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**EARS FROM HARVESTED SHEAVES; OR,**

## **DAILY PORTIONS**

By Joseph C Philpot (1802 – 1869)

SELECTED FROM THE WORKS OF J. C. PHILPOT BY HIS  
DAUGHTERS

*The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the  
masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd.—*  
Ecclesiastes 12:11

*A word spoken in due season, how good is it!—*Proverbs 15:23

### **PREFACE**

With deep feelings of pleasure we have responded to a call for a second edition of this work, and would add to our gratitude for the blessing so graciously vouchsafed to many on its perusal, the heartfelt desire and prayer that our ever-loving Saviour, who is able to do for His people exceeding abundantly above all they ask or even think, will continue to make the book useful, not only to the godly into whose hands it may fall, but also to a generation yet to come, and to his name be all the praise.

S. & D. M. PHILPOT  
Croydon, 1896.

"The soul's best, truest safeguard is love. Men fall into error because they never really loved the truth which they profess. Once love the truth, and error never more can have a place in your heart."

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**August 1**

**"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Romans 8:2**

**We by nature and practice are bond-slaves to sin and Satan. We are the sport of the prince of the power of the air, who takes us captive at his will. We are held down also by many hurtful lusts; or, if free from gross sin, are bond-slaves to pride, covetousness, or self-righteousness. Perhaps some idol is set up in the chambers of imagery which defiles all the inner man; or some snare of Satan entangles our feet, and we are slaves, without power to liberate ourselves from this cruel slavery. We groan under it, as the children of Israel under their burdens, but, like them, cannot deliver ourselves. But sooner or later the truth comes to our aid; the truth as it is in Jesus flies to the rescue of God's oppressed family; the blessed Spirit opens it up and seals it upon the heart with a divine power. As, then, under his gracious influences they believe the truth, and feel its power and savour in their heart, a liberating influence is communicated; their fetters and shackles are loosened; the bondage of sin and Satan, and the power and strength of evil are sensibly broken, and a measure of holy freedom is enjoyed. There is no other way of getting from under the bondage of the law but by the application of the gospel, and by believing what the gospel reveals. As the truth, then, comes to the heart as the very word of the living God, power comes with it to believe; faith is raised up to credit the testimony; and as faith begins to credit the truth of God and receive it in hope and love, there is a sensible loosening of the bonds; and then the chains and fetters drop off of themselves. It is with the soul as it was with Peter in prison: when the angel came, and a light shined in the prison, and the angel's words fell upon his ears, "the chains fell from off his hands." There remained nothing then to bar his exit; for "the iron gate that leadeth unto the city opened to them of its own accord." So whatever chains or fetters may hold the soul, let the angel of mercy come; let the message of salvation be revealed, the chains of unbelief drop off, the iron gate of hardness gives way, and the truth makes the soul blessedly free (John 8:32).**

**August 2**

**"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life." 1 Timothy 6:12**

**It is through faith that the power whereby God keeps his people acts and is made known, and it is very instructive and encouraging to be able to trace in our own hearts the connection between the power of God and the actings of faith. We are not carried to heaven as passengers are carried by the express train to Holyhead, so that if once in the carriage they may go to sleep, look out of the window, or read the newspaper without fear of losing their way, or not reaching their destination. Though kept by the power of God, we have to fight every step of the way. It is this living, fighting, struggling, and yet eventually conquering faith, which sets the tried and exercised child of God at such a distance from the loose and careless doctrinal professor, who is hardened and emboldened to presume, and even walk in ways of sin and death by holding the doctrine of being kept by the power of God, without knowing anything of the secret way by which this power works and keeps. To such we may adapt the language of James. You believe that the elect of God are kept by his Almighty power unto salvation. "Thou doest well; the devils also believe and tremble"—which you do not if you be one of these loose professors. But does God keep you? Does he keep you from evil, that it may not grieve you? Does he keep your eye single, your conscience tender, your heart prayerful, your life and walk circumspect, your eye from adultery, your tongue from folly, your hands from covetousness, and your feet from the ways of pride and worldliness? You have no evidence that you are an heir of God and are being kept by his power unto salvation, unless you have some experience how he keeps, and that as it is by power on his part, so it is through faith on yours. Whenever we slip, stumble, or go astray, it is through the power of unbelief; and whenever we stand, fight, or prevail, it is by faith.**

**August 3**

**"One shall say, I am the Lord's: and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel." Isaiah 44:5**

**"Another shall call himself by the name of Jacob." Jacob was a wrestler, for he wrestled all night with the angel; and by wrestling he obtained the blessing. So at present you may be a wrestling Jacob, but have not yet come off a prevailing Israel. You may not be without a sense of guilt and bondage at times in your conscience, and may often doubt and fear whether the root of the matter be in you, because you cannot use the language of assurance and say, "I am the Lord's." Still you may be a wrestling Jacob. The Lord may have put his Spirit in you to enable you to wrestle with him for the blessing, and yet he may not have given you that appropriating faith whereby you can believe that he is yours, and can call him such. How full was the patriarch Jacob of doubt and fear when his own life, and that of his wife and children, lay in the very hands of the injured Esau! But it was this very fear which made him wrestle all the harder, and more fervently cry out, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." Can you not say, "I am seeking for a blessing of this kind with all my heart; I am wrestling with God for it by prayer and supplication, and nothing less can satisfy me?" If this be your experience, you certainly may "call yourself by the name of Jacob." "And shall surname himself by the name of Israel." As Jacob represents a wrestler in the court of grace, so Israel is the emblem of one who has obtained the blessing. When, therefore, any wrestling Jacob has prevailed with God by strength of arm, he may surname himself by the name of Israel. He can then say, "I have wrestled with God for the promised blessing, and have obtained It. I have cried unto the Lord, and he has heard my cry. I have spread my petition before him, and he has at last granted it." So wrestled and so prevailed Hannah, David, Hezekiah, and many a saint both dead and living.**

**August 4**

**"And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee." Psalm 9:10**

**There is a knowing of God's name. By the "name of God" are to be understood the revealed perfections of the Almighty—all that he has revealed concerning himself in the Scriptures of truth. Every attribute, every perfection, everything that God has said of himself, is summed up in the "name of God." But especially does the "name of God" signify the Son of his love, who is "the**

brightness of his glory, and the express image of his Person;" as he said to Moses, "Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him;" that is, all my revealed perfections, all my glorious character, all my divine attributes are in him; for "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Now, there is a knowing this name of God; that is, there is such a thing as an experimental acquaintance in the soul with the perfections of God as revealed in the Scriptures. His name is therefore known when the perfections of God are revealed in the heart and conscience by the power of the Spirit. And this is by virtue of living faith in the soul. By faith we see God. By faith we know God. When we receive into our hearts the truth as it is in Jesus, and when we believe by living faith what God has said of himself in the word, then we know the name of God; and every manifestation of God's mercy, every token of God's favour, and every shining in of God's perfections, is a discovery in our hearts, a raising up in our souls of the knowledge of God's name.

## August 5

"He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up. Selah. God shall send forth his mercy and his truth." Psalm 57:3

And where is God's mercy revealed? Outwardly in the word of God; inwardly in the heart. And it is by sending his mercy into the conscience, shedding abroad his love in the soul, manifesting his pardoning favour within, that God "saves from the reproach of him that would swallow us up." Man may say, 'I do not doubt your religion; surely you have marks and testimonies of being a child of God!' Ministers may come and endeavour to soothe you, and often by their soothing make more mischief than they mend: 'O, no doubt, if you are exercised with these things you are a child of God;' as though a man could be satisfied with exercises, and because he is hungering and thirsting after the Lord, could be contented with his famine and his drought. No; these things do not touch the secret malady, do not go far enough, nor deep enough, nor come with divine power as from the mouth of the Lord himself. All short of this leaves the poor patient afflicted, desolate,

and dejected; and does not remove that under which his soul labours. But mercy, sweet mercy, sent from heaven, and dropped from above into his spirit, applied to his conscience, revealed to his heart, and brought warm into his very soul by the Spirit of God—that saves him from the reproach of every enemy that would swallow him up. For if he can lean, confidently lean upon the arms of mercy, what can man do, what can Satan do, what can sin do, what can death do, what can hell itself do to hurt him? If the mercy of God is upon his side, revealed to his heart, and sent from heaven into his soul, who or what shall swallow him up?

August 6

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." 1 John 5:7

A spiritual knowledge of the Trinity lies at the foundation of all vital godliness. To know Father, Son, and Holy Ghost by special teaching and divine revelation, is the sum and substance of spiritual religion, and is eternal life; according to the Lord's own testimony, John 17:3, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Thus, sooner or later, the Lord leads all his people into a feeling acquaintance with, and divine reception of this glorious mystery; and thus they come to know the Father's electing love, the Son's redeeming work, and the Spirit's inward testimony; and that these Three are One. But how opposed to nature, sense, and reason is this glorious mystery; and how they all rise up in rebellion against it! How can Three be One or One be Three? nature asks and reason argues. And yet the babes receive and believe it. For take away the doctrine of the Trinity, and all their hope is gone in a moment. How can we rest upon Christ's atoning blood, if it is not the blood of the Son of God? or upon his justifying righteousness, if not the righteousness of God? or how could we be kept, led, taught, and guided by the Holy Ghost, if he too was not a divine Person in the Godhead? Thus we come to know the mystery of Three Persons in the Godhead, by feelingly receiving into our hearts the work of each with power; and yet we know that these Three are but one God. It is this inward reception of the truth in the love of it which holds up the soul in a storm. We are often tossed about, and ready to say, "How can these things be?" But we are brought up by this deep-rooted feeling, as the

**anchor brings up the ship in the gale, that we are undone without it. If this mystery be removed, our hope must be removed with it; for there is no pardon, peace, nor salvation, but what stands in, and flows out of, an experimental knowledge of the Three-One God.**

### **August 7**

**"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places." Ephesians 1:19, 20**

**It is no great mystery that the Son of God should be exalted to the throne of power. It is but a step from the bosom of the Father to his right hand. But that one in our nature should be exalted to that seat of pre-eminence and power; that the Mediator between God and man should be the man Christ Jesus; that the hands which once were nailed to the cross should now hold the sceptre, and that the feet which once walked on Lake Gennesaret, which were weary and dust-soiled at Jacob's well, which were washed with a sinful woman's tears and kissed in penitential grief and love with polluted lips—that these very feet should now have all things put under them both in heaven and earth, there is the mystery. And yet what food for faith. The living family of God want a living Saviour, one who can hear and answer prayer, deliver out of soul-trouble, speak a word with power to the heart when bowed down with grief and sorrow, sympathise with them under powerful temptations, support them under the trials and afflictions of the way, maintain under a thousand discouragements his own life in their soul, sustain under bereavements the mourning widow, and be a father to her fatherless children; appear again and again in providence as a friend that loveth at all times and a brother born for adversity, smile upon them in death, and comforting them with his rod and staff as they walk through the valley of its dark shadow, land them at last safely in a happy eternity.**

### **August 8**

**"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions." Psalm 51:1**

**This psalm is very suitable to the wants and feelings of every sensible sinner, for it is not necessary to have committed David's sin to have a measure of David's repentance and confessions, and of David's desires, breathings, and supplications. "Have mercy upon me, O God," he says, "according to thy lovingkindness." To ask God to have mercy upon us is one of the first cries that a convinced sinner puts up to God. It was so with the publican in the temple; and where it is sincere, God will certainly hear it "according to his lovingkindness," for he is full of love and kindness to poor, mourning sinners. How the psalmist also begs of the Lord to "blot out his transgressions according unto the multitude of his tender mercies." As our sins in thought, word, and deed are a countless multitude, of which every one deserves hell, we need "the multitude of his most tender mercies" to blot them out. We may see the stars in the sky, the sands on the sea-shore, the drops of dew on the grass, the waves rolling in upon the beach; but both our sins and God's tender mercies exceed them all. How he shewed these tender mercies in giving his dear Son to suffer, bleed, and die for miserable sinners; and how we need all these tender mercies to pity and pardon us and our transgressions. And how earnestly David begged, "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." It is only the washing of God himself that can wash us thoroughly. If we could shed an ocean of tears it would not wash away one sin; but the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. In order to make us know this, the Lord shews us and makes us feel the guilt and burden of sin, and that we can do nothing to put it away. Pardon must be his own free gift, and that every sensible sinner is made to feel.**

**August 9**

**"Godliness is profitable unto all things." 1 Timothy 4:8**

**What is "profitable?" I may define it in one short sentence—that which does the soul good. Now "godliness" is profitable unto all things, as doing the soul good in all circumstances. Here it stands apart and separate from everything of a worldly nature. Here it is**

distinguished from the "bodily exercise that profiteth little." It is "profitable unto all things." In sickness, in health; in sunshine, in storm; upon the mount, in the valley; under whatever circumstances the child of God may be, "godliness" or rather the "exercise" of godliness is profitable. And it is drawn out by these circumstances. It lives in the face of trials; it is strengthened by opposition; it becomes victorious through defeat; it gains the day in spite of every foe:

**"Stands every storm, and lives at last."**

It does not die away like "bodily exercise;" it does not bloom and fade away in an hour; it is not like Jonah's gourd that grew and withered in a night; it does not leave the soul in the horrors of despair when it most needs comfort; it is not a fickle, false friend that turns its back in the dark and cloudy days of adversity. It is "a friend that loveth at all times," for the Author of it "sticketh closer than a brother." It can come to a bed of sickness when the body is racked with pain; it can enter a dungeon, as with Paul and Silas when their feet were in the stocks; it can go, and has gone with martyrs to the stake; it soothes the pillow of death; it takes the soul into eternity; and therefore it is "profitable unto all things." It is a firm friend; a blessed companion; the life of the soul; the health of the heart; yea, "Christ himself in you, the hope of glory." It is God's own work, God's own grace, God's own Spirit, God's own life, God's own power, God's own dealings, which end in God's own happiness; and therefore it is "profitable unto all things."

**August 10**

**"Having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." 1 Timothy 4:8**

True religion lies deep; it is not a balloon hovering over us miles up in the air. It is like truth—it lies at the bottom of the well. We must go down, then, into religion, if we are to have it really in our hearts. The Lord Jesus Christ was "a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief." He took the lowest, last, and least place. He was always down; so that if we are to be companions with the Lord Jesus Christ, we must go down with him—down into the valley, down into suffering, down into humiliation, down into

trial, down into sorrow. When we get puffed up by worldly joy, or elated by carnal excitement, we do not sympathise with the Lord Jesus Christ in his suffering manhood; we do not go with him then into the garden of Gethsemane, nor behold him as "the Lamb of God" on the accursed tree. We can do without Jesus very well when the world smiles, and carnal things are uppermost in our heart. But let affliction come, a heavy cross, a burden to weigh us down, then we drop into the place where the Lord Jesus is only to be found. We find, then, if the Lord is pleased to bring a little godliness into the soul, and to draw forth this godliness into vital exercise, that it has "the promise of the life that now is." There are promises connected with it of support and strength, comfort, consolation, and peace, that the world knows nothing of; there is a truth in it, a power, a reality, a blessedness in it, that tongue can never express. And when the soul gets pressed down into the vale of affliction, and the Lord is pleased to meet with it there, and visit it then, and draw forth godliness in its actings and exercises, then it is found to have "the promise of the life that now is." Faith, hope, love, repentance, prayerfulness, humility, contrition, long-suffering, and peace—all these gifts and graces of the Spirit are exercised chiefly when the soul is down in affliction. Here is. "the promise of the life that now is" in the drawing forth of these heavenly graces in the heart.

And godliness hath the promise also of "the life which is to come." It supports in life and in death; and takes the soul into a happy and blessed eternity. Grace will end in glory; faith in sight; hope in fruition. The soul taught of God will see Jesus as he is. Thus godliness has "the promise of the life which is to come," when eternal peace shall abound, tears be wiped from off all faces, and grace consummated in endless bliss.

**August 11**

**"That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." Hebrews 6:18**

**If ever there was in your experience a season never to be forgotten of alarm, of fear, of terror, of guilt, of apprehension; and then when you scarcely knew what to do, think or say, there was a view opened up to you of a refuge in the Person and work, blood and**

righteousness of the Lord the Lamb; if as driven or drawn you fled to it, were kindly received, and found safe harbourage from guilt and doubt and fear, then you surely know what it is to have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before you. It is these, and these only, who are heirs of promise; and therefore how important it is to have had some personal experience of these things. How are we to know whether we possess the life of God in our soul, the grace of God in our heart, unless there has been some such fleeing and some such laying hold? Do see, then, if you can trace these two things in your breast: first, if there ever was a season with you when you feared, and trembled at the wrath to come, and were compelled to flee for refuge from it. But, secondly, finding no refuge in self, and that all your own righteousness was a bed too short and a covering too narrow, you fled to Jesus as your only hope; and as there was a sweet opening up to the eye of your faith of a refuge provided in the Lord the Lamb, you were enabled to take hold of him in his covenant characters and blessed relationships, and found in him rest and peace. If, then, you can find these two features of divine life in your soul, you are one of the characters of whom our text speaks; you have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before you in the everlasting gospel.

**August 12**

**"My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word."  
Psalm 119:81**

How difficult, for the most part, it is, and we may add, how rare to be able to realise for ourselves, with any degree of abiding permanency, a sweet experimental sense of, and an assured interest in those spiritual blessings with which, so far as we are believers in the Son of God, we are blessed in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Glimpses, glances, transient views, sips and tastes, drops and crumbs sweet beyond expression whilst they last, but rarely given and soon gone, are, generally speaking, all we seem to get after much hard labour, many cries, earnest entreaties, and vehement longings before the Lord, as he presents himself to our faith, seated on the throne of his grace. How many there are who are daily and sometimes almost hourly crying out, if not in the exact words, yet in the substance of them:

**"O come, thou much-expected guest;**

**Lord Jesus, quickly come!"**

**And yet how long he seems to delay his coming! How continually are they looking upward till eyes and heart seem alike to fail, waiting for his appearing more than they that watch for the morning; how willing to make any sacrifice, to do anything, be anything, or bear anything, if he would but manifest himself to their souls. How often are they searching and examining their hearts, lips, and lives, to see if there be any evil way in them which makes him hide his lovely face, and not drop one word into their longing breasts, whereby they might hold sweet communion with him! How they desire to be blessed with real contrition of heart, and godly sorrow for their sins, and be melted and dissolved at his feet, under a sight and sense of his bleeding, dying love!**

**But whence spring all these longing looks and waiting expectations? Do not all those earnest desires and vehement longings shew that those in whom they so continually are found are begotten again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead? It is divine life in their souls which is the spring and source of these inward breathings, lookings, and longings; and this divine life arises out of a new and spiritual birth, which is itself the fruit of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. It is not the still-born child that cries; it is the cry of the living child which so goes to the heart of the mother. Thus the cries of which we have spoken shew that there is life. But with Life there is hope; for why should a man be ever crying after, waiting for, and anxiously expecting a blessing which he has no hope ever to obtain? If, then, these had no living hope, would they cry? There are no cries in a dead hope. It is because the grace of hope in their breasts is, like every other grace of the Spirit, alive unto God, that it acts in union with faith and love, to bring them and keep them earnest, sincere, and unwearied before the throne, expecting and anticipating what God has promised to bestow on those who wait upon him.**

**August 13**

**"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Romans 8:16**

**You may not perhaps, for the most part, enjoy a strong or clear assurance of your interest in Christ; you may be frequently much exercised whether you are a child of God; and yet you may at times have had a sweet testimony that grace is in your heart. You may have heard the servants of God so describe the feelings of your soul, so enter into your exercises, and bring forward such evidences of grace, that, in spite of all your unbelief, you were convinced that if these men spake agreeably to the mind of God, which you could not well doubt from the power which accompanied it, you were one of his children; and as you felt this inward witness, your heart was softened and moved within you, and you could not help lifting up your soul in praise and adoration to the God of all your mercies. You might sink again almost as low as before; but whilst that heavenly feeling lasted, you had a testimony in your conscience that you were a child of God, and could then and there believe that he was your Father and heavenly friend. This text does not, therefore, cut off those who have not reached the full assurance of faith; it does not imply, much less say, that everybody shall be cut off and sent into everlasting perdition who cannot clearly and boldly declare that the Spirit itself beareth witness with their spirit that they are the children of God. On the contrary, it opens its benign arms to every one who has in any degree or at any time received any deliverance, felt any measure of spiritual consolation, or been favoured with any testimony of his acceptance in the Beloved. It does not come as a two-edged sword to kill all who do not enjoy the full assurance of faith, but still have felt the power of the truth in their hearts. It does not say to such, "You have neither part nor lot in the matter." It would rather draw them forward into the sheltering arms of eternal mercy, and encourage them to press on to know more and more of that inward witness which alone can cheer them in hours of darkness and distress, support them upon a dying bed, and enable them to walk without doubt and fear through the gloomy valley of the shadow of death.**

**August 14**

**"And if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Romans 8:17**

**O the blessedness of being a child of God! Can heart conceive or tongue express the heights and depths of grace and glory, the safety, the happiness, the honour, the bliss, the delight of being an heir of God and a joint-heir with Christ? We soon shall have to put off our mortal bodies—soon have to lie down with the worms of the grave and the clods of the valley—soon have to enter into the invisible world. Well may we then ask ourselves what are our prospects of eternity? Where then will be our inheritance? Will it be one of eternal misery and woe, of weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, or of the pleasures which are at God's right hand for evermore? Have we any evidence or testimony that we are the children of God? Has the Spirit ever borne any direct or indirect witness to our adoption into his family—to our sonship and to our heirship? When we review our past experience, can we find any marks that we can look upon with a good measure of faith and hope as sound, scriptural evidences that we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ? Can you look back upon that memorable season when the Lord was first pleased to work upon your conscience and convince you of your sins?—to that time of love when Christ was first revealed to your heart?—to that day of affliction and trouble when a sweet promise of interest in his love and blood was sealed with divine power upon your soul? Can you find any solid, substantial marks or tokens that you are a partaker of saving and sanctifying grace, born of God, separated from the world as a pilgrim and a stranger, and pressing onward through a thousand foes and fears to a heavenly country? It is of no use leaning upon the testimony of man, or upon any vain hopes or presumptuous confidence that may spring up in a self-righteous, deceitful heart. It is the witness of the Spirit with our spirit, more or less clear—the shining in of the light of the Lord's countenance—the manifestations of his presence and love, which alone can really satisfy a child of God of his being a partaker of grace and of the glory that is to be revealed at the coming of the Lord Jesus.**

**August 15**

**"O that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat! I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments." Job 23:3, 4**

Was not Job in the same spot where we often are? If this aged patriarch had not known what it was to be shut up in his mind, harassed and distressed, and well-nigh overwhelmed with the attacks of the wicked one, he would not have said, "O that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat! I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments." Has that ever been, is it now, the genuine feeling, the real experience of your soul? Do look into your heart, you that fear God. Do look for a moment, if you have never looked before, at the work of grace (and where are you, if you have never looked at it?) and consider if you know any of these matters. Did you ever, in a feeling of darkness, gloom, bondage, and distress of soul, cry (I do not say the words, it is the feelings we want, let the words go), "'O that I knew where I might find him!' Lord, I do want to find thee; my soul longs after thee; I want a taste of thy blessed presence; I want to embrace thee in the arms of my faith; I want the sweet testimonies of thy gracious lips; 'O that I knew where I might find thee!' I would not care what I went through." If so, then these very things shew that you have the fear of God in your souls, and the teaching of the Spirit in your hearts. You are where Job was, and if you know something of what Job speaks here, "O that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat!"—if that is the desire of your soul, you have Job's religion, you have Job's experience, you have Job's affliction in this matter, and you will have Job's deliverance, Job's joy, Job's peace, and Job's salvation. Job's God is your God, and you will be where Job now is, bathing your ransomed soul in all the glory of the Lamb.

**August 16**

"Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." Psalm 68:18

What a painful thing it is to be rebellious! There is hardly any feeling worse than rebellion to a man whose conscience is made tender in God's fear. To have rebellion against a holy and wise God; rebellion against his dealings with us in providence; against his teachings in grace; because we have not more of the light of his countenance; because we have not more and clearer testimonies and manifestations! We know in our judgment that God cannot err in any of his dealings, and yet to find at times such awful

rebellion against God, O how painful it is! The least trifle can work up rebellion. It does not want a storm or a gale to lift up its proud waves. The slightest breath, the faintest breeze that blows, will at times stir up the billows of the rebellious heart, and make it swell with tumultuous heavings. But what a mercy it is to the poor souls that groan and grieve under a rebellious heart, that this ascended Mediator has received gifts for them! It is not your patience, meekness, and good temper, nor your gentle and quiet disposition, that bring down grace into your hearts; but God the Father has lodged all the graces and gifts of the Spirit in his dear Son, and they are given to you because you have an interest in his blood and righteousness. The Lord teaches us this. If we were always patient, meek, holy, submissive, never harassed by the devil, and never felt the workings of corruption, we should begin to think we had some power to please God in ourselves, and should slight and neglect a precious Saviour. But when taught by painful experience what a depraved nature and rebellious heart we carry in our bosom, when the Lord lets down a little mercy and grace into our soul, we then know the blessed quarter whence it comes, and learn to abhor ourselves and bless his holy name.

**August 17**

**"If a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully." 2 Timothy 2:5**

In other words, it is not a bare striving, but a striving according to certain rules. But these rules are spiritual rules; and being spiritual rules, exclude everything of sense, reason, and nature. Now man, in an unregenerate condition, whether he be in a state of profanity, or in a state of profession, has no spiritual knowledge of the way by which to overcome. He may strive against his lusts; he may endeavour to overcome those things that conscience bears testimony against; but he is not crowned, because he strives not lawfully. He strives in his own strength; contends in his own wisdom; and trusts in his own righteousness. Such strugglers and such overcomers (if overcomers they ever are) are not crowned, because they strive not according to the rules laid down in God's word. This at once excludes all creature righteousness, human wisdom, and natural strength. This takes the crown completely off the creature, and puts it on the head of the Redeemer.

**There are certain rules then laid down in the Scripture, according to which we are to fight and to overcome. For instance, the Lord of life and glory is held out in the word as our pattern: "He hath left us an example that we should follow his steps." He fought the battle before us; and he gained the victory, not for himself only, but for his people; and he has left us here below to walk in his footsteps, and to overcome in the same way as he did; as we read, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne; even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." All striving then, and all overcoming, which is not in the steps of Christ, and precisely (in a measure) in the same way in which Jesus strove and overcame, is not the overcoming which is crowned with God's approbation.**

**August 18**

**"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." 1 John 5:11**

**How often we are looking and looking in vain for life in ourselves. True it is that if God has quickened our souls we are partakers of life divine, of life spiritual, of life eternal, of the life that is in Christ and comes from Christ; and yet how often we vainly seek to find it warm and glowing in our breasts. If once given it never dies; but it is often hidden beneath the ashes, and thus though it slowly burns and dimly glows, yet the ashes hide it from view, and we only know it is there by some remains of warmth. "Your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3); and therefore not only hidden as treasured and stored up safely in God, but hidden from the world, and even hidden from the eyes of its possessor. Christ is our life. There is no other. To look, then, for life in ourselves independent of and distinct from the fountain of life is to look for that in the creature which is lodged in the divine Creator, is to look for that in man which dwells in the God-man; to look for that in self which is out of self, embosomed in the fulness of the Son of God. And it is not merely that life is in him, but he is the life itself. As the sun not only has light and heat, but is light itself and heat itself, so the blessed Lord not only grants life, but he himself is what he grants. As a fountain not only gives water, but is itself all water, so Christ not only gives what he is, but is all that he gives. Not only, therefore, is he the "resurrection," centring in himself everything, both for time and eternity, which resurrection**

contains and resurrection implies, but he is "the life," being in himself a fountain of life, out of which he gives from his own fulness to the members of his mystical body.

### **August 19**

**"The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy; he will not always chide; neither will he keep his anger for ever." Psalm 103:8, 9**

**God is angry and justly angry with the sins of his people. He hates sin with a perfect hatred. He cannot but entertain unceasing wrath against it. It is so contrary to the purity and perfection of his holy nature, that wherever he meets with sin his indignation flashes out against it. And till we have some discovery and manifestation of Christ to assure us of an interest in his precious blood and finished work, we cannot separate the anger of God against our sins from the anger of God against our persons. But when the Lord is pleased to reveal a sense of his goodness and mercy in the Person and work of his dear Son, then we can see by the eye of faith that though he is angry with our sins, he is not angry with our persons, but accepts us in the Beloved, having chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Thus he retains not his anger for ever. And why? Because it is propitiated, put away, not retained so as to burn to the lowest hell. The blessed Lord has offered a sacrifice for sin; put away the punishment and penalty due to transgression, propitiated and appeased, and thus put away his indignation and fiery displeasure against the sins of his people; for all the anger of God due to their sins and to their persons was discharged upon the Person of Jesus as he stood our representative and hung upon the cross a bleeding sacrifice, putting away sin by the offering of himself. This is the reason why he retaineth not his anger for ever, it being appeased and put away through the propitiation of our blessed Lord, that it should not burn against the persons of the people of God, nor consume them with the fiery indignation that shall burn up the wicked.**

### **August 20**

**"And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel." Exodus 25:22**

**What heart can conceive or tongue describe the blessedness of this heavenly truth that at all times, under all circumstances, and in all places there is provided a mercy seat, a throne of grace, at which the God of all grace and a sensible sinner may freely meet without let or hindrance, if indeed there be any spirit of prayer in the petitioner's breast? As no place, so no circumstance is too dark for his eye not to see; as no covering is too thick, so no circumstance is too obscure for his sight not to pierce through: "Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord." So felt the Psalmist: "If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to thee." By night upon our bed; by day in our various occupations; in the crowded streets or in the lonely fields; surrounded by the ungodly or in company with the Lord's people, we may, if the Lord the Spirit enable us, lift up a hearty sigh, utter a confessing word, and pour forth one simple desire. This may not to some seem to be sufficient to warrant the gracious fulfilment of the promise, "There will I meet with thee;" and yet every relief thereby obtained proves that it is so; for wherever or whenever we get any sense of the Lord's presence or of the Lord's power, any intimation that his eye is upon us for good, and his ear listening to our cry, be the prayer short or long, be it uttered on our knees or sighed out on our feet, be it in the quiet room or the bustling street, we have in it that evidence which each believer knows best in the sweet experience of it, that God does fulfil his own gracious word, "There will I meet with thee."**

**August 21**

**"O Lord, by these things men live; and in all these things is the life of my spirit." Isaiah 38:16**

**When Hezekiah said, "By these things men live," he meant that by these trials and deliverances, by these sinkings and risings,**

strippings and clothings, emptyings and fillings, "by these things men," that is, spiritual men, "live." It is a mystery, but a great truth, that just in proportion as we die to the world, to self, to sense, to nature, and to false religion, the more the life of God is strengthened in our conscience. The Lord, perhaps, has taught some of you this truth through great afflictions. But when these trials came upon you at the first, it seemed as though they would entirely overwhelm you; they took away your standing, and it appeared as though they had destroyed your faith and hope. But though these floods of temptation passed over the soul, they swept away nothing but rubbish, which till then was mistaken for the inward teachings of God the Spirit. So far then from these afflictions overwhelming your faith, you found that faith was secretly strengthened by the very flood that threatened at first to drown it. True faith is no more destroyed by sharp trials, than the oak is destroyed by cutting away the ivy, or by a storm blowing down some of its rotten branches. And thus, as the oak, the more the winds blow upon it, takes a firmer root in the soil; so the storms and tempests that blow upon the soul, only cause it to take a firmer hold of the truth, and to strike its fibres more deeply into the Person, love, work, and blood of Jesus. So that, "by these things men live," for through them, the life of God is maintained and kept up in the soul, the Holy Ghost secretly strengthening it by the very things that seemed to threaten it with destruction.

**August 22**

**"Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of." 2 Timothy 3:14**

Various hindrances meet the child of God in his path heavenwards. And their tendency is such, that but for the grace of God, they would effectually succeed in driving him from the faith. When, then, he has to meet a head wind blowing right in his teeth, when the storm and hail beat roughly upon him, when the waves rise high and the stream runs strong, there seems no getting on; and he fears that he shall be like "the children of Ephraim, who, being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle." And yet there is that grace implanted in his heart, there is that faith which God the Spirit first created and still keeps alive in his soul, that though he may for a moment be driven aside, he yet never turns his back upon the truth; though retarded for a

moment, his face is still Zionwards. I can say for myself, that all the trials I have passed through, all the temptations I have been in, and all the persecutions I have had to endure, from sinner and from saint, have only served to rivet the truth of God more firmly in my heart. I find the trials, sufferings, exercises from without and from within, instead of driving faith out of the soul, having that effect which Satan would produce by them, and driving the heart from truth into error, from the Church of God into the world,—I can say, from feeling experience, that these inward and outward trials only rivet the truth, and the love of the truth, more deeply in my heart; and instead of driving out faith, they have only tended to strengthen, encourage, and confirm it.

August 23

"But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Thessalonians 2:13, 14

The first work of grace is to kill rather than to make alive; to wound rather than to heal; to bring down rather than to lift up; to reveal the law rather than the gospel. For "balm is useless to the unfeeling." Salvation with all its superabounding grace is but an empty sound to those who have never felt themselves cut off from all help or all hope. So, in a sense, there is a calling under and through, if not by the law, in the first teaching and operations of the Spirit of God, bringing the soul under its condemnation as a ministration of death. But when the law has done its office, and the sinner is slain by its killing power, then there comes to his aid and deliverance, what the Apostle speaks of here, the calling by the gospel. When the gospel utters its melodious voice; when pardon is proclaimed through the sacrifice of Jesus; when peace reaches the heart through atoning blood revealed to the conscience; when the glad tidings of salvation by grace are no longer a mere sound in the letter, but are made the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; when heavenly light shines into the mind; when divine power attends the word to the soul; when faith is raised up, hope casts its anchor within the veil, and the love of God is shed abroad, then and there is the calling of which the Apostle here speaks—a calling by the gospel. The sound

of the gospel trumpet, like the silver trumpet on the great day of jubilee, reaches the ear and heart of the captive exile and he hasteneth that he may be loosed (Isa. 51:14). The scene now changes; the storms of God's wrath blow over; the day-star appears in the dawning morn of the gospel day, "a morning without clouds" (2 Sam. 23:4), until the Sun of righteousness in due time rises with healing in his wings. As, then, the gospel is thus made the power of God unto salvation, the soul is enabled to listen to, and embrace it as a joyful sound. Now just in proportion as faith receives it, hope anchors in it, and love embraces it, is evidence given of our being from the beginning chosen unto salvation.

**August 24**

**"If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." John 4:10**

We cannot know the nature, though we may know the necessity, of the gift of God, till we experience its power as revealed and shed abroad in our soul. Then we know some measure of the gift of God when we feel eternal life flowing through our spiritual veins. How do I know I live naturally? Is not my participation of natural life known to me by an internal consciousness that I possess it? I know I live, because I feel that I live. And so, if we have spiritual life, there will be, at times and seasons, an internal consciousness that we have it; we shall feel the spiritual heart beat, and the spiritual lungs breathe, and the spiritual eyes see, and the spiritual ears hear: in a word, we shall be internally conscious of those emotions and sensations which are peculiar to the life of God in the soul. Spiritual life will be seen in its own light, felt in its own power, and shine forth in its own testimony. The little that we do know (and it is indeed for the most part but a little) makes us long for more of it. If ever we have received "the gift of God" into our conscience; if ever we have felt the mysterious operation of divine life in our hearts; if ever we have known the sweet emotions and peculiar sensations by which it manifests itself, it has killed us to all other religions; and as a measure of divine life has flowed into the heart out of the fulness of the Son of God, we want no other religion but that which stands

**in the power of God; by that alone we can live, and by that alone we feel that we can die.**

**August 25**

**"Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." 1 Peter 1:9**

**What a blessed, what a glorious end is this; what a prize to win, what a victory to gain, what a crowning consummation of all that faith has believed, hope expected or love embraced! Whatever doubts and fears may have harassed the mind, whatever sore temptations may have distressed the soul, whatever deep afflictions, painful trials, heavy guilt, and hard bondage may have sunk it low, so low sometimes, as if it never would get over them or rise out of them, still that faith, which is God's gift and work, lives through all, and there is a blessed end in store for it—the salvation of the soul. And O, what does this not comprehend and imply? Think of what salvation is from; think of what salvation is unto. Neither the one nor the other can be fully known on this side of eternity. You may have had some glimpses of hell, you may have had some glimpses of heaven; some taste of the wrath to come, some taste of the glory that shall be revealed. But you have had only a small taste of either. The wrath of God, the horrors of a guilty conscience, the terrors of despair, the falling into his hands who is a consuming fire you may have, in some small measure, felt or feared; but you have never known, for nature could not bear it, the full and terrible extent of those dreadful realities. And so you may have had glimpses and glances, earnest and foretastes of the glory that shall be revealed; but you have never enjoyed, for nature could not bear it, what saints enjoy in the immediate presence of God. But if you have seen, tasted, handled, felt, and enjoyed a little of what you are saved from, and a little of what you are saved unto, it will make you bless God for having given you even a grain of that true and living faith, the end of which will be the salvation of your soul.**

**August 26**

**"If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise." 1 Corinthians 3:18**

**The fruit and effect of divine teaching is, to cut in pieces, and root up all our fleshly wisdom, strength, and righteousness. God never means to patch a new piece upon an old garment; he never intends to let our wisdom, our strength, our righteousness have any union with his; it must all be torn to pieces, it must all be plucked up by the roots, that a new wisdom, a new strength, and a new righteousness may arise upon its ruins. But till the Lord is pleased to teach us, we never can part with our own righteousness, never give up our own wisdom, never abandon our own strength. These things are a part and parcel of ourselves, so ingrained within us, so innate in us, so growing with our growth, that we cannot willingly part with an atom of them till the Lord himself breaks them up, and plucks them away. Then, as he brings into our souls some spiritual knowledge of our own dreadful corruptions and horrible wickedness, our righteousness crumbles away at the divine touch; as he leads us to see and feel our ignorance and folly in a thousand instances, and how unable we are to understand anything aright but by divine teaching, our wisdom fades away; and as he shews us our inability to resist temptation and overcome sin, by any exertion of our own, our strength gradually departs, and we become like Samson, when his locks were cut off. Upon the ruins, then, of our own wisdom, righteousness, and strength, does God build up Christ's wisdom, Christ's righteousness, and Christ's strength: as Jesus said to his servant Paul, "My strength is made perfect in weakness;" and this brought him to that wonderful conclusion, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Cor. 12:9). But only so far as we are favoured with this special teaching are we brought to pass a solemn sentence of condemnation upon our own wisdom, strength, and righteousness, and feelingly seek after the Lord's.**

**August 27**

**"The desire of our soul is to thy Name, and to the remembrance of thee." Isaiah 26:8**

**How sweet and expressive is the phrase, "The desire of our soul!" How it seems to carry our feelings with it! How it seems to**

describe the longings and utterings of a soul into which God has breathed the spirit of grace and mercy! "The desire of our soul,"—the breathing of our heart, the longing of our inmost being; the cry, the sigh, the panting of our new nature; the heavings, gaspings, lookings, longings, pantings, hungerings, thirstings, and ventings forth of the new man of grace—all are expressed in those sweet and blessed words, "The desire of our soul!" And what a mercy it is, that there should ever be in us "the desire" of a living soul; that though the righteous dealings of God are painful and severe, running contrary to everything nature loves; yet that with all these, there should be dropped into the heart that mercy, love, and grace, which draw forth the desire of the soul toward the Name of God. This is expressed in the words that follow, "With my soul have I desired thee in the night!" If you can say no more about the work of grace upon your heart than that—can you really use these words as descriptive of feelings experienced within, "With my soul have I desired thee in the night?" Is your soul longing after the Lord Jesus Christ? Is it ever in the night season panting after the manifestation of his presence? hungering and thirsting after the dropping-in of some word from his lips, some sweet whisper of his love to your soul? These are marks of grace. The carnal, the unregenerate, the ungodly, have no such desires and feelings as these; there is nothing in their heart corresponding with "the desire of the soul" unto the Name of God. But it is the case with all the righteous; for "the desire of the righteous shall be satisfied."

**August 28**

**"And stablish you in every good word and work." 2  
Thessalonians 2:17**

The living family of God need to be established in the truth, so as not ever to be "children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine." It is not sufficient for a building to be reared: it must be established before we can know whether it will stand. The most anxious moment of the builder is to see how it will settle; how the walls will bear the roof, and every part stand firm and good without bulging or slipping. When the centering is taken away from a newly-built arch, how the architect looks to see whether it will settle well and the extent of the drop, if there be any. So in grace. It is not merely making a profession that will serve. Many a

building stands well as long as the scaffolding remains; many an arch looks firm whilst the centering supports it. So many seem to stand well in early days, when upheld by zeal and earnestness, or strengthened by the support of others. But how will the soul stand when helps are removed? Will it be established in the faith, or fall into some error or some gross evil, and thus, like an arch badly built, drop into ruin when the centering is taken away. How we continually see those who once seemed firm in the truth now greedily drinking down some deadly error presented to their lips under the charm of a plausible novelty; and others fall headlong into some open sin, or get entangled in some delusion. O that the Lord would stablish you, me, and all who desire to fear his name firmly and deeply in his precious truth, that we may never fall a prey to evil or error, but may have a religion of his own maintaining; that the work upon our heart may be the genuine work of God first and last; a building of his own raising and his own establishing, that it may stand firm amidst the storms of time, and endure for all eternity!

**August 29**

**"He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions." Psalm 107:20**

What an effect a word from God can produce! Be it in reading; in hearing; on the knees; or in secret meditation; when a word drops from the Lord's mouth with any divine power into the soul, what a change it produces! And nothing but this divine power can ever bring a poor sinner out of his miserable condition. When this comes, it does the work in a moment; it heals all the wounds which sin has made, and repairs all the breaches in the conscience that folly has produced. One word from God heals them all. The Lord does not come as it were with plasters to heal first one sore and then another. He heals now as in the days of his flesh. When he healed then, he healed fully, at once, completely. The earthly doctor heals by degrees; he puts a plaster on one sore, and a liniment on another; and heals one by one. But when the Lord heals, it is all done in a moment. The balm of Gilead flows over all the wounds, heals them up, and makes them perfectly whole. It is then with the soul as with the woman with the issue of blood; "she felt in her body she was healed of that plague." And this is healing! Any testimony from God, really from God, does it in a

moment. If you can get but one word from God into your soul to make you believe you are a child of God, and interested in his pardoning love and mercy, every wound, though there be a million, yes, every wound will be healed instantaneously. This is the only healing worth having. To be healed by evidences is like being healed by plasters. You want an evidence here, and an evidence there, as a man that has his body full of sores wants a plaster upon every wound. One word from God is the real panacea, the true, the only "heal-all;" and Jesus (Jehovah-rophi, "the Lord my healer") the only true infallible Physician. Would you be healed completely, you must look to the Lord, and not to man; be a Hezekiah, not an Asa.

**August 30**

**"As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." 1 Peter 1:14-16**

Grace lays us under the greatest of all obligations to its free and bountiful Giver, and especially to render a believing obedience to his revealed will and word. It is his free, sovereign, and distinguishing grace alone which makes and manifests us to be his children, and therefore it demands of us, as a feeble and most insufficient tribute of grateful praise, that we should walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, and glorify him in our body and spirit which are his. He that has never known and felt this knows nothing of the riches of God's grace in the manifestation of mercy and love to his soul. Such a one knows, that do what he can, he can never do enough to show forth the praises of him who hath called him out of darkness into his marvellous light, and his grief and burden ever are that, through the power of indwelling sin, he cannot do the things that he would, but is always falling short, always sinning against bleeding, dying love. To such a one, therefore, the precepts of the gospel are as dear as the promises, and he sees that they are set in the word of truth as "a lamp to his feet and a light to his path," a guiding rule by which, if he could but direct his steps, he would glorify God, walk in peace and love with his people, preserve a good conscience, and adorn the doctrine which he professes in all things. Obedience, therefore, to him is a sweet word, and is viewed

by him as a precious portion of that free and everlasting gospel which, in restoring fallen man to God's favour, restores him also to an obedience acceptable in his sight.

August 31

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Romans 8:18

What is to be compared with the salvation of the soul? What are riches, honours, health, long life? What are all the pleasures which the world can offer, sin promise, or the flesh enjoy? What is all that men call good or great? What is everything which the outward eye hath seen, or natural ear heard, or hath entered into the carnal heart of man, put side by side with being saved in the Lord Jesus Christ with an everlasting salvation? For consider what we are saved from, as well as what we are saved unto. From a burning hell to a blissful heaven; from endless wrath to eternal glory; from the dreadful company of devils and damned spirits, mutually tormenting and tormented, to the blessed companionship of the glorified saints, all perfectly conformed in body and soul to the image of Christ, with thousands and tens of thousands of holy angels, and, above all, to seeing the glorious Son of God as he is, in all the perfection of his beauty, and all the ravishments of his presence and love. To have done for ever with all the sorrows, troubles, and afflictions of this life; all the pains and aches of the present clay tabernacle; all the darkness, bondage, and misery of the body of sin and death; to be perfectly holy in body and soul, being in both without spot, or blemish, or any such thing, and ever to enjoy uninterrupted union and communion with the Father, Son, and blessed Spirit—O what a heaven lies before the believing saints of God as the end of their faith in the salvation of their souls!