Spirit will teach us,
3430 and he will impart it to us as an experience, and will show how
3431 he can give victory in the power of the cross over all that is of
3432 the flesh.

3433
3434 The Cross and the World

3435
3436 What the flesh is in the smallest circle of my own person, that
3437 the world is in the larger circle of mankind. 'The flesh' and 'the
3438 world' are two manifestations of the same 'god of this world
3439 who is served by both. When the cross deals with 'the flesh' as

3440 accursed, we at once discover what the nature and power of the
3441 world are. 'They ... hated both me and my Father' (John 15.24).
3442 The proof of this was that they crucified Christ. But Christ
3443 obtained the victory on the cross and freed us from the power
3444 of 'the world'. And now we can say: 'God forbid that I should
3445 glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the
3446 world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world' (Gal. 4.14).

3447
3448 The cross was to Paul every day a holy reality, both in what he
3449 had to suffer from the world and in the victory which the cross
3450 constantly gave. John also writes: 'The whole world lieth in
3451 wickedness' (1 John 5.19). 'Who is he that overcometh the
3452 world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? This
3453 is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ ... And it
3454 is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth' (1
3455 John 5.5, 6). Against the two great powers of the god of this
3456 world, God has given us two great powers from heaven,
3457 namely, the cross and the Spirit. greatest victory with his hands
3458 and feet nailed to the cross. We abide in the shadow of the

3459

3460

3461

3462 Chapter 17

3463

3464 A Testimony

3465

3466 In the following quotations from Starlight, by G. Sterrenberg,
3467 the great truth about the cross is expressed in simple and
3468 powerful words. Let the chapters on 'The Fellowship of the
3469 Cross' and 'The Holy Spirit and the Cross' especially be read.

3470

3471 Our Head Christ took the lowest place on the cross, and so He
3472 has marked out for us His members the lowest place. The
3473 brightness of God's glory (Heb. 1.3) became the rejected of
3474 men (Isa. 53.3). Since that time the only right we have is to be
3475 the last and the lowest. When we claim anything more we have
3476 not yet rightly understood the cross.

3477
3478 We seek for a higher life; we shall find it if we sink deeper into
3479 the cross fellowship with our Lord. God has given the crucified
3480 One the highest place (Rev. 5). Shall we not do the same? We
3481 do this when from hour to hour we act as those who are
3482 crucified with him (Gal. 2.19, 20). Thus we honor the crucified
3483 Lord.

3484
3485 The Lamb obtained His greatest victory with His hands and
3486 feet nailed to the cross. We abide in the shadow of the
3487 Almighty only so long as we abide under the shadow of the
3488 cross. The cross must be our home. There alone are we
3489 sheltered. We first understand our own cross when we have
3490 understood his. And we desire to get so close to it that we not
3491 only view it but touch it, yes, still more that we take up the
3492 cross, and so it becomes as someone has said, an inner cross.
3493 Then the cross asserts itself in us, and we experience His
3494 power which especially manifests itself in this, that we do not
3495 faint under it but carry it with joy.

3496
3497 What would Jesus be without His cross? His pierced feet have
3498 bruised the head of the enemy, and His pierced hands have
3499 despoiled him utterly (Matt. 12.29). What are we without the
3500 cross? Do not let the cross go, but hold it fast. Do we think that
3501 we can go by another road than that He trod? Many can make
3502 no progress because they will not take up the cross.

3503

3504 Epilogue

3505

3506 A single word to the reader concerning the disposition of mind
3507 to which this book appeals! It is not enough that one should
3508 understand and appropriate the thought of the writer, and then
3509 rejoice because of the new insight he has obtained and the
3510 pleasure which knowledge has brought. There is something
3511 else which is of great importance. I must surrender myself to
3512 the truth so that I shall be ready, with an undivided will,
3513 immediately to perform all that I shall learn to be God's will.

3514

3515 In a book such as this, dealing with the life of prayer and
3516 hidden fellowship with God, it is indispensable that we should
3517 be prepared to receive and obey all that we see to be according
3518 to the word and will of God. Where this disposition is lacking,
3519 knowledge only serves to make the heart less capable of
3520 receiving fuller life. Satan endeavours to become master of the
3521 Christian's inner chamber because he knows that if there has
3522 been unfaithfulness in prayer the testimony will bring but little
3523 loss to his kingdom. Spiritual power to lead the unsaved to the
3524 Lord, or to build up the children of God, will not be
3525 experienced under it. Persevering prayer, through which alone
3526 this power comes, has been lacking.

3527

3528 The great living question has been before many: shall we really
3529 set ourselves to win back again the weapon of believing prayer
3530 which Satan has, in a measure, taken away from us? Let us set
3531 before ourselves the serious importance of this conflict. As far
3532 as each minister is concerned, everything depends on whether
3533 or not he is a man of prayer—one who in the inner chamber
3534 must be clothed each day with power from on high. We, in

3535 common with the church throughout the whole world, have to
3536 complain that prayer has not the place in our service of God
3537 that it ought to have, according to the will and promise of God
3538 and according to the need of minister and congregation and
3539 church.

3540
3541 The public consecration which many a believer has been led to
3542 make of himself at conferences is not an easy thing. And even
3543 when the step is taken, old custom, and the power of the flesh,
3544 will tend to bring it to naught. The power of faith is not yet
3545 vigorous. It will cost strife and sacrifice to conquer the devil in
3546 the name of Christ. Our churches are the battlefield where
3547 Satan will bring forth all his power to prevent us from
3548 becoming men of prayer, powerful in the Lord to obtain the
3549 victory in heaven and on earth. How much depends on this for
3550 ourselves, for our congregations, and for the kingdom!

3551
3552 Do not be surprised if I say that it is with fear and trembling,
3553 and not without much prayer, that I have written what I trust
3554 will help to encourage the brethren in the conflict. It is with a
3555 feeling of deep unworthiness that I venture to offer myself as a
3556 guide to the inner chamber, which is the way to holiness and to
3557 fellowship with God.

3558
3559 Do not wonder that I have asked the Lord that he would give
3560 this book a place in some inner chambers, and that he may
3561 assist the reader, so that, as he sees what God's will is, he may
3562 immediately give himself up to the doing of it. In war,
3563 everything depends on each soldier being obedient to the word
3564 of command, even though it costs him his life. In our strife
3565 with Satan we shall not conquer unless each one of us holds
3566 himself ready even in the reading of this simple book, to say

3567 from the heart: 'What God says I will do; and if I see that
3568 anything is according to his will, I will immediately receive it
3569 and act upon it.'

3570

3571 Do not wonder that I have written this testimony to remind the
3572 brethren that everything depends on the spirit of surrender to
3573 immediate obedience, in which we read all that is said
3574 according to the word of God. God grant that, in his great
3575 grace, this book may prove a bond of fellowship by which we
3576 may think of and help one another, and strengthen each other
3577 for the conflict in prayer by which the enemy may be
3578 overcome and the life of God may be gloriously revealed!

3579

3580

3581 [http://www.worldinvisible.com/library/murray/praylife/indexpr](http://www.worldinvisible.com/library/murray/praylife/indexpray.htm)
3582 [ay.htm](http://www.worldinvisible.com/library/murray/praylife/indexpray.htm)