

The sum and substance of the whole matter of Christian grace and experience is contained in believing on Christ, in knowing God and His Son whom He hath sent. But here is where many fail, for they lack faith in God. Instead of desiring to be brought into fellowship with Christ in His self-denial and humiliation, they are ever seeking for the supremacy of self. . . . O if we did but appreciate the love of God, how our hearts would be expanded, our limited sympathies would be enlarged, and break away from the icy barriers of selfishness, and our comprehension would be deeper than it now is. . . .

It is because we do not know God, we do not have faith in Christ, that we are not deeply impressed with the humiliation He endured in our behalf, that His abasement does not lead us to the humbling of self, to the exalting of Jesus. . . . O if you loved Him as He has loved you, you would not shun an experience in the dark chapters of the suffering of the Son of God!

In order to be partakers with Christ in His sufferings, we must behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. When we contemplate the humiliation of Christ, beholding His self-denial and self-sacrifice, we are filled with amazement at the manifestation of divine love for guilty man. When for Christ's sake we are called to pass through trials that are of a humiliating nature, if we have the mind of Christ we shall suffer them with meekness, not resenting injury, or resisting evil. We shall manifest the spirit that dwelt in Christ. . . . We are to understand what the sacrifice, the labors, and the sufferings of Christ are, in order that we may cooperate with Him in working out the great scheme of redemption. —*That I May Know Him*, p. 104.

The church is a Christian society formed for the members composing it, that each member may enjoy the assistance of all the graces and talents of the other members, and the working of God upon them, according to their several gifts and abilities. The church is united in the holy bonds of fellowship in order that each member may be benefited by the influence of the other. All are to bind themselves to the covenant of love and harmony. The Christian principles and graces of the whole society of believers are to gather strength and force in harmonious action. Each believer is to be benefited and improved by the refining and transforming influence of the varied capabilities of the other members, that the things lacking in one may be more abundantly displayed in another. All the members are to draw together, that the church may become a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men.

The covenant of agreement in church membership is that each member would walk in the footsteps of Christ, that all will take His yoke upon them, and learn of Him who is meek and lowly in heart. Doing this, "Ye shall," saith the dear Saviour, "find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:29, 30).

Those who wear Christ's yoke will draw together. They will cultivate sympathy and forbearance, and in holy emulation will strive to show to others the tender sympathy and love of which they feel such great need themselves. He who is weak and inexperienced, although he is weak, may be strengthened by the more hopeful and by those of mature experience. Although the least of all, he is a stone that must shine in the building. He is a vital member of the organized body, united to Christ, the living head, and through Christ identified with all the excellencies of Christ's character so that the Saviour is not ashamed to call him brother. . . . A church, separate and distinct from the world, is in the estimation of heaven the greatest object in all the earth. . . . The church is to be as God designed it should be, a representative of God's family in another world. —*Lift Him Up*, p. 295.

Strength comes by exercise. All who put to use the ability which God has given them will have increased ability to devote to His service. Those who do nothing in the cause of God will fail to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. A man who would lie down and refuse to exercise his limbs would soon lose all power to use them. Thus the Christian who will not exercise his God-given powers not only fails to grow up into Christ, but he loses the strength which he already has; he becomes a spiritual paralytic. It is those who, with love for God and their fellow men, are striving to help others that become established, strengthened, settled, in the truth. The true Christian works for God, not from impulse, but from principle; not for a day or a month, but during the entire period of life.

This world is not a parade ground, but a battlefield. All are called to endure hardness, as good soldiers. They are to be strong and quit themselves like men. . . . The true test of character is found in the willingness to bear burdens, to take the hard place, to do the work that needs to be done, though it bring no earthly recognition or reward.

O that each one would place a proper estimate upon the capabilities that have been given him of God! Through Christ you may climb the ladder of progress, and bring every power under the control of Jesus. . . . In your own strength you can do nothing; but in the grace of Jesus Christ, you can employ your powers in such a way as to bring the greatest good to your own soul, and the greatest blessing to the souls of others. Lay hold of Jesus, and you will diligently work the works of Christ, and will finally receive the eternal reward.

—*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 306.

The soldier of Christ must meet many forms of temptation, and resist and overcome them. The fiercer the conflict, the greater the supply of grace to meet the need of the soul. . . . The true Christian will understand what it means to pass through severe conflicts and trying experiences; but he will steadily increase in the grace of Christ to meet successfully the enemy of his soul. . . . The darkness will press upon his soul at times; but the true light will shine, the bright beams of the Sun of righteousness will dispel the gloom; and. . . through the grace of Christ he will be enabled to be a faithful witness of the things which he has heard from the inspired messenger of God. . . . By thus communicating truth to others, the worker for Christ obtains a clearer view of the abundant provisions made for all, of the sufficiency of the grace of Christ for every time of conflict, sorrow, and trial. Through the mysterious plan of redemption, grace has been provided, so that the imperfect work of the human agent may be accepted in the name of Jesus our Advocate.

Man has little power, and can accomplish but a small work at his very best.... God is omnipotent, and at every point where we need divine help and seek for it in sincerity, it will be given. God has pledged His word that His grace will be sufficient for you in your greatest necessity, in your sorest distress. Christ will be to you a present help if you will appropriate His grace. —*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 260.

Thanksgiving and praise should be expressed to God for temporal blessings and for whatever comforts He bestows upon us. God would have every family that He is preparing to inhabit the eternal mansions above, give glory to Him for the rich treasures of His grace. Were children, in the home life, educated and trained to be grateful to the Giver of all good things, we would see an element of heavenly grace manifest in our families. Cheerfulness would be seen in the home life, and coming from such homes, the youth would bring a spirit of respect and reverence with them into the schoolroom, and into the church. There would be an attendance in the sanctuary where God meets with His people, a reverence for all the ordinances of His worship, and grateful praise and thanksgiving would be offered for all the gifts of His providence. . .

Every temporal blessing would be received with gratitude, and every spiritual blessing become doubly precious because the perception of each member of the household had become sanctified by the Word of truth. The Lord Jesus is very near to those who thus appreciate His gracious gifts, tracing all their good things back to the benevolent, loving, care-taking God, and recognizing Him as the great Fountain of all comfort and consolation, the inexhaustible Source of grace.

If we would give more expression to our faith, rejoice more in the blessings that we know we have,—the great mercy and love of God,—we should have more faith and greater joy. No tongue can express, no finite mind can conceive, the blessing that results from appreciating the goodness and love of God. Even on earth we may have joy as a wellspring, never failing, because fed by the streams that flow from the throne of God. —*Our Father Cares*, p. 24.

God is love. He has shown that love in the gift of His only begotten Son. Yet the love of God does not excuse sin. God does not excuse sin in Satan, in Adam, or in Cain, nor will He excuse sin in any of the children of men. The perverted nature of man may distort the love of God into an attribute of weakness; but light is shining from the cross of Calvary, that man may have correct views and hold theories that are not perverted. . . .

The truth as it is in Jesus will teach most important lessons. It will show that the love of God is broad and deep; that it is infinite; and that in awarding the penalty to the disobedient, those who have made void God's law, it will be uncompromising. This is the love and justice of God combined. It reaches to the very depth of human woe and degradation, to lift up the fallen and oppressed who lay hold of the truth by repentance and faith in Jesus. —*Lift Him Up*, p. 158.

Tuesday, September 22
The God of Love

Though now He has ascended to the presence of God, and shares the throne of the universe, Jesus has lost none of His compassionate nature. Today, the same tender, sympathizing heart is open to all the woes of humanity. Today the hand that was pierced is reached forth to bless more abundantly His people that are in the world. . . .

Through all our trials we have a never-failing Helper. He does not leave us alone to struggle with temptation, to battle with evil, and be finally crushed with burdens and sorrow. Though now He is hidden from mortal sight, the ear of faith can hear His voice saying, Fear not; I am with you. "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore" (Revelation 1:18).

Those who put away iniquity from their hearts and stretch out their hands in earnest supplication unto God will have that help which God alone can give them. A ransom has been paid for the souls of men, that they may have an opportunity to escape from the thralldom of sin and obtain pardon, purity, and heaven. . . . Those who frequent the throne of grace, offering up sincere, earnest petitions for divine wisdom and power, will not fail to become active, useful servants of Christ. They may not possess great talents, but with humility of heart and firm reliance upon Jesus they may do a good work in bringing souls to Christ. . . .

Thousands have a false conception of God and His attributes. . . . God is a God of truth. Justice and mercy are the attributes of His throne. He is a God of love, of pity and tender compassion. Thus He is represented in His Son, our Saviour. He is a God of patience and long-suffering. If such is the being whom we adore and to whose character we are seeking to assimilate, we are worshiping the true God.

If we are following Christ, His merits, imputed to us, come up before the Father as sweet odor. And the graces of our Saviour's character, implanted in our hearts, will shed around us a precious fragrance. —*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 77.

Christ came to reveal God to the world as a God of love, a God of mercy, tenderness, and compassion. By the world's Redeemer the thick darkness with which Satan had enshrouded the throne of the Deity was swept away, and the Father was again manifest to men as the Light of life. . . .

Christ is saddened by the sight of men so absorbed in worldly cares and business perplexities that they have no time to become acquainted with God. To them heaven is a strange place; for they have lost it out of their reckoning. Not familiar with heavenly things, they tire of hearing about them. They dislike to have their minds disturbed in regard to their need of salvation. But the Lord desires to disturb their minds, that they may become acquainted with Him in time to accept His offer of salvation. —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 8.

When the hearts of men are softened by the presence of the Spirit of God, they are more susceptible to impressions of the Holy Spirit, and resolves are made to deny self and to sacrifice for the cause of God. It is when divine light shines into the chambers of the mind with unusual clearness and power that the feelings of the natural man are overcome, that selfishness loses its power upon the heart, and that desires are awakened to imitate the Pattern, Jesus Christ, in practicing self-denial and benevolence. The disposition of the naturally selfish man then becomes kind and pitiful toward lost sinners, and he makes a solemn pledge to God, as did Abraham and Jacob.

Heavenly angels are present on such occasions. The love of God and love for souls triumphs over selfishness and love of the world. Especially is this the case when the speaker, in the Spirit and power of God, presents the plan of redemption, laid by the Majesty of heaven in the sacrifice of the cross. . . .

God has given man a part to act in accomplishing the salvation of His fellow men. He can work in connection with Christ by doing acts of mercy and beneficence. But he cannot redeem them, not being able to satisfy the claims of insulted justice. This the Son of God alone can do, by laying aside His honor and glory, clothing His divinity with humanity, and coming to earth to humiliate Himself and shed His blood in behalf of the human race.

In commissioning His disciples to go "into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15), Christ assigned to men the work of spreading the gospel. But while some go forth to preach, He calls upon others to answer to His claims upon them for tithes and offerings with which to support the ministry and to spread the printed truth all over the land. —*Ye Shall Receive Power*, p. 90.

The world is perishing for want of truth, pure, unadulterated truth. Christ is the truth. His words are truth.

When the believer, in the fellowship of the Spirit, can lay his hand upon truth itself, and appropriate it, he eats the bread that comes down from heaven. He enters into the life of Christ, and appreciates the great sacrifice made in behalf of the sinful race.

The knowledge that comes from God is the bread of Life. It is the leaves of the tree of life which are for the healing of the nations. The current of spiritual life thrills the soul as the words of Christ are believed and practiced. Thus it is that we are made one with Christ. The experience that was weak and feeble becomes strong. It is eternal life to us if we hold the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end.

All truth is to be received as the life of Jesus. Truth cleanses us from all impurity, and prepares the soul for Christ's presence. Christ is formed within, the hope of glory.

The truth is to be partaken of every day. Thus we eat the words of Christ, which He declares are spirit and life. The acceptance of the truth will make every receiver a child of God, an heir of heaven.

Truth that is in the heart is not a cold, dead letter. . . . There is fullness of joy in the truth. There is a nobleness in the life of the human agent who lives and works under the vivifying influence of the truth. Truth is sacred and divine. It is stronger and more powerful than anything else in the formation of a character after the likeness of Christ. When it is cherished in the heart, the love of Christ is preferred to the love of any human being. This is Christianity. Thus truth—pure, unadulterated truth—occupies the citadel of the being. This is the life of God in the soul. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." Ezekiel 36:26. —*Our High Calling*, p. 208.

Thursday, September 24
Our Triune God

The Father cannot be described by the things of earth. The Father is all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and is invisible to mortal sight. The Son is all the fullness of the Godhead manifested. The Word of God declares Him to be "the express image of His person." "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Here is shown the personality of the Father.

The Comforter that Christ promised to send after He ascended to heaven, is the Spirit in all the fullness of the Godhead, making manifest the power of divine grace to all who receive and believe in Christ as a personal Saviour. There are three living persons of the heavenly trio; in the name of these three great powers—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized, and these powers will co-operate with the obedient subjects of heaven in their efforts to live the new life in Christ.

Christ is the pre-existent, self-existent Son of God. . . . In speaking of his pre-existence, Christ carries the mind back through dateless ages. He assures us that there never was a time when He was not in close fellowship with the eternal God. He to whose voice the Jews were then listening had been with God as one brought up with Him. . . .

Jesus declared, "I am the resurrection, and the life." In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived. "He that hath the Son hath life." The divinity of Christ is the believer's assurance of eternal life. . . .

The Holy Spirit is a person, for He beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. When this witness is borne, it carries with it its own evidence. At such times we believe and are sure that we are the children of God. . . .

The Holy Spirit has a personality, else He could not bear witness to our spirits and with our spirits that we are the children of God. He must also be a divine person, else He could not search out the secrets which lie hidden in the mind of God. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." . . .

We are to co-operate with the three highest powers in heaven,—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,—and these powers will work through us, making us workers together with God. —*Evangelism*, pp. 614–617.

Friday, September 25
For Further Reading

That I May Know Him, "Are You Growing Up?" June 6, p. 163.
Conflict and Courage, "A Voice of Gladness," December 12, p. 352.