

The True Christian's Love of the Unseen Christ

Thomas Vincent



DIGITAL Puritan PRESS

The True Christian's Love of the Unseen Christ

A Discourse Chiefly Tending to Excite and Promote the Decaying Love of Christ in the Hearts of Christians.

by Thomas Vincent

Edited by Gerald Mick

DIGITAL **Puritan** PRESS

Westfield, Indiana, USA



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www.digitalpuritan.net

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The unattributed biographical preface is adapted from that which appears in several 19th century editions of works by Thomas Vincent, including this title and *God's Terrible Voice in the City*—an account of his experiences during the Great Plague of London in 1665, and the Great Fire which followed in 1666.

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ISBN 9781548998479 (paperback)

ISBN 9780359565603 (e-book)

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Foreword

Apathy amongst believers is perhaps the greatest danger facing the church in our day. It quietly opens a door to let in a multitude of divisive and unwelcome guests. Apathy cultivates a sleepy tolerance for error and false teaching, coaxing us to stand by in silence while Scripture is manipulated in a way that brings glory to the personality standing behind the pulpit. Apathy produces the kind of superficial preaching that is heard and soon forgotten in far too many sanctuaries throughout the world every Sunday. Apathy first permits, then rationalizes, and finally defends the compromise of basic biblical morality. Apathy nurtures the neglect of evangelism and promotes the endless (and aimless) pursuit of pleasure or leisure over the difficult and necessary duties of service and holiness.

Apathy also manifests itself in our personal lives in many ways—a passivity toward the truth, stalled-out spiritual growth, relapses in the area of personal purity (for apathy is a wide and easy gateway into sin), indifference for the lost and their plight, and an over-arching absence of any desire to see Christ magnified.

Not surprisingly, we don't talk to each other about the apathy we see quietly taking root in our hearts, and we are quick to refocus our attention on other things. But ignoring the problem will not mitigate the damage an apathetic spirit inevitably produces.

We are called to live lives characterized by passion, fervor, and zeal. And yet it is not enough to simply possess these qualities; their origin and end are also of vital importance. In these pages you will hear Thomas Vincent calling you to return to your first love, Jesus Christ. It is just as audible a call today as it was when first proclaimed centuries ago. The call is this: to eschew the cold, mechanical, religious orthodoxy that Jesus condemned ([Matthew 15:8](#); [Revelation 2:4](#), [3:16](#)), and instead to cultivate a living, vibrant, and unmitigated love for the Savior!

As you read this book, I urge you to do so actively. Work hard to hear and contemplate the truths of Christ in such a way that you are compelled to take action, remembering that it is always a safe and profitable use of your

time and effort to strive for an ever-increasing love for Jesus Christ (indeed, it is impossible to love him too much!). It is love for Christ that calls us to draw ever nearer unto him. We are captivated by his beauty as we see it revealed in his Word. And in the end, intimate communion with Christ is the only certain cure; it will annihilate the apathy that has ushered in so much of what ails us in our day.

My prayer for you today is that you may finally ring the death-knell for the torpid spirit of apathy that has caused you to slumber for far too long. May your love for Christ increase exponentially each day for the rest of eternity.

ERIC MOORE
Westfield, Indiana, USA
December 2018

Biographical Preface

“The memory of the just is blessed.”

[Proverbs 10:7](#)

The Reverend Thomas Vincent, the subject of the present brief memoir, was born at Hertford, England in the month of May, 1634. He was the son of a pious minister, the Reverend [John Vincent](#), and brother of the justly celebrated [Nathaniel Vincent](#)—a man whose praise is still in all the churches of the Living God.

Of his early education, his habits of piety, and how he was brought to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, we have no particular account. He graduated at Christ’s Church, Oxford, and as he appears to have entered into the ministry very early, and was soon distinguished in his holy vocation in a very conspicuous manner, it is but fair to infer that “from a child he knew the Scriptures” ([2 Timothy 3:15](#)), and that the instructions of a pious father and the blessing of God had produced in him an abundant fruit of ministerial gifts and graces. Indeed, it is said of him that he knew the entire New Testament and Psalms by heart. And by his eminent usefulness and pure zeal for the good of others, he commanded the respect and veneration of men of all parties—even those that were so widely separated by those distracting times. It is also noteworthy that he was as much a pattern of humble submission to the dispensations of his Divine Master in the midst of the most severe trials and persecutions, as he was in his active diligence in the cause of righteousness and truth.

Sometime prior to the restoration of [Charles II](#) he succeeded the Reverend [Thomas Case](#) at the sequestered rectory of St. Mary Magdalen on Milk Street in London. There he remained until he was ejected by the [Bartholomew Act](#) of August 24, 1662—a day which has so often been shrouded in darkness, and which for the awful singularity of its disasters can never be forgotten by the Christian church to the end of time.

After being driven from his beloved employment “preaching Christ crucified” ([1 Corinthians 1:23](#)), he united with his no less devout and learned friend, the Reverend [Thomas Doolittle](#), in the education of youth.

From this duty he was however soon called by the awful judgment which visited London in the year 1665. Indeed, in those days, “pestilence walked in darkness, and destruction wasted at noon-day” ([Psalm 91:6](#)). The groans of the dying and the lamentations and distress of the survivors were heard in every household. In vain did thousands look in their last moments for consolation from those who had ministered the word of life to them—yet dismay and terror had not only seized the flocks, but its shepherds as well. Both had sought a place of safety from the plague; it was the only thing that anyone had the time or inclination to seek.

In this momentous crisis, which was capable of shaking even the strongest faith, Mr. Vincent resolved to commit himself to the protection of his God, so that he might administer spiritual relief to the desperate and the dying. He gave notice of his intention to his colleague, who strongly urged him to abandon the idea by expressing the danger to which he would be exposing himself, and reasoning that he should instead reserve himself for more extensive service in the future.

Mr. Doolittle’s reasoning did not persuade Mr. Vincent, and they mutually agreed to refer the case to their brethren in and about the city. Mr. Doolittle began by stating his objections to the plan of his affectionate friend. But Mr. Vincent soon replied that he had seriously weighed the whole matter before making his resolution to engage upon it; he had examined the state of his own soul, and knew that he could cheerfully look death in the face. He expressed his belief that it was absolutely necessary for some comfort to be administered to such multitudes of his dying fellow beings, and that since he had no prospect of such an excellent opportunity for exercising his ministry in such a useful way, he had committed himself and his case to God in prayer, solemnly devoting himself to his service and the immortal souls in peril on this occasion. He then added that he therefore hoped no one would endeavor to weaken his hands in this work.

His reasoning produced such conviction in the minds of his brethren that with one voice they declared their belief that God was indeed calling him to this trying duty. And uniting their prayers for his preservation and success, they committed him to the God who would not permit a hair of his head to be touched without his consent ([Luke 21:18](#)).

Thus encouraged, he set to work immediately with zeal and resolve. He went into the scenes of contagion, entering the dwelling-places of disease and death without fear. Throughout the entire epidemic he preached in various parish churches every Lord's Day. His preaching was suited to the occasion and solemnized by the awful scenes that surrounded his hearers. This was further intensified by his own persuasive and searching manner of address—and it produced powerful and lasting effects. Multitudes crowded in to hear him, and it was unusual for his sermons not to be sealed by some who came to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

God was pleased to honor this good man's faith and the prayers of his brethren. And although nearly 68,000 died of the plague that year in London (including seven from the household in which Mr. Vincent resided), yet he remained in perfect health during the entire epidemic. Thus did the Lord fulfill his own promise to protect his servant in [Psalm 41:3–7](#), preserving him for future usefulness to a large congregation, among whom he labored until it pleased his Master to call him unto his eternal rest in the year 1678.

Be assured that the slender volume you now hold in your hands will speak for itself. It breathes the very spirit of the Gospel in every page, unfolding the nature of sincere love for the Lord Jesus Christ, and pointing the believer to heaven, where the Savior sits—the very Savior who, “though having not seen, we love; in whom, though now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory” ([1 Peter 1:8](#)).

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. What can you ascertain of Thomas Vincent's personality from this brief sketch of his life in ministry?
2. What examples would be worthy of imitation for Christians today?

To the Christian Reader

Our Savior sent an epistle from heaven to the church of Ephesus, in which he reproved her because she had left her first love; he threatened to remove her candlestick, taking away her light, if she would not recover her love. By the same hand and at the same time, he sent another epistle to the church of Laodicea, in which he reproved her lukewarmness, and because she was neither hot nor cold, threatened to spew her out of his mouth ([Revelation 2:4–5, 3:15–16](#)).

And are Christians in England under no such sin, and in no such danger? For some scoff at the flames of love to Christ (like dogs that bark at the moon so far above them), while the most nominal Christians are complete strangers to this love, regardless of what their doctrinal knowledge may be. The former look upon love to Christ as nothing but a fancy, while the latter have it only in theory. And even among those Christians who sincerely love Christ, there are very few that know what it is to love Christ with passion and zeal.

When there is such a general decay of love to Christ within our land, Lord, what is likely to become of England? Have we not provoked the Lord to take away our candlestick, plunging us into a worse darkness than the Egyptians ([Exodus 10:21–22](#))? Will he cover our light because it shines forth with such cold beams, because the light of head-knowledge is accompanied by so little warmth of love to Christ within the hearts of most Christians?

Everyone will fetch water to help quench the fire when the city is burning. And just as surely, in this day when we see such a general decline in love for Christ, we need someone to fetch us fire—a fire from heaven—and to use bellows (by this I mean arguments) so that the spark of love for Christ, which seems so close to going out, is both kindled and fanned into flame.

Reader, the following discourse concerning *The True Christian's Love of the Unseen Christ* is not finely-spun and curiously woven with neatnesses of wit and language; it is not flourished and set off with a variety of metaphors, hyperboles, rhetorical elegancies, or poetic fancies and

fragments; it is not adorned and fringed with the specious show of many marginal quotations excerpted from diverse authors. Rather, the discourse is plain—but the author has endeavored that it might be warm, his design being to advance the esteem of his Master more than himself. And if he has less of your praise so that his Lord may have more of your love, then his great aim is achieved.

In this age of knowledge, there is generally more need of excitation than information, and thus the chief part of this discourse is application, and about two-thirds of it is exhortation, where you have a variety of arguments and motives for stirring up and provoking a love for Christ. This is combined with diverse directions on how to attain this love in truth and strength, and how the strength of love for Christ should manifest itself. An appendix has also been added, to further encourage you toward a love for Christ: *Christ's Manifestation of Himself Unto Those That Love Him*.

This whole discourse is practical. You will not find anything in it which is controversial. Both Protestants and Catholics will verbally acknowledge the obligation which Christians have for loving Christ, and no one who is a true Christian will find anything that is objectionable; none but Muslims, infidels, and devils will profess anything against it.

And that this little book may be blessed by the Lord to be a means of warming and inflaming your heart with love to the unseen Christ—this is the earnest prayer of a hearty well-wisher to your soul.

THOMAS VINCENT.

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. What prompted Thomas Vincent to write this book?
2. What is his goal for you, the reader?

Introduction

“Whom having not seen, ye love, in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.”

[1 Peter 1:8](#)

The life of Christianity very much consists of our love for Christ. Without love for Christ we are as much without spiritual life as a carcass is without natural life when the soul has fled from it. Faith without love to Christ is a dead faith, and a Christian without love to Christ is a dead Christian—dead in his sins and trespasses. Without love to Christ we may have the name of Christians, but we are wholly without the nature of Christians; we may have the form of godliness, but are wholly without its power (*cf.* [2 Timothy 3:5](#)). “Give me thine heart,” is the language of God to all the children of men ([Proverbs 23:26](#)). ‘And give me thy love,’ is the language of Christ unto all of his disciples.

Christ knows the command and influence which true and strong love for him has; how it will engage all of the other affections of his disciples for him—that if he has their love, then their desires will be chiefly for him, their delights will be chiefly in him, their hopes and expectations will be chiefly from him—and their hatred, fear, grief, and anger will be carried forth chiefly unto sin, because it is offensive to him.

He knows that love will engage and employ all of the powers and faculties of their souls for him: their thoughts will be brought into captivity and obedience unto him ([2 Corinthians 10:5](#)); their understandings will be employed in seeking and finding out his truths; their memories will be receptacles for retaining them; their consciences will be ready to accuse and excuse as his faithful deputies; their wills will choose and refuse according to his direction and revealed pleasure.

All of their senses and the members of their bodies will be his servants: their eyes will see for him, their ears will hear for him, their tongues will speak for him, their hands will work for him, their feet will walk for him. All of their gifts and talents will be dedicated to his devotion and service.

If he has their love, they will be ready to do for him whatever he requires; they will be ready to suffer for him whatever he calls them unto. If they have much love to him, they will not think much of denying themselves, taking up his cross, and following him wherever he leads them ([Matthew 16:24](#)).

And because love for Christ is so essential to true Christianity, so earnestly looked for by our Lord and Master, so powerfully commanding in the soul and over the whole man, and so greatly influential upon our duty, I have made love for Christ the subject of this treatise; and my chief endeavor in it shall be to excite and provoke Christians unto the lively and vigorous exercise of this grace of love unto the Lord Jesus Christ, for there is a great and universal need of it.

The epistle in which my text lies was written by Peter, the apostle of the circumcision, and is directed “to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia,” as [the first verse](#) in this chapter describes. By “strangers” we are to understand the scattered Jews, who were indeed strangers in the various countries that they inhabited. We read in the second chapter of Acts that many of these Jews came from these and other countries to Jerusalem to worship. And while they were in the temple, they heard the apostles speaking in the various languages which were used in the many places where they lived—and that without instruction from man, but as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance. They were both amazed and confounded by this ([Acts 2:4–6](#)). And after hearing Peter preach one sermon through the wonderful power of the Holy Spirit, three thousand of them were converted to the Christian faith and added to the church ([Acts 2:37–41](#)). Now when the feast of Pentecost was over, these converted Jews returned to the countries where their homes, families, and callings were. And because these countries were heathenish and idolatrous, they doubtless met with opposition and suffering on account of the Christian religion of which they had become zealous professors—and this besides what they endured from their own countrymen, for many of the unconverted Jews hated Christianity more than the heathens did.

The apostle appears to be addressing these believers in this epistle. In it he encourages them with many consolatory arguments to continue suffering for the sake of Christ. In the [second verse](#) he wishes that grace and peace

might be multiplied in them and toward them; and then, though their sufferings did abound, their consolations would abound much more. In [verses 3–5](#) he blesses God for his abundant mercy toward them in bringing them into the lively hope of the glorious and never-fading heavenly inheritance, which was reserved for them on account of God’s infinite grace, and unto which they were reserved and kept through faith by God’s infinite power. In the [6th and 7th verses](#) he tells them that although they were weighed down by many afflictions, yet these trials, they are but for a season. “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning” ([Psalm 30:5](#)). These trials were necessary in order to humble them, to purify them, to crucify them to the world, and to make them more like the Lord Jesus Christ. And by the trial of their faith, the true nature of that faith would be apparent to both themselves and others—and the worth of it would appear much more precious than gold which has been purified by fire. And if this carried them through their sufferings, they would be found both to their own praise and their Master’s honor on the day when Jesus Christ will appear.

The apostle speaks of the love they bore unto this Jesus Christ, of the unspeakable and glorious joy which resulted from believing in him (although they had not seen him)—a joy which no trouble or affliction could overwhelm or hinder: “Whom having not seen ye love, in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory” ([1 Peter 1:8](#)). Now from this observe,

Doctrine 1. That it is the property and duty of true Christians to love Jesus Christ, whom they have never seen: “Whom having not seen ye love.”

Doctrine 2. That true Christians believe in an unseen Christ: “In whom though now ye see him not, yet believing.”

Doctrine 3. That true Christians may rejoice in believing with unspeakable and glorious joy: “In whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”

Here are three great points to be addressed:

1. Concerning the love of Christians unto Christ.

2. Concerning the faith of Christians in Christ.
3. Concerning the joy of Christians in believing.

For the present I shall speak only of the love of Christians unto Christ under the first doctrine; perhaps I will have the opportunity to address the others at a later time.

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. What litmus test does the author use to test the genuineness of a Christian profession of faith? How does Scripture support this notion? (For hints, see [Proverbs 23:26](#), [Revelation 2:4–5](#), [Revelation 3:15–16](#), [Matthew 6:21](#), and [Mark 12:28–30](#). Compare this to [Matthew 15:8](#).)
2. List all of the things that Christ can count on having if he has your heart.

Chapter 1

TRUE CHRISTIANS LOVE JESUS CHRIST.

Doctrine. *It is the mark and duty of true Christians to love the Lord Jesus Christ, whom they have never seen.*

In handling this point I shall speak:

1. Concerning true Christians, who do love Jesus Christ.
2. Concerning Jesus Christ, whom they have never seen—the object of their love ([chapter 2](#)).
3. Concerning the love they bear for this unseen Christ ([chapter 3](#)).
4. I shall show that it is an attribute of true Christians to love Jesus Christ, whom they have never seen ([chapter 4](#)).
5. I shall show that it is their duty to love him ([chapter 5](#)).
6. I shall describe how they ought to love him ([chapter 6](#)).
7. I shall explain why they love him ([chapter 7](#)).
8. Finally, I shall make some points of use and application ([chapters 8–17](#)).



Concerning true Christians, whose property it is to love Jesus Christ, whom they have never seen, “whom having not seen ye love”; ye love—that is, you who are true Christians, who are so in reality as well as in profession.

And of these true Christians that love Christ, the apostle describes them as “elect [...] according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ” ([1 Peter 1:1–2](#)). True Christians are elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father; they are those whom God, according to the counsel of his own will ([Ephesians 1:11](#)), according to his own purpose and grace ([2 Timothy 1:9](#)), did choose from all eternity to be a holy and peculiar people to himself for the purpose of glorifying him here on earth ([1 Peter 2:9](#)), and that they might be glorified by him hereafter in heaven.

And this election evidences itself in the sanctification of the Spirit. True Christians are sanctified, being separated and set apart from the rest of the world for God's use and service. God has sealed them for himself, and thus distinguished them from all others. Now the mark of this seal is holiness unto the Lord: "If any man purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work" ([2 Timothy 2:21](#)). They are purged from the defilement of sin, which pollutes and dishonors them; they are vessels of honor, like those of silver and gold in a great house, which are adorned with pearls and precious stones. They are bejeweled with every sanctifying grace, which are of more worth than the richest gemstones—and therefore they are both beautiful in God's eye and fit for his use, having been prepared and commissioned for every good work.

The apostle Paul prays for this on the Thessalonians' behalf: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" ([1 Thessalonians 5:23](#)). True Christians are sanctified wholly—in their whole man—though they are not sanctified thoroughly. They are sanctified in every part, though they are not sanctified to the highest degree.

Their entire spirit is sanctified; that is, the higher faculties of the soul: the understanding and the will. Their understandings are enlightened by the Holy Spirit so that they may discern both good and evil beyond what any natural man can attain unto. Their wills are bowed (or rather, rectified and made straight), being inclined unto God and his law.

Their souls are also sanctified in the lower faculties, in all the affections which belong to the desires, passions, and appetites. They cultivate feelings of love, desire, delight, and hope toward God, Christ, and things above, while their feelings of animosity (hatred, fear, grief, and anger) are directed toward sin.

Their bodies also are sanctified, being made members of Christ ([1 Corinthians 6:15](#)) and instruments of righteousness ([Romans 6:13](#)). Their eyes, ears, tongues, hands, feet, and every part are devoted to God and made use of for his glory. In this manner are true Christians sanctified by the Spirit.

They are also sanctified unto obedience. The graces which are wrought by the Spirit in their hearts manifest themselves as obedience in their lives. Their way of life follows a course of obedience unto the laws of Christ, for they are sanctified unto obedience.

Finally, they are sanctified unto the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ ([1 Peter 1:2](#)). God has set them apart to be sprinkled with the blood of the immaculate Lamb who takes away sin, so that they might be pardoned and saved ([John 1:29](#)). And such are true Christians, who love this Christ whom they have not seen.

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. The author describes sanctification of the whole person as a mark of true conversion ([1 Thessalonians 5:23](#)). How is sanctification made manifest in each part of our being?
2. Do you see these marks of sanctification in your life? Explain your answer.

Chapter 2

THE OBJECT OF A CHRISTIAN'S LOVE IS THE UNSEEN CHRIST.

The object of a true Christian's love is Jesus Christ, whom they have never seen. This Jesus Christ whom they love is the eternal Son of God, the second person in the glorious Trinity, who in time assumed our human nature, clothed himself with our mortal flesh, lived like a servant in a lowly condition, died like a criminal the cursed death of the cross—and all for our sakes, for our sins. He rose again on the third day for our justification, and after forty days ascended up into heaven, where he sits at the right hand of the throne of majesty on high in order to make intercession for us, and to make preparation for our reception there into the glorious mansions and eternal habitations which are in the Father's house.

He is called *Jesus* from the Hebrew word יֵשׁוּעַ, which signifies 'to save' because he saves his people from their sins ([Matthew 1:21](#)). He is called *Christ* from the Greek word χρίω, which signifies 'to anoint', for he has been anointed by the Father with the Spirit and with power, to be Mediator between God and man, to be the great Prophet, Priest, and King of the Church.

Christians have not seen this Jesus Christ with the eye of sense. Long ago some Christians (such as the apostles, those who were of his family, and other disciples who conversed with him frequently), they did indeed see him with the eye of sense—yet it was in his state of humiliation, when he was here upon the earth. But now he is in heaven, in his state of exaltation. And some have seen Christ after his ascension, namely Paul at the time of his conversion, and Stephen (the first martyr) before he died. But no one's eyes have had a perfect sight of the glory which is upon Christ's body, the luster of which is so great that none can behold it in this state of weakness and imperfection, and live.

And regardless of whatever sight some Christians may have had formerly of him, no Christians now have a sight of Christ's person. They hear of him with their ears, but they do not see him with their eyes. They have seen representations of Christ in the sacraments, but they have never seen the

One that is represented there. They have seen his image upon their fellow-Christians, but they have not seen the Original from which this image has been sketched. Some Christians have been in Judea, and have seen the place where the Lord lived; and have been in Jerusalem to see the place where the Lord died. Some have visited the sepulcher where for a time the Lord did lie; and they have seen the mount from which the Lord ascended. But no Christians who are now living have been in the Jerusalem or Mount Zion which is above, to see where the Lord is now enthroned in his glory. It is this Jesus Christ, the object of their love, whom Christians have not seen.

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

Do you long to see this unseen Christ in all of his glory? Is it, “absence makes the heart grow fonder,” or, “out of sight, out of mind”?

Chapter 3

CONCERNING THE LOVE CHRISTIANS BEAR FOR THE UNSEEN CHRIST.

The third point concerns the love which true Christians bear for this unseen Christ. Love is the going forth of the heart unto the beloved object, and the love which true Christians bear unto Jesus Christ is a grace wrought by the Spirit in their hearts. Now this grace results from beholding and comprehending Christ's infinite beauty and excellence—his matchless love, grace, and mercy. Their hearts go forth unto him in earnest desires of union to and communion with him; in him they find their greatest source of satisfaction, and this is accompanied by a yielding and dedication of themselves unto his will and service.

1. *The love of Christians for Christ is a grace wrought within their hearts by the Spirit.* It is a flower most sweet and fragrant, but there is no seed of it in the nature of any man since the fall. Rather, it is planted in the soul by the Spirit of God. Love for Christ is a divine spark that comes down from above, a fire kindled by the breath of the Lord, whose essence is love.

2. *The grounds of this love for Christ is the beholding and comprehending of Christ's loveliness and love.* There must first be a discovery of Christ as a suitable object for the Christian's love. Now this is not some bare notion, but a firm comprehension of it, that Christ is infinitely lovely and superlatively excellent. They see and understand that his love is matchless and transcendent toward the children of men, and that there is a treasury to be found in him, a warehouse of all graces, and the richest and most necessary provisions—otherwise there would be no going forth of the heart in love unto him.

3. *The Christian's love for Christ expresses itself in its desires for union unto and communion with Christ.* It is the nature of love to desire union to the beloved object, and this is especially true of a love unto Christ. And once this union has been attained, their desires seek communion with Christ in the form of conversation and fellowship with him—for no interaction is so desirable as that which occurs with the persons we love most dearly. And

having attained this communion, they find their greatest source of satisfaction in it. The soul is at ease and rests sweetly in Christ, rejoicing in his presence and love.

4. The result of this love which true Christians have for Christ is a yielding and dedication of themselves to his will and service. Lovers give themselves unto those whom they love; this is a natural part of the marriage union. And those who love Christ, they are espoused and joined unto Christ. They give themselves unto Christ to be his, and wholly at his disposal, even as the wife gives herself unto her husband.

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. How does the author define love?
2. From whence does such love for Christ arise?
3. What are the marks of love for Christ?

Chapter 4

IT IS AN ATTRIBUTE OF TRUE CHRISTIANS TO LOVE JESUS CHRIST, WHOM THEY HAVE NEVER SEEN.

The fourth thing to show is that it is the property of all true Christians to love this unseen Christ. True Christians are distinguished, not only from all heathens and infidels, but also from all bare nominal Christians, by their love for Jesus Christ.

It is the property of covetous persons to love worldly wealth and riches; it is the property of ambitious persons to love worldly honor and dignities; it is the property of voluptuous persons to love sensual pleasures and delights—and it is the property of true Christians to love Jesus Christ, whom they have never seen.

None but those who are true Christians love Christ, and all that are true Christians love him. Now the loveliness of Christ does not appear to the eye of sense, but to the eye of faith. Those who do not see him with this eye cannot love him; and those that see him with this eye cannot help but love him. And for those who do not love Christ, it is not because Christ lacks beauty—but because they are blind. Now all true Christians have this eye of faith for seeing Christ's excellencies, and none but true Christians have this eye. The essence of Christianity consists of believing: reason makes us men, but faith makes us true Christians. And as it is the property of true Christians to believe, so also is it their property to love this unseen Christ.

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. Explain how love for Christ is the one essential characteristic of a true Christian.
2. Why is it that only Christians can have a genuine love for Christ?

Chapter 5

IT IS A CHRISTIAN'S DUTY TO LOVE JESUS CHRIST.

The fifth thing is to show that it is the duty of all true Christians to love this unseen Christ. This is apparent from what we read in [John 21:15–17](#). Peter was the most bold and forward of all of Christ's disciples, and as a result he had been too self-confident, a fault which laid the foundation for his fall, when he shamefully denied his Master three times. A look from his Lord reminded him of this, and brought him to repentance with bitter weeping for his sin as soon as it was committed ([Luke 22:54–62](#)). After our Savior had risen from the dead he appeared unto Peter with the rest of his disciples, and asked him the same question three times, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" In doing this he tacitly rebuked him for his great sin in denying his Lord three times—something which Peter would have never done were it not for some defect in his love for Christ. And in this rebuke he also signifies that to love him is the great duty, and the greatest thing he looks for in all of his disciples (*cf.* [Matthew 22:37–38](#)).

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

Explain how Peter's denial of Christ serves as an example, to show us that it is our duty as Christians to love Christ.

Chapter 6

HOW SHOULD A CHRISTIAN LOVE JESUS CHRIST?

The sixth thing is to show how Christians ought to love this unseen Christ.

1. Christians ought to love Christ with *sincerity* of love. “Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity” ([Ephesians 6:24](#)). It was the great sin of Judah that “she turned not to the Lord with her whole heart, but feignedly” ([Jeremiah 3:10](#)).

It is a great sin to love Christ with a feigned and hypocritical love. The love of Christians for Christ ought to be sincere with regard to the habit and inward workings of it. They must love him not only in show, word, and outward profession, but their love must also be cordial in their hearts—and thus indeed a love in truth.

Furthermore, the love of Christians for Christ must be sincere as it pertains to the object of it. They must love Christ for himself, and not chiefly for what they get from him. To love Christ only for temporal gain is hypocritical love; to love Christ chiefly for other gain is not so spiritual—but to love Christ for his own excellencies and perfections, this is most sincere and genuine, and this sincerity of love for Christ is everyone’s duty.

2. Christians ought to love Christ with *supremacy* of love. They must place him in the highest seat of their hearts. He is a Great King, and he looks for the throne, and that all created things are placed beneath him and stand at his footstool.

These are the words of our Savior: “He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me” ([Matthew 10:37](#)). Christians may love father and mother, for the law of God and nature requires it ([Exodus 20:12](#)). They may love husband and wife, for the Word of God commands the husband to love his wife as his own body, even as Christ loved the Church ([Ephesians 5:25,28](#)). They may love sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, kindred, friends, and even enemies, and they ought to do it ([Matthew 5:44–45](#)). Yet all of this must be

a subordinate love, for they must love Christ with their greatest love, or they are not worthy of being called his disciples.

3. Christians ought to love Jesus Christ with *ardency* of love. “And they said one to another, ‘Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?’” ([Luke 24:32](#)). Christ kindled this burning love within the heart of his disciples, and he requires this burning love of all Christians. “Love is strong as death; the coals thereof are coals of fire which hath a vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it” ([Song of Solomon 8:6–7](#)). Christians should have such a strong, vehement, ardent, and flaming love for Jesus Christ that all the waters of affliction cannot quench it, and no clouds of temptation or persecution can drown or overwhelm it.

4. Christians ought to love Christ with *constancy* of love. Having begun to love him, they ought to continue to love him, and love him unto the end. As they are constant in their obedience and persevere in their other graces, so also ought they to be constant and persevere in this grace of love for Jesus Christ.

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. List four ways that a true believer should love Jesus Christ. Explain what each means.
2. If you compare yourself to this standard, how do you measure up in each of these areas? Take the matter to prayer.

Chapter 7

WHY DOES A CHRISTIAN LOVE JESUS CHRIST?

The seventh thing is to show why true Christians love Jesus Christ, whom they have never seen.

Reason 1. True Christians love Jesus Christ *because of the need which they have of him*. Men love their necessary food, without which their bodies would starve from hunger. Men love their necessary clothing and habitations, without which their bodies would freeze in the winter season. Men love their necessary friends, upon whom they have their dependence (under God), and from whom they have all their subsistence.

But nothing in this world, and no friend here below, is so necessary to the body as the Lord Jesus Christ is unto the soul. And as the excellencies of the soul are far beyond the excellencies of the body, so also are the necessities of the soul far beyond the necessities of the body—and these necessities can only be provided by Jesus Christ. Therefore true Christians love him.

When they were first converted, being convinced of their sinfulness and awakened from their carnal security, O what need did they have (and see that they had) of Christ! They perceived themselves to be lost, and that only Christ could save them. They felt the wounds of conscience, and it was only Christ that could heal them. They feared the wrath of a sin-revenging God, and it was only Christ who could deliver them. The remission, reconciliation, and salvation that they obtained through Christ laid the first foundation of a most endearing love for him.

And still they perceive a continual need for Jesus Christ; he procures a daily pardon for them, and conveys daily supplies of grace unto them. They need Christ to enlighten them when they are dark, to quicken them when they are dead, to enlarge them when they are straitened, to strengthen them when they are weak, to comfort them when they are sad, to support them when they are tempted, to lift them up when they have fallen, to reassure them when they are in doubt, to encourage them when they are fearful, to steady them when they stagger, and to restore them when they wander. Christ, and

none but Christ, can do all of this and more for them—and therefore true Christians love him, because of their great need of him.

Reason 2. True Christians love an unseen Christ *because of his loveliness*. And although this beauty cannot be seen by the eye of the body, it is clearly seen by the eye of faith.

Consider the description which is given of the beloved Christ by his spouse the Church in [Song of Solomon 5:9](#). In it the daughters of Jerusalem enquire of the love-sick spouse, “What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest amongst women? What is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?” To this spouse replies with a description: “My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand” ([v.10](#)); she goes on to set forth his graces, beauties, and excellent accomplishments in metaphors taken from the various parts of a man’s body ([vv.11–15a](#)). She concludes with, “His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars. His mouth is most sweet, yea he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem” ([vv.15b–16](#)).

The spouse is acknowledged to be the fairest amongst women not only by the daughters of Jerusalem, but also by her beloved, who has a more searching eye. He both commends and admires her loveliness: “Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah; comely as Jerusalem; Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me” ([Song of Solomon 6:4–5a](#)); and, “Who is this that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?” ([v.10](#)).

But then what beauty is there in the Beloved? If the Church is beautiful beyond all of the other children of men, then how beautiful is Jesus Christ, from whom the Church derives all of its own beauty? He is said to be “white and ruddy,” which reveals the beauty of his face. His countenance is said to be “as Lebanon, and like the lofty cedars thereof,” and this describes the majesty of his face. His mouth is said to be “most sweet”; and indeed it is sweet with regard to the gracious words which proceed from it—for no doctrine is as sweet as Christ’s doctrine, no precepts are as sweet as Christ’s precepts, and no promises are as sweet as Christ’s promises.

But to sum up all of these excellencies and perfections, he is said to be “altogether lovely.” There is no person or thing in the world which can

properly be called *altogether lovely*, for many defects may be found in even the most amiable persons, and many shortcomings may be found in even the most desirable of things. Yet Christ is *altogether lovely*; he is in no respect unlovely. There is no spot or blemish, no defect or imperfection to be found in him. And he is lovely in every respect: there is in every regard an incomparable and transcendent amiableness in Christ's person. In the person of Christ the human and divine natures are joined together harmoniously, and this makes him most lovely.

His human nature is a symphony of body and soul. His body is most beautiful; a most glorious beauty and luster is put upon it. Regardless of whatever it was in his state of humiliation, be assured that it now has a glorious beauty in his state of exaltation. It is called *σῶμα τῆς δόξης*, “a glorious body” ([Philippians 3:21](#)). If the face of Moses shone with resplendent glory after conversing with God for forty days on Mount Sinai which is here below ([Exodus 34:29–35](#)), then how must the body of Christ shine, having been with God for more than sixteen hundred years on the Mount Zion which is above? I am persuaded that Christ's body is the most beautiful of all visible creatures.

But the beauty of Christ's soul excels even more. No creature whatsoever has such shining excellencies as those which are found in the soul of Jesus Christ. All of the excellencies that have ever been found in any created being are like a feather laid on the scales against the exceeding weight of his glorious excellencies and perfections.

With regard to spiritual endowments while he was here upon the earth, Christ exceeded the most excellent men that have ever lived: he exceeded Moses in meekness, Solomon in wisdom, and Job in patience—and how much more does he now exceed them in heaven? He exceeds not only the spirits of just men made perfect, but also the most glorious and holy angels that have never sinned. If any creatures have wisdom, it is but a beam, for Christ is the sun. If any have goodness, it is but a drop, while Christ is the ocean. If any have holiness, it is merely a spark, for Christ is the brightness of his Father's glory. If any have the Spirit, they only have it to some degree—but the Spirit is given to Christ without measure ([John 3:34](#)).

And if Christ is most lovely in his manhood, then how much more lovely is he in his godhood? As God he is equal in all glorious excellencies with the Father. Christ's divinity implies an excellency of being. He calls himself "I am" ([John 8:28](#)). He has excellence in his glory, and therefore he is called "the Lord of glory" ([1 Corinthians 2:8](#)), and the King of glory: "Lift up your heads O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in" ([Psalm 24:7](#)).[1]

Many descriptions are given in the New Testament of this lovely Person. I shall mention only one, [Colossians 1:15–19](#):

"Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature; for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were made by him and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father, that in him all fullness should dwell."

If we read, believe, and consider this great description of Christ, then by necessity we must both see and say that Jesus Christ is most excellent and admirable, and that no beloved is like the Beloved of true Christians—and thus it is that true Christians love Jesus Christ, because of his loveliness.

Reason 3. True Christians love Christ *because of the love which he bears for them* ([1 John 4:19](#)). He loves them with a first and free love; he loves them with a tender and compassionate love; he loves them with an active or doing love; he loves them with a passive or suffering love. His love is infinite, without bounds or limits; it is superlative, without comparison; it is transcendent, beyond comprehension; it is everlasting, without change—and it has no end or conclusion.

He loved them when they were polluted in their sins, and washed them with his own blood. He loved them when their souls were naked, and clothed them with the robes of his righteousness. He loves them in their sickness and sorrows, and is their Comforter. He loves them in their poverty and predicaments, and is their Benefactor. He loves them in life, and is the life

of their souls; he loves them at death, and is the stay of their hearts—and he loves them after death, and will be their portion forever.

Thus there is great reason that true Christians should love Christ because of his loveliness, and there is further reason that they should love him because of his love for them—especially because both are so incomparable and incomprehensible. I shall speak further on this in the chapters that serve as an exhortation for stimulating Christians to love Jesus Christ.

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. Name the three great reasons why love for Christ should flow effortlessly from a Christian.
2. Are you mindful of these reasons in your daily walk with Christ? Why or why not? If not, can you think of anything that might make you more so?

Chapter 8

THERE ARE FEW TRUE CHRISTIANS IN THE WORLD.

Use 1. From this learn that there are but few true Christians in the world, because there are so few that love this unseen Christ. There are many Christians in name, but few Christians in deed and truth.

In former days, when one openly professed to be a Christian, it argued a true love for Jesus Christ. By this I mean the time of the Early Church, when Christians were persecuted by the heathens, as they were in the ten dreadful persecutions that issued forth from the heathen emperors, and the world was watered with Christian blood. In those days anyone that openly acknowledged himself to be a Christian exposed himself to imprisonment, the rack, torture, burning, and a most cruel death. It was the truth and strength of love for Jesus Christ which carried those Christians through such great sufferings as they did bear for the sake of Jesus Christ.

But now there are multitudes who are Christians in name only. They call themselves Christians, and many are baptized in Christ's name, but they are altogether without love for the Christ whose name they bear. Surely there are but few, not only in the Christian world, but even in England (where Christianity is to be found in as great a purity as in any place) that love Jesus Christ with sincerity.

1. No grossly ignorant persons truly love Christ, for those who don't know Christ cannot love him. *Ignoti nulla cupido*—we cannot love what we do not know; an unknown evil cannot be hated, and an unknown good cannot be loved.

2. No grossly erroneous persons truly love Christ, for those who have not received Christ's truths cannot love Christ's person. "If any man love me, he will keep my words" ([John 14:23](#)). The words of Christ include not only the words of his precepts, but also the words of his doctrine, and those who are grossly mistaken about the fundamental truths of Christianity are no friends to Christ, but rather are so far from true love to him that they are counted as his enemies.

3. No grossly wicked persons truly love Christ:

a.) Such are profane persons, who blaspheme the name of God in their hideous oaths, for the love of Christ teaches a holy awe and reverence for God's name.

b.) Such are those who persecute God's people for righteousness' sake. How can they love the Head when they hate the body? Christ considers himself to be persecuted when his members are persecuted: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" ([Acts 9:4](#)); and, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest" ([v.5](#)). And surely those who persecute Christ cannot love Christ.

c.) Such are those who scoff at religion by deriding holiness or mocking the name of a saint or godly person. By doing so they reveal their contempt for the holiness of Christ, from whom the saints derive all their holiness—and how can they love Christ when they condemn him and his image-bearers?

4. No unjust persons truly love Christ. They may be unrighteous with regard to their execution of judgment in his distributive justice (in the dispensing of rewards or punishments), or with regard to his commutative justice (in their business dealings). Christ strictly requires justice and righteousness, and how can they love him if they do not keep this commandment?

5. No covetous persons truly love Christ. The apostle says, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" ([1 John 2:15](#)). And thus I say that if any man loves the world (that is, with his chief love), then the love of the Son is not in him, for the our love cannot be set upon both the things here below and Christ who is above ([Matthew 6:19–21,24](#)).

6. No licentious persons truly love Christ—no drunkards, adulterers, or any who indulge themselves in unlawful delights, for the love of Christ teaches us to deny and mortify such lusts.

7. No mere civil persons (who are unconverted), and no hypocrites (who have a form of godliness but lack the power of it, [2 Timothy 3:5](#)) can truly love Christ. The former may be loving and courteous unto men, but they

have no love for Christ; the latter may profess love to Christ, and may even appear to love him, but they do not really love him.

8. No one who is under the reigning power of any sin can truly love Christ, for where sin is reigning in the heart, this is incompatible with a love for Christ.

Now if we separate all of these previously mentioned persons from the rest—the grossly ignorant, the grossly erroneous, the grossly wicked, the profane, those who persecute God’s people, those who scoff at religion, the unjust, the covetous, the drunkards, the adulterers, the licentious, those who are merely civil, the hypocrites, and anyone that remains under the reigning power of sin—how few will be left? And yet these few who remain are the ones that truly love Christ. Thus it is apparent that there are but very few that are true Christians.

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. How does persecution (or the absence of it) correlate with the number of false professors and true Christians in the visible church?
2. The author lists several types of people who may be found at church on Sunday, but who are not in all likelihood true Christians. List these broad categories of people, and explain how true love for Jesus Christ strikes against each of these circumstances.

Chapter 9

EXAMINE YOURSELF, TO SEE IF YOU TRULY LOVE JESUS CHRIST

Use 2. Therefore examine yourself, so that you may know whether you are a true Christian, by the trial of your love for Jesus Christ. Do you love this Jesus Christ whom you have never seen? Most in the world truly love only the people and things which they have seen. But can you say that you sincerely and chiefly love Jesus Christ, whom you have not yet seen? The love of most arises from the notice that the eye takes of objects which it finds beautiful. But does your love arise from the notice which the ear has given to the Word, which reveals the beauty that is found in Christ?

Question. How may we know whether we have true love for Jesus Christ?

Answer. You may know the truth of your love for Jesus Christ:

1. By your desire for Christ's presence.
2. By your prizing and frequenting of the ways in which Christ is to be found, and by seeking him in those ways.
3. By your love for Christ's image.
4. By your obedience unto Christ's commandments.



First, by your desire for Christ's presence. Wherever there is a great love for any person, there is a desire to be in the presence of that person. Do you sincerely and earnestly desire Christ's presence? There is a twofold presence of Christ: his gracious presence here, and his glorious presence on the last day.

1. There is Christ's gracious presence here. "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you" ([John 14:18](#)). You desire to be with certain friends and family members, but do you chiefly desire that Christ would come unto you? Christ comes to his disciples in a way of gracious communication and in a way of gracious manifestation—and a sweet consolation arises from them both.

a.) Do you desire that Christ would come unto you in a way of gracious communication? Are your desires for the communication of spiritual light from Christ to teach and guide you, of spiritual life from Christ to enliven and encourage you, of spiritual strength from Christ to support you under burdens and enable you to perform your duties? Do you earnestly desire communication of every kind, and further degrees of grace from the fullness of grace which is found in Christ? Do you hunger and thirst for Christ's righteousness, not only that it may be imputed unto you for your justification, but that it may also be more and more imparted unto you for your further sanctification, so that you may be brought and wrought into a more perfect conformity to and likeness of Jesus Christ? If you do, then this is evidence of true love for Jesus Christ.

b.) Do you desire that Christ would come unto you in a way of gracious manifestation? "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him" ([John 14:21](#)). Do you earnestly desire the fulfillment of this promise, and that Christ would reveal more of the beauty of himself and the love of his heart unto you? Are you grieved when your Beloved withdraws himself? When the curtain is drawn, and a cloud is interposed between you and this Sun of Righteousness? When he hides and veils his face from you? Do you long for Christ's return to you, when he shall reveal himself unto you again? 'Come Lord Jesus, come quickly ([Revelation 22:20](#))! Be as a roe or young hart upon the mountains of spices ([Song of Solomon 8:14](#)); leap over the mountains and skip over the hills; make haste unto my soul, which is lovesick for you in your absence from me. O that I might see your face, which is so fair! That I might hear your voice, which is so sweet! That I might feel your presence, which is so refreshing! O that I might behold your heart-ravishing smiles! Lord, say that I am yours, and you are mine; that you have loved me and given yourself for me; that your love for me was from eternity past, and that it is unchangeable!' Are these the longings of your soul? They are the longings of love for Christ.

c.) Do you desire that Christ would come unto you in a way of sweet consolation, which results from this gracious communication and manifestation? Do you long for the oil of gladness which Christ is anointed with? That he would anoint you with the Spirit, not only to sanctify you, but also to comfort you? Do you desire that your heart might be filled with the

unspeakably full and glorious spiritual joys of the Holy Spirit? Do you desire the comforts which Christ alone can provide—comforts which go far beyond all the comforts that the world and flesh can give? His comforts come in through the door of faith; they are far beyond all the comforts that come in through the door of sense. The joys which are found in Christ go far beyond all the joys that can be found in even the sweetest and most desirable creature-enjoyments. If you desire these heavenly comforts, it is evidence of true love for Christ, and that you desire Christ's gracious presence.

2. And do you also desire Christ's glorious presence on the last day? When he promises, "Surely I come quickly," does your heart answer, "Amen, even so come Lord Jesus" ([Revelation 22:20](#))? Are you glad that you live so near the end of the world, that the Lord is at hand, and that the coming of the Lord draws nearer and nearer every day? Can you lift up your head with joy when you look toward the place where the Lord Jesus Christ is, at the right hand of the throne of majesty on high, and think with comfort that in but a little while he that shall come will indeed come, and will not tarry much longer; that within a short while Christ will descend from heaven with a shout, with the sound of a trumpet—and that your eyes shall see him in the brightness of his glory and majesty? Do you look and long for the day of Christ's glorious appearance from heaven, when you shall be awakened from out of your grave (where you may take a short sleep before) and be gathered together by the angels, caught up in the clouds, and from there (in a shining garment of immortality on your body, and with Christ's unspotted righteousness in your soul) to be brought with shouts and acclamations of joy and triumph into his presence, who will then graciously acquit you of all sin and punishment, openly acknowledge you as his faithful servant, gloriously crown you before the whole world, and receive you to live and reign with him for all eternity? Do you have such desires as these?

If you are afraid of Christ's glorious appearance, lest you should be rejected because you fear that you are not ready and prepared, yet can you also say from your heart that above all things you desire to be ready, that you are endeavoring to make ready, that it grieves you that you are not more ready, and that if you were ready, and were assured of your interest in Christ, that you would desire that Christ would come immediately—and that you desire no greater happiness and felicity than to live with Christ in glory, and that

you account the presence of Christ in heaven to be the happiness of heaven? If you do, this is evidence of a true desire for Christ's glorious presence, and a sincere love for Jesus Christ.

Second, you may know your love to Christ by your prizing and frequenting of the places in which Christ may be found, and that you seek him there. Christ may be found in his sanctuary, and in his public and private ordinances. Do you give your attendance unto those ordinances—public prayer, the preaching of the Word, and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper? Do you prize these ordinances because of the stamp of Christ's institution is upon them, because of Christ's presence in them, and because they are a means of bringing you together with Christ?

And when you are attending these ordinances, do you diligently seek after Christ in them? Do you rest in the outside and carnal part of ordinances, in meeting with God's people there; or do you design, desire, and seek something more inward, spiritual, and incomparably sweet—to meet with Christ there, to find fellowship with the Father and the Son? And upon this account, can you say with David, “How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord!” ([Psalm 84:1](#)); and, “A day in thy courts is better than a thousand” ([v.10](#)); and, “One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple” ([Psalm 27:4](#))?

Do you also seek Christ in your family and in your closet? Do you seek him in private prayer and meditation? Your love to Christ expresses itself in your desires—and your desires reveal themselves when you seek Christ in his ways.

Third, you may know of your love for Jesus Christ by your love of Christ's image. Now the image of Christ may be found in his Word and upon his people:

1. Do you love the image of Christ in his Word? As Caesar's coin bore Caesar's image and inscription, so also does Scripture (which is the Word of Christ) bear Christ's image and inscription. Do you love the Scriptures because Christ's image is upon them? Do you love the Word of doctrine in the Scripture because the image of Christ's truth and wisdom are upon it? Do you love the Word of precepts in the Scriptures because the image of

Christ's holiness is upon it? Do you love the Word of threatenings in the Scriptures because the image of Christ's righteousness is upon it? Do you love the Word of promises in the Scriptures because the image of Christ's goodness, grace, and love are upon it? You have Christ's Word in your Bible, and at times you have the sound of it in your ears—but does the Word of Christ dwell in your heart? You receive Christ's Word because you see light in it, but do you also receive it because of your love for it?

2. Do you love Christ's image upon his people? If you do not love your brother whom you have seen, then how can you love your Lord, whom you have not seen ([1 John 4:20](#))? All of Christ's disciples bear Christ's image. If you love the original, then you will love the picture, though it may be drawn imperfectly. If you love the perfect goodness and holiness which are found in Christ, then you will love that same goodness and holiness which you see in his saints, though they have it in an imperfect measure. Do you love Christ's disciples because you see Christ's image upon them, even though they may differ from you in some circumstantial opinions?

Fourth, you may know of your love for Jesus Christ by your obedience to his commandments. “If you love me, keep my commandments” ([John 14:15](#)); and, “He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me” ([v.21](#)).

You have Christ's commandments—do you keep them? You know them, but do you practice them? Your love for Christ is known by your obedience to Christ. If Christ is your beloved, then he is also your Lord. If you have true affection for him, you will also yield in subjection unto him.

If you love Christ, you are careful to please Christ; you are not a servant of the flesh, who is careful to please the flesh—but you are a servant of Jesus Christ, who above all takes care to please him. If you love Christ, you are fearful of giving just occasion of offence unto men, but above all, you are fearful of displeasing and offending your Lord.

Do you labor to walk in such a way that you may please Christ with sincere and universal obedience? Are you hearty in your obedience unto Christ? Do you respect all of his commandments? Does it grieve you to see yourself fall short in your obedience unto Christ? If you can truthfully say in the presence of the Lord that you do not allow yourself to live in the practice of

any known sin, nor in the neglect of any known duty which Christ commands, then this is a sure sign of true love for Jesus Christ.

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. List the four types of evidence that we may search for in ourselves to see if we truly love Jesus Christ.
2. In what way do you see these evidences working themselves out in your heart and life?
3. Is there an area in which you see a greater deficiency? Commit the matter to heartfelt prayer, asking God to forgive your dullness, and that the Holy Spirit might instill in you a new passion for serving and loving him in this manner.

Chapter 10

REPROOF FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT LOVE CHRIST, OR WHO LOVE HIM BUT A LITTLE..

Use 3. For reproof.

First, to those who have no love at all for the unseen Christ. Does the use of information ([chapter 8](#)), together with the use of self-examination ([chapter 9](#)) leave you with the conviction that you are altogether without this love? If so, then permit me this word of reproof.

Are you a creature made by and for Christ, and yet you have no love for him? Are you a rational creature, that has a soul capable of knowing him and loving him, and yet you have no love for him? Are you a Christian if you do not love Christ? Have you been baptized in Christ's name, and yet have no love for Christ's person? Do you profess to be Christians, and yet not love Christ? Do you make a show of devotion without any true affection for the object of your worship?

Sinner, though you have not seen Christ, yet have you not heard of him? And have you not heard enough to engage and draw forth your love unto Christ?

What do you think? Is there such a person as Jesus Christ, or is there not? Do you have a Bible? If you do, then have you not read from it the history concerning Jesus Christ? What do you think of that history—is it true, or is it false? Do you think that the Gospel is some cunningly devised fable? Are not the Scriptures which contain this Gospel the very Word of the true God, who cannot lie? Are there not enough marks of divinity upon them to sufficiently prove their divine origin to any that search them, and do not purposefully shut their eyes to the light which clearly shines there?

And if it is true that there is indeed such a person as Jesus Christ (and nothing could be more true than this), then how is it that you do not have love for him? Don't the Scriptures reveal and display Christ as the most excellent and amiable person? And yet, do you not love him? Can you love people and things that are at best imperfect in their loveliness, and not love

Jesus Christ, who is altogether lovely? Can you love a person of great honor here below, who has only been granted some limited power and authority, and not love Jesus Christ, who is the Lord of Glory, and has all power and authority in both heaven and earth? Can you love those who have earthly wisdom and knowledge, yet not love Jesus Christ, who is the wisdom of the Father, who knows all things, and whose wisdom is divine?

Can you love those who are generous and bountiful, yet not love Christ, whose bounty is superlative, and whose gifts are most rich and unsurpassed? Can you love friends that are kind, and not love Jesus Christ, who is the best friend that the children of men have ever had? Can you love a benefactor that feeds you, clothes you, and gives you money—and yet not love Christ, who offers to feed your hunger-starved soul with the bread of life, to cloth your naked soul with the robes of his righteousness, and to give you the spiritual riches of grace, the least dram of which is worth more than all the riches of the earth?

Can you love riches and not love Christ, in whom there are treasures, and by whom you may have not only spiritual riches here, but a heavenly inheritance hereafter? Can you love honors, and not love Christ, by whom you have the highest dignity, the honor of being called a child of the King of heaven, and one who will receive a crown of glory in the next world? Can you love liberty and not love Christ, by whom you are made free from the slavery of the Devil and your own lusts? Can you love safety and not love Christ, who is the only Savior of mankind, and the only one who can put you out of the reach of your worst enemies and the worst evils? Can you love peace and not love Christ, by whom you may have peace with God, and peace in your own conscience? Can you love pleasures and delights yet not love Christ, by whom you may have unspeakable and glorious joy, and the everlasting pleasures which are to come?

Without love for Christ you are under the guilt of all your sins; neither your original sin nor any of the sins you have committed are pardoned. They all lie upon your own score, and you must answer for all of them yourself. How dreadful is your reckoning likely to be!

Without love for Christ you are under a curse: not only the curse of the law for breaking it, but also the curse of the Gospel for disobeying the

command of the Gospel to love the Lord Jesus Christ: “If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be *anathema maranatha*” ([1 Corinthians 16:22](#)), that is, let him be accursed until the Lord comes. And when the Lord comes, will he remove this curse from you? No, he will come in flaming fire to take vengeance upon you, for he has promised to punish those who have disobeyed the Gospel with everlasting destruction.

And then what shall become of you? On that day the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah will be dreadfully punished with a fire much worse than the fire that was rained down upon them from heaven, to consume both themselves and their homes. By this I mean the fires of hell, which are kindled and kept ablaze for all eternity by the breath of the Almighty. But you who do not love the Lord Jesus Christ, despite all that you have seen of him, all of his invitations to you and offers of kindness—you will be punished more dreadfully than the wicked Sodomites. On the day of judgment it will be more tolerable for them than it will be for you; the torments of hell will be intolerable for all, but they will be most intolerable for those who have sinned against the Gospel. The fires of hell will burn upon you the most fiercely, and the scourge of conscience will lash you the most furiously. Consider this, you who have no love for Christ, or when he comes in judgment he will tear you to pieces, and there will be no one to deliver you. If you do not have the sweet fire of love for Christ kindled within your heart here, you will be thrown into the dreadful fires of hell, which will burn you everlastingly.

Second, this reproves those of you who have some love for Jesus Christ, but it is very little love. You who love Christ, is not your love very small, not only in comparison with his love for you, but also in comparison with the love some Christians have attained unto?

How strong was the love of the apostles for Christ when they left everything to follow him! And after Christ’s resurrection, and his ascension into heaven, when the Holy Spirit was sent down to sit in the likeness of fiery tongues upon them ([Acts 2:1–4](#))—O what a fire of love for Christ was kindled within them! Hence the bold profession of Christ they make before the chief priests and elders ([Acts 4](#)). Hence their rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ when they were beaten for owning and preaching him ([Acts 5:40–41](#)).

The love that Peter and John had for Christ was great, and Paul's love for Christ was not less than the love of these leading apostles. And this is the reason that he took such pains to preach the Gospel in so many parts of the world, from Jerusalem to Illyricum ([Romans 15:19](#)). See also how he affirms himself as being a minister of Christ and gives evidence of his strong love for his Master:

“Are they ministers of Christ? I speak as a fool, I am more; in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods; once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeying often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things which are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?”

[2 Corinthians 11:23–29](#)

And in the next chapter he says, “I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake” ([2 Corinthians 12:10](#)). The basis of this was the love he had for Christ; he was constrained by it ([2 Corinthians 5:14](#)). He had such love for Christ that he professed, “To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain” ([Philippians 1:21](#)). Christ was his life, and his life was entirely devoted to him.

But where is such love to be found now? I might also mention the love of some Early Church Fathers: [Ignatius](#), [Polycarp](#), [Jerome](#) and others. Take one instance in Jerome, who expresses his love to Christ in this manner:

“If my father were weeping on his knees before me; my mother hanging on my neck behind me; and my brethren, sisters, and kinsfolk howling on every side to retain me in a sinful course, I would sling my mother to the ground, run over my father, despise all my kindred and tread them under my feet, so that I might run to Christ.”

How small is your love for Christ when compared to the love of those famous heroes who were martyred! They despised the flames and endured such wrenching and painful deaths for the love which they have borne unto Jesus Christ. The fire of their love burned stronger within them than the fire around them which consumed their bodies.

Is not your love also small in comparison with the love that our late reformers had for Jesus Christ? Their love for him gave them such courage and resolution that they could withstand a whole world of antichristian fury and opposition.

Is your love for Jesus Christ comparable to that of the many eminent theologians and private Christians our nation has seen in the previous generation, who are now asleep in their graves? How few have risen up to replace them! It has been observed, and is to be greatly lamented, that in recent years there has been a great decrease in the power of godliness amongst those who are sincere believers—and is this not evident in the great decline of love even true Christians have for Jesus Christ?

Are not you dwarves in comparison with others? Are not you babes in Christ, and weaklings in your love for Christ? Is it not evident that you have but little love for Christ when he is but little in your thoughts and meditations? The thoughts are the handmaidens of the love; where the love is strong and ardent, many thoughts will be accompanying it. Does your heart tell you that you have very few thoughts of Christ? You often think of your food, but how infrequently do your thoughts turn to Christ, who is the bread of life? You often think of your clothing, but how infrequently do you think of the robes of Christ's righteousness? You often think of your earthly friends, but how infrequently do you think of Jesus Christ, your Friend in heaven? Objects that you can see are often not only before your eyes, but also in your thoughts—but how little is Christ, who is the object of faith, entertained in your thoughts?

Moreover, does it not argue little love for Christ that you speak so little of and for him in your conversations with one another? If you had great love for Christ, would this love not breathe itself forth more in your conversations? You talk about yourself with ease, and often commend yourself either directly or indirectly, which reveals the great love you have

for yourself—yet how little do you commend your Lord and Master, extolling his excellencies with your lips? Doesn't this show that you have but little love for him in your heart? You can readily discuss news and public occurrences (which is both lawful and needful, providing due limits are observed), but when you leave Christ out of your conversations, it shows that you do not have an abundance of love for him, because “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh” ([Matthew 12:34](#)). Those who have much love for the world speak of their riches; those who have much love for pleasures often speak of that subject; those who have great love for their friends will often speak of them and commend them in conversations with others—and when you speak but little of Christ, it is a sign that you love him but little.

Does not the little zeal which you have for Christ's honor in this world argue that you have but little love for him? What are you doing to promote Christ's interest among the friends and family members that you are acquainted with? Do you do all that you can to bring others into the ways of God, and into Christ's acquaintance?

Does not your small amount of time spent in private devotions reveal but a small amount of affection for Christ? Can your closet (or other places you may retire unto) bear witness against you regarding how little time you spend there in private prayer and conversation with Christ? Brief and constrained private prayers are evidence of a heart that is constrained in its love for Jesus Christ.

Does not your reluctance to exercise this love for Christ reveal the weakness of your love unto him? How slow of heart are you in your love for Jesus Christ? How hard is it to persuade you? You do not need to be persuaded to love your wife if she is kind and helpful; you do not need to be persuaded to love your children if they are pretty and hopeful; you do not need to be persuaded to love your friends if they are friendly and faithful—and yet you are reluctant to embrace the love of Jesus Christ, a love which has everything in it to commend itself to you, and is the strongest love of them all.

Need I say more to convince you that you have but little love for Christ? Doesn't your own conscience give a sufficient testimony from these clear

evidences?

And now Christian, think what a sin, what a shame, what folly it is for you to have so little love for Jesus Christ. If it is a great sin for those who are strangers to Christ to have no love for him at all, and it brings them under the most dreadful curse—then surely it cannot be a small sin for you (who are his true disciple) to have but little love for him. Is it not very displeasing to the Father for you to have but little love for his Son? If your relationship to Christ brings you out of enmity with him, yet do you not anger him again by harboring only a lukewarm affection for Christ? This sin is aggravated by the nearness of your relationship to him.

Is it not dishonorable to Christ for you to have so little love for him? When you have no great love for him, in effect what you are saying is that there is no great worth or beauty to be found in him. And by this are you not ungrateful for Christ, with an ingratitude beyond comparison to even the most obliging earthly friend? Is it not your shame that you should have so little love for Christ, when he deserves your love so much?

The infinite excellencies and perfections which are in his person notwithstanding, his infinite kindness unto you calls for the strength of your love. Think of what he has done for you; think of what he has suffered for you; think of what he has purchased for you; think of what he has promised to you; think of what he has laid out for you; think of what he has laid up for you—and yet to have but little love for Christ? This is such a poor return!

Moreover, is it not your folly to have but little love for Christ? Do you not bereave yourself by this, or deprive yourself of such peace as passes all understanding; of such inconceivable sweetness and comfort, both in the strength of your love unto him, and in the sense of his love for you? Are not injury and mischief the consequences of your little love for Christ? Isn't it difficult to go forward in the ways of God, like Pharaoh when his chariot-wheels were mired in the mud? Love for Christ is like oil in those wheels; it makes you ready for any good work which he calls you unto. Yet when you have but little love for Christ, you moved more slowly, and are more sluggish in serving Christ; you cannot and will not take the same pains in

the work of the Lord, nor be so zealous as you might (and should be) for your Master's glory.

To conclude, if you have but little love for Christ, you are likely to faint in the day of adversity, and to shrink when you are called to take up his cross and suffer for his sake. Smaller sufferings will unsettle you, greater sufferings will frighten and perplex you, and in times of great trial you will be in the fearful danger of turning into an apostate. Great love for Christ and great faith are needed to carry you through sufferings with courage, so that you may persevere unto the end.

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. Are you a person who has no love for Jesus Christ? What thoughts does the author's line of questioning stir up within you?
2. Are you a person who has but little love for Jesus Christ? Thinking of your own Christian walk over the past year, how does your love for Christ manifest itself in—
 - How much you think about Jesus Christ?
 - How often you speak about Jesus Christ?
 - How much zeal you have for his honor in the world?
 - How eager and fruitful your times of personal devotion have been (time spent reading and considering the Bible, and time spent in private prayer)?
 - Your eagerness or reluctance to embrace Christ's love and walk in his ways each day and in every circumstance?
3. What does a lack of love for Jesus Christ in your heart reveal about what you think of him in your mind?
4. What benefits are you depriving yourself of by your lack of love for Jesus Christ? What things does the author hint at concerning the future outcome of such a lack of love for him, both in this life and the next?

Chapter 11

IF YOU WOULD LOVE JESUS CHRIST, CONSIDER HIS PERSON.

Use 4. And now I come to my chief aim in choosing this subject: to exhort you to love Jesus Christ, whom you have never seen. This is the topic I shall most largely insist upon, and in presenting it, I will give both motives (chapters 11–14) and directions (chapters 15–17).

The motives for creating and kindling a love for this unseen Christ in you may be drawn:

1. From the consideration of who Christ is (chapter 11).
2. From the consideration of Christ's love for you ([chapter 12](#)).
3. From the consideration of Christ's benefits unto you ([chapter 13](#)).
4. From the consideration of the love which Christians have (or should have) for Jesus Christ ([chapter 14](#)).



The first sort of motives may be drawn from the consideration of who Christ is, and this a.) in and of himself, b.) in relationship to God the Father, and c.) unto all that are true Christians.

First, consider who Christ is in and of himself.

In general, he is the most amiable person, and the most suitable object for your love. If you look back into the past, from the days that were long before you, since the day that God created man upon the earth; if you search from one side of heaven to the other; and if you make inquiry into all every part of the earth—you will never find any person so lovely, so beautiful, and so deserving of your love in every way, as the Lord Jesus Christ. There is a matchless, transcendent, and incomparable beauty and excellency in him.

With what passion do some foolish men love the external beauty which they see in some women: the exact symmetry and pleasing proportions of the body, the beautiful features and colors of the face and eyes, the quick and

graceful motions of their spirits, and their charming glances—O how this ravishes the hearts of their adoring lovers! And yet the most beautiful woman in the world is no better than painted clay; she is nothing but dirt and corruption wrapped in fair skin—a skin which sickness will make pale and sallow, and death will mar and spoil completely.

But the attractiveness and beauty of Christ is more transcendent and permanent—and therefore a more appropriate object for your love. Christ is fairer than the children of men; he is all fair without any spot, altogether lovely without any blemish or deformity.

I have already spoken of the splendid beauty which is in Christ's glorified body, the most lovely of any visible creature which God has made. I have also spoken of the shining excellencies which are found in Christ's glorified soul, which is joined to his divinity. But if we could imagine all of the beauty that every eye has ever seen in the most attractive people that have ever lived, all combined together in one person—how captivating would that person be! And yet the beauty of such a person, though ever so resplendent, would be but a dark shadow in comparison to the radiance of Christ's elegant beauty.

Can you love the imperfect beauty which you see in creatures, and yet not love the perfect beauty which is in Christ? Can you love a fading beauty which will soon wither like a flower, and yet not love Christ, whose beauty never decays, but always remains more fresh than the beauty which is found in the flower of youth? Can you be so enamored with beautiful objects that are before your eyes, and yet not find delight in this far more beautiful object, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is so clearly seen by the eye of faith? If the eye of your faith were open, to clearly see the transcendent beauty of Christ, you could not help but love him. If, like others, your eye could meet his gaze, and see the sweet smiling of his lovely face, your heart would be overcome and ravished with love, and filled with the ecstasies of joy and indescribable delight.

But more particularly, there are many winsome features in the person of Christ to attract and draw forth your love. I will give six of them:

1. His greatness and authority.
2. His holiness and purity.

3. His wisdom and omniscience.
4. His truth and fidelity.
5. His fullness and all-sufficiency.
6. His kindness and mercy.



1. Consider Christ's greatness and authority. *Aquila non capit muscas* ('The eagle does not catch flies'); great souls are only stirred by great things. There is none so great as Jesus Christ. He has the greatest honor and dignity, and he has the greatest power and authority. The excellence of one's majesty greatly engages love in his subjects, commanding their hearts as well as their obedience: the princes who have the greatest power and authority are the darlings of their people when they do not abuse their authority by unrighteousness, cruelty, usurpation, or tyranny. If power is managed with clemency, and authority is accompanied by kindness toward those that are under its command—then these princes are greatly revered in the hearts and minds of their people, who will be ready and willing to spend their estates and risk their lives in their service.

Christ is the Prince of the kings of the earth. He is clothed with the highest honor, arrayed with the most excellent majesty, decorated with the greatest power, and entrusted with absolute authority. He is the King and Lord of Glory; he is exalted to higher dignity than the greatest ruler that has ever lived upon the earth. Yea, he is advanced above all thrones and dominions, all principalities and powers, and all of the glorious angels which are in heaven. All power is given to him in heaven and on earth ([Matthew 28:18](#)).

He does what he wishes in heaven. The angels are at his beck and call; they execute his will; they come and go by his command. And he has all power on earth. He is the head of the Church and everyone within it. He can restrain and conquer his enemies, bringing them under his feet whenever it pleases him to do so.

And in whatever degree of severity that is sometimes shown in executing his judgments and taking vengeance upon the wicked, he never abuses his power by unrighteousness. He is most just toward the worst offenders, and

punishes them here far less than their iniquities deserve. And what kindness and compassion does he show to his own people?

Will not you have great love for such a great Person? The consideration of the high dignity of your Lord should raise your love for him to a great height. When Christ has such authority, shall he not command your heart? When Christ has been given such power that he can defend you against the rage and cruelty of your most powerful and malicious adversaries, will you not greatly love such a person, and confidently trust yourself to live under the shadow of his government?

2. Consider Christ's holiness and purity. Some great people who abound in wealth and honor, who have some natural qualities that are pleasant, and who have accomplished things which might otherwise render them very useful in their own countries—yet by their wickedness, debauchery, filthiness, or impurity; by their impious and vicious lives, they stain all of their other excellencies, and render themselves the objects of contempt and scorn unto those who otherwise would bear great respect and love unto them.

But Christ is most lovely in his holiness and purity. He was holy in his birth. Though born of a sinful woman, yet he was born without sin. He kept his garments from all spots and stains while living amongst impure sinners. His heart and life were free from all the pollution of sin, and he was never guilty of the least transgression in either thought or deed.

O what an excellent person Christ was when he was here upon the earth! How glorious was his holiness! What bright beams of perfect purity and exact innocence did Christ scatter in the dark places of the earth where he lived, and among those dark and sullied sinners with whom he conversed! And how then does Christ shine in holiness now that he has entered into the Holy of Holies above, and there converses with none but such as are holy?

I know that because of Christ's holiness and purity, he is the object of the hatred and enmity of the wicked and ungodly. They have enmity against Christ because he is the enemy of their darling and beloved lusts. When he was here below, he told his brothers, "The world hateth me, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil" ([John 7:7](#)). And the hatred of the world still abides upon him for the same reason, for Christ reproves this

world's sin, and the world cannot endure it. The bright rays of Christ's holiness glare into their sore eyes, and his holy precepts are an affront to their carnal hearts.

Yet notwithstanding this, his holiness makes him a most suitable object for the love of his saints. Those who judge correctly will love the best things the most, and the best men and women in the world are those who are most holy. And if you are indeed Christ's disciple, you will love holiness wherever you see it. Now can you love the imperfect holiness which is found in God's people, and yet not love Christ, who is perfectly and infinitely holy in himself—the source of all the holiness which is found in the children of men? If there is such a wonderful luster in the holiness that some have obtained from Christ that it makes them shine like lights in a dark world ([Matthew 5:16](#)), then what superb and pre-eminent radiance must exist in the holiness of Christ! And being a matter for such great admiration, it therefore calls for great affection: “Thy word is very pure, therefore thy servant loveth it” ([Psalm 119:140](#)). Christ is the Word—not the written Word, but the essential Word—and he is very pure, and therefore you should love him.

3. Consider Christ's wisdom and omniscience. Wisdom makes the face shine; learning advances some very highly in esteem; and those who know the most, if their morals are commensurate with their knowledge, they are most admired by those that understand what true worth is. This is especially true if spiritual wisdom is joined with what is natural and acquired; if there is a great degree of grace in the heart, and an abundance of knowledge in the head, how worthy are these people of our love?

Daniel was a man of great learning and wisdom, skilled in all the knowledge of the Chaldeans which was not sinful and diabolical. And furthermore, he was endowed with divine wisdom by the teaching of the Holy Spirit. The angel told Daniel more than once or twice that he was a man greatly beloved; he was greatly beloved by the Lord of Heaven, greatly beloved by his prince on earth, greatly beloved by his own people, and greatly beloved by the Chaldeans (except for a few that envied his prosperity and favor).

Now if Daniel's wisdom rendered him so universally amiable, then how should Christ be loved on account of his wisdom and knowledge! The wisdom of Christ goes far beyond the wisdom of Daniel—or the wisdom of Solomon, who was wiser than Daniel. These men had wisdom which made them famous and highly esteemed in their day, but Christ is the embodiment of all wisdom, and the very wisdom of the Father. They were children of wisdom, but Christ is the father and fountain of it; they had some of wisdom's jewels, but the treasures of wisdom are laid up and hidden in Christ ([Colossians 2:3](#)). They had learning and knowledge, but their knowledge was ignorance in comparison with the knowledge of Christ. The sum of their great knowledge was small in comparison to the things which they did not know or understand. They knew some things, but Christ is omniscient, and knows all things. They knew many of nature's secrets, but Christ knows the secrets of heaven, and the very mind of God. Nothing is hidden from him.

Therefore how great should our love for Christ be! If you are wise, you will love Christ, who is so infinitely wise himself; and if you would be wise, you must love Christ, who alone can make you truly wise.

4. Consider Christ's truth and fidelity. Faithfulness and truth are very rare in our day, when falsehood and deceit are so widespread. What was said of old may be said now, "Truth faileth and falleth in the street" ([Isaiah 59:14–15](#)); and therefore those who are true and without guile, faithful and without deceit—these are worthy of great esteem and love. But what love should you give unto Christ, who is not only true, but truth itself? He is most faithful in all of his undertakings and promises, and has never deceived any that have put their trust in him. He is often better than his word, and is never worse. You love a friend who is true and faithful, yet will you not love a true and faithful Christ, the best friend of the children of men? As Christ's faithfulness should encourage your confidence in him, so also should it cause you to love him.

5. Consider Christ's fullness and all-sufficiency. Those who have large and plentiful estates are greatly beloved by the poor and destitute, if they find them to also have large hearts and open hands which are ready to provide for their needs and necessities. And yet no one has such fullness and plenty as the Lord Jesus Christ. No one is as willing to give of his fullness unto the

needs of those who are poor in spirit and sensible of their need ([Matthew 5:3](#)).

“It hath pleased the Father that in him all fullness should dwell” ([Colossians 1:19](#)). There is not only plenty in him, but fullness also: not the fullness of the cistern, but the fullness of the fountain; not the fullness of sufficiency for himself alone, but fullness for all of his people as well; not some fullness in some things, but fullness in all things that are good; not fullness for some limited period of time, but all of this fullness will remain in him for all of his people throughout all generations. And all of this does not depend upon the pleasure of men, whose minds may change, but on the pleasure of the Father, who is always the same, and whose good will unto his people is unchangeable.

And besides the fullness of glory which he possesses for all eternity, there is a twofold fullness in Christ for his people here below. There is a fullness of merit, and a fullness of spirit:

a.) *A fullness of merit.* He has wrought a full and perfect righteousness for them, and he imputes it to them for their justification ([2 Corinthians 5:21](#)).

b.) There is *a fullness of spirit* in Christ. The Holy Spirit has been given unto him without measure, and he imparts and communicates it unto them for their comfort and sanctification.

Christian, you are empty, but Christ is full; you are poor, but Christ is rich; you are needy, but Christ is all-sufficient—and will not you love Christ, who is able to do for you beyond what you are able to ask or think ([Ephesians 3:20](#)), and is just as willing as he is able to supply all of your spiritual necessities ([2 Peter 1:3](#))? Will you not love Christ, who is an overflowing and ever-flowing fountain of good; who has inexhaustible treasures of grace and comfort within him that are laid out before you for the taking, that every day you may freely come to fetch such jewels out of this treasury—jewels that are of higher worth and greater use than any earthly riches?

6. Consider Christ’s kindness and mercy. All the kindness of men is unkindness compared with the kindness of Christ. All the mercies of men are cruelty compared with the mercies of Christ. He is all kindness, all

tenderness, all compassion, all pity, all grace, and all mercy to the misery of lost mankind. I shall not enlarge upon this further at this time, because this will fall under the second heading of arguments which focus on the consideration of Christ's love. Yet if you add the kindness and mercy of Christ to all of his other excellencies and perfections, he will certainly appear to have the greatest reasons for attracting the love of any that do not have a thick veil of unbelief before their eyes which hides him from their view.

Second, consider who Christ is in relationship to God the Father; he is most nearly related to him, and he is most dearly beloved by him:

1. Christ is most nearly related to and thus most perfectly like the Father. All created beings are related to God as their Maker, but God's children are more closely related. The saints, who are his children by adoption and regeneration, are closely related to God. The angels, who are his sons by creation, and who have never been separated from him by sin, are even more closely related to God. But the Lord Jesus Christ is most closely related to God the Father, for he is the only begotten eternal Son of God. And thus Christ bears his image most perfectly; he is both the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person ([Hebrews 1:3](#)).

This close relationship and likeness of Christ to the Father calls for your strongest love. If you have a reason for honoring the Father, then by the same account you have a reason for honoring the Son. And if you have a reason for loving the Father, then you also have the same reason for loving the Son.

You love the sons of princes, yet will you not love the Son of God? You love your own children, who bear your image, and yet will not you love Christ, who is the express image of God? In [Philippians 2:6](#) we read of Christ, "who, being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God." Christ (without taking anything away from God) is equal with God in all of his glorious excellencies and perfections—and therefore your highest and strongest love is due unto him. You cannot withhold it from him without robbery.

2. Christ is most dearly loved by the Father. "For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the

excellent glory: ‘This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased’” ([2 Peter 1:17](#)). He that is worthy of the Father’s love is certainly worthy of yours; he that is chiefly loved by the Father should be chiefly loved by you.

Third, consider who Christ is unto all that are true Christians.

If you are a true Christian, then Christ is your Shepherd; he feeds you in green pastures, and he has laid down his life for his sheep. Will you not love such a Shepherd?

He is your Captain, who has conquered all of your enemies for you. He leads you onward to receive the spoils of war. Will you not love such a Leader?

He is your Prophet; he teaches you the most excellent things that have ever been taught, the highest mysteries and most glorious truths which are in your own best interest to know and believe. He shows you the most excellent way by his Word and Spirit; he opens your understanding by opening his truths, and gives you both light and an eye for discerning this light. Will you not love such a Teacher?

He is your High-Priest; he has made satisfaction for you, and makes intercession for you, so that you may be reconciled unto God. His intercession is as effective as it is unceasing—and will you not love such an Advocate?

He is your King, who rules over you with great power, righteousness, wisdom, and kindness—and will you not love such a Sovereign?

He is your Benefactor, who is most generous and considerate. No gifts can compare to his gifts. And will you not love such a Friend?

He is your Brother, and if he is not ashamed to call you his brothers and sisters, would it not be a shame if you should withhold your heart from him?

He is your Husband, and through faith you are joined to him by the Spirit with bonds that can never be broken. Will you not embrace him with your dearest love?

He is your Redeemer; he has rescued and delivered you from sin and Satan, from death and wrath. He has redeemed you with a price, namely, his own blood—and has he not paid the greatest price for your love? He has also redeemed you by conquest—and will you not allow his love to conquer your heart?

Surely you are altogether unworthy of these relationships if you will not present Christ with your greatest affection. And thus I have completed the motives drawn from the consideration of who Christ is.

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. How does marinating your soul in a thorough contemplation of the person of Christ lead to greater love for him?
2. Which of these aspects of the beauty of the person of Christ is the most effective at drawing you to him? Did anything the author say catch your particular attention?

Chapter 12

IF YOU WOULD LOVE JESUS CHRIST, CONSIDER HIS LOVE FOR YOU.

The second kind of motives for kindling a love for Jesus Christ within you may be drawn from the consideration of Christ's love for those who are true Christians. If indeed you are a Christian, then Christ loves you—

1. With the freest love.
2. With the truest love.
3. With the strongest love.
4. With the surest love.



First, consider that Christ loves you with the freest love. There are many things that might draw you to love Christ, but there is nothing in you to draw and engage his love, nothing but deformity and enmity toward him—unless the filthiness that he loathes, and the wickedness which his soul hates, can be considered motives for loving you. And yet Christ's love unto you is most free.

There is no one in the world that will love you unless he finds or fancies some loveliness in you, something which serves as a motive for drawing his love unto you. Wit is a motive to some, wealth to others, beauty to some, strength to others, near relation to some, kindness to others, generosity to some, service to others, greatness to some, and goodness to others. Most find similarity to themselves (whether it is in good or evil) to be a motive for love.

But Christ's first love to you is altogether free; that which is a motive unto men for inducing them to love you is no motive for inclining Christ to love you. The sin which you brought into the world with you, and the many sins which you have committed since you came into the world, these are enough to shut out all motives of love from Christ, for he finds this sin odious and abominable. Whatever it was that caused Christ to love you, it did not arise from you yourself, but it arose from his own kindness.

And does not this free love of Christ incline you to love him? Does he love you most freely, and will you not love him most dearly? Did Christ love you without any merit within you for attracting his love, and will you not love Christ, in whom there are so many admirable things to attract your love? Did Christ love you first, and yet you will not return that love? Did Christ love you in your deformity, and yet you will not love him in whom there is such perfect beauty? And if you now have any spiritual beauty, it is only because of the loveliness which Christ has put upon you. Christ's first love was free, and this is a matter of the greatest admiration—and it should also be a motive for the greatest affection unto him.

Second, consider that Christ loves you with the truest love. There is little true love in the world. You have many that truly hate you, but so few that truly love you. And there is great deception in the pretended love and affection of some; all those that flatter you do not truly love you. Love in show, in outward appearance, in good words and fair speeches, this is common; but love in deed and in truth, and where there is the greatest need for it (the best evidence of real love)—this is rarely to be found.

Job complains that,

“My brethren have dealt deceitfully like a brook,
and as the stream of brooks they pass away;
which are blackish by reason of the ice,
and wherein the snow is hid;
what time they wax warm they vanish,
when it is hot they are consumed out of their place.”

[Job 6:15–17](#)

In prosperity Job had many friends, and their love and friendship appeared to have some strength and consistency, like ice upon the brook. But when the heat of trouble and calamity came upon him, then the love of his friends melted and vanished away like the ice and snow which melt in the warm beams of the sun.

The love of most is selfish, and for their own ends; and therefore when their love is not likely to benefit them, but rather create trouble and disadvantage for themselves, then it all comes to nothing. True Christianity teaches

another kind of love, and those that are true Christians have a genuine love, which is most apt to show itself in trying circumstances.

And yet none can or do love you with such a true love as Jesus Christ. There is no flattery or deception in his love. His love is not counterfeit in the least degree; it is not at all selfish or designed for his own ends. He does not love you in order to receive anything good from you, but so that he might do good unto you. He loves you not only in prosperity, but also in affliction and adversity (which is where you may see the greatest evidence of his genuine love for you). He is “a present help in the time of trouble” ([Psalm 46:1](#)), and in those times he gives the most tender demonstrations of his love. He is touched by your feelings of weakness when you are tempted, and sympathizes with you in your sorrow when you are afflicted; he shows his love for you by visiting you in your troubles, and in supporting you, relieving you, or delivering you from them. O what love should you have for the Lord Jesus Christ, who loves you with such a true love!

Third, consider that Christ loves you with the strongest love. His love is more durable than death, and more fervent than the fiercest flames of fire. The strength of Christ’s love for you shows itself in its activity—in what he has done for you, what he is doing for you, and what he will do for you:

1. The strength of Christ’s love for you is evident from *what Christ has done for you*. I will give you some examples:

a.) It was the strong love of Christ which brought him down from heaven for you, to assume your nature. What manner of love was this, that God should become man, that Spirit should become flesh, that he who made the world should be born of a lowly virgin—and all of this for your sake!

b.) It was the love of Christ which made him fulfill all righteousness for you. He yielded perfect obedience to both the moral and ceremonial law, so that you might benefit from it.

c.) It was the love of Christ which made him submit himself to the temptations of the Devil for you, so that he who suffered while being tempted might be able to comfort you when you yourself are tempted ([Hebrews 2:18](#)).

d.) It was the love of Christ which made him endure the contradictions of sinners for you. He bore the many affronts, insults, envyings, and blasphemies of wicked men so that he might give you an example of how to carry yourself in similar circumstances.

e.) It was the love of Christ which made him lay down his life for you. “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend: ye are my friends” ([John 15:13–14](#)). That such a person as Christ, so excellent and innocent, should undergo death, and such a death as that of the cross, so disgraceful, so painful; that he should submit to such ignominy, and endure such agony, such mutilation of his flesh, such anguish in his spirit; and that with such resolution and willingness, with such submission and patience, and all of this for such as you and I, who though now his friends, yet at that time were strangers and enemies by nature—here was love stronger than death! O the height and depth of this love! The longest line of your most extended thoughts and imagination can never reach nor measure the dimensions of this love of Christ.

f.) It was the love of Christ which raised him again from the dead for you; he was “delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification” ([Romans 4:25](#)).

g.) It was the love of Christ which carried him up from earth to heaven, where he was previously for you. “Nevertheless I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will send him unto you” ([John 16:7](#)).

2. The strength and activity of Christ’s love for you is show in *what he is currently doing for you*:

a.) He is interceding for you at the right hand of God. “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us” ([Romans 8:34](#)). It is because of his great love for you that Christ pleads on your behalf in heaven, that you may be accepted, that your sins may be pardoned, that your prayers may be answered, and that the Holy Spirit may be sent down to teach, sanctify, and comfort you.

b.) He is preparing a place for you. “In my Father’s house there are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you” ([John 14:2](#)). It is through love that Christ as your forerunner has entered into the glorious palace that is above, in order that he might take possession of it for you, and to prepare a place for your reception there.

3. The strength and activity of Christ’s love to you shows itself in *what he will do for you*:

a.) He will keep you in his hand in such a way that no one will be able to pluck you out of it. “They shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand” ([John 10:28](#)). Because you have been received into the arms of his love, you shall be kept by the power of his hand—and therefore you shall never fall away, either finally or totally.

b.) Christ will make all things work together for your good. “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God” ([Romans 8:28](#)). Christ has an endearing love to everyone who loves God—and your love for God is the fruit of his love unto you ([1 John 4:19](#)). And when men and devils conspire against you to do you harm, Christ’s love will turn it to your spiritual advantage.

c.) Christ will stand by you in times of trouble and at death. “I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you” ([John 14:18](#)). When affliction comes, Christ will not leave you comfortless—especially if it is for his sake, and you are deprived of all your outward comforts. When friends fail, and your flesh fails, and your heart fails—yea and even life itself fails, then Christ will not fail, but will stand by you to strengthen you. He will be a light in your darkest hours, a support for your spirit when it is ready to sink within you.

d.) After death Christ will take care of your soul. He will not permit it to wander aimlessly. He will not allow the Devil to seize it as his prey, but will send his angels to conduct and convey it into the heavenly paradise, so that where he is, there they may be also. “And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom” ([Luke 16:22](#)). “We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body and present with the Lord” ([2 Corinthians 5:8](#)).

e.) Christ will raise your body up on the last day. If your body is consumed by fire, drowned in the water, or has decayed in the earth—whatever becomes of it, the Lord Jesus, at his second glorious appearance, will find it and raise it, and will then transform it into the likeness of his most glorious body. “And this is the Father’s will, which hath sent me: that everyone which seeth the Son and believeth on him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day” ([John 6:40](#)). “For our conversation is in heaven, from whence we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body” ([Philippians 3:20–21](#)).

f.) Christ will send forth his angels to gather you into the company of all of the elect that have ever lived, in all ages and all parts of the world. And he will bring you into his presence; when he comes to judge the world, you will meet him in the air. “And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven unto the other” ([Matthew 24:31](#)). “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air” ([1 Thessalonians 4:16–17](#)).

g.) Christ will own you, crown you, and admit you into the kingdom of heaven which he has prepared for you. “Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, ‘Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world’” ([Matthew 25:34](#)).

Here is strong and active love indeed! And does not the consideration of this love that Christ has for you raise and intensify your love for him? Does it not provoke and stir you to the most active and vigorous exercise of love unto him? Has Christ united himself unto your nature, and yet your heart will not be united unto him? Has he fulfilled all righteousness for you, and yet you will not fulfill his command to love him? Has he endured such temptations, contradictions, and sufferings on your account, and given himself to die for you—and yet you will not give your heart unto him?

Has he risen from the dead and ascended into heaven for you, and yet your affections will not rise from the earth and ascend into heaven where Jesus

Christ is? Does he plead with the Father in heaven for you, and yet you will not listen to him pleading with you for your love, in his Word and by the Spirit's calling? Is he preparing a glorious mansion for you in his Father's house, and yet you will not prepare a place for him and entertain him in the inner room of your chief affections?

Does he and will he keep you in his hand, and yet you will not embrace him in your heart? Will he make all things work together for your good, and yet you will not allow your affections to work toward him?

Will he stand by you in trouble and at death, and yet you will not put life into your love for him? Will he send his angels to convey your soul into his presence when it is separated from your body, and will you not permit your heart to go to him and lodge with him before that day? Will he raise up your body on the last day, and does the hope of this not raise up your affection for him? Shall you be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and have Christ confess and crown you there—and yet the forethought of this does not enravish your heart with love for Christ, and transport you with unspeakable joy?

I would submit to you that the strength of Christ's love for you should engage your love for him, not only in the genuineness of it, but also in the strength of it.

Fourth, consider that Christ loves you with the surest love. Your earthly friends may love you for awhile with some degree of strength and warmth, but differences may arise between you which can quickly weaken and cool their love for you, making them like strangers or even enemies unto you. And even if their love does abide, it is never certain, because they themselves may not abide; if their love does not die while they are living, they themselves may die, and then their love for you will be at an end.

But the love that the Lord Jesus Christ has for you is the surest love. If he begins to love you, he will continue to love you; if he loved you once, he will continue loving you to the end (or rather, endlessly). The love of Christ is not subject to changes and variation like our love is. If your love for him fails, his love for you will not fail. And although you may offend him, it is not irreconcilable. If you are unkind toward him, he may withdraw the manifestations of his love for awhile, but he will never wholly remove his

love from you—for the love of Christ precludes any changes and knows no end.

Christian, what motive can you find in any person or thing in the world that you have seen which compares to what you have in the Lord Jesus Christ, whom you have not seen? He is a most amiable person; his greatness, holiness, wisdom, faithfulness, fullness, and kindness make him shine with an admirable luster. His relationship to God the Father, the love that the Father has for him, and his relationship to you as your Shepherd, Captain, Teacher, Advocate, King, Benefactor, Brother, Husband, and Redeemer—all of these things commend him to your love. And when matchless beauty and grace meet in a person that also bears matchless love unto you, when this most amiable Lord Jesus loves you with such a free, cordial, strong, active, sure, constant, and incomparable love that surpasses all other loves to an incomprehensible degree, then with what faithfulness, forcefulness, and fervency should you love so suitable an object!

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. Make a list of the characteristics of the love that is typical of mankind in this world. Now make a list of the characteristics of Christ's love for you, and compare the two lists.
2. Does a consideration of Christ's love for you stimulate an increased affection for Christ within you? Explain.

Chapter 13

IF YOU WOULD LOVE JESUS CHRIST, CONSIDER THE BENEFITS
HE BESTOWS UPON YOU.

The third kind of motivation to kindle your love for Christ may be drawn from the consideration of Christ's benefits. If you are a true Christian, you have:

1. Spiritual light from Christ.
2. Spiritual life from him.
3. The pardon of sin from him.
4. The robes of righteousness from him.
5. The peace of conscience from him.
6. The joys of the Holy Spirit from him.
7. The riches of grace from him.
8. The dignity of being made a child of God from him.
9. The spirit of prayer from him.
10. A title to the kingdom of heaven, with the first fruits and foretastes of it from him here, and to receive the possession of it by him hereafter.



1. You have spiritual light from Christ. Christ is the Sun from which all the beams of this light do come. In former days, when you were not only in the dark, but darkness, Jesus Christ enlightened you. "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of the light" ([Ephesians 5:8](#)). It is Christ that has turned you from darkness to light, that has transferred you from the darkness into his marvelous light ([Colossians 1:13-14](#); [1 Peter 2:9](#)).

He has caused a marvelous light to shine into your mind, by which he has revealed unto you the wonderful things of the law, so that you might discern the odious nature of sin; and by which he has revealed unto you the wonderful mysteries of the Gospel, so that you might discern the excellence of Gospel-privileges and the exceeding riches of God's grace and kindness through Jesus Christ. Christ has opened your eyes so that you may see the

greatest evil and be delivered from it, and in order that you may see the greatest good and happiness, and attain it.

And does this light which you have from Christ not call for your love? The man who was born blind and was cured of his blindness by Christ loved Christ for this favor so much that he boldly pleaded for him before the Pharisees, despite the fact that he was cast out of the synagogue for it ([John 9](#)). How much more reason do you have for loving Christ, who has cured you of your spiritual blindness—which, had it continued, you would have gone to hell blindfolded, where there is black darkness forever?

2. You have spiritual life from Christ. You were spiritually dead, and Christ has resuscitated you. “You hath he quickened who were dead in sins and trespasses” ([Ephesians 2:1](#)). We read that Christ raised Lazarus from the dead after he had been buried four days ([John 11](#)). Lazarus loved Christ before this, but without a doubt this resurrection wonderfully endeared his love for Christ to an exceeding degree.

And shall Christ’s raising you up from your spiritual death not also raise your heart unto a great height of love for him? We greatly love someone who is instrumental in saving our lives when we are in great danger, especially if he risks his own life in so doing. And will you not greatly love Christ, who has given you spiritual life (which is far better than bodily life), and died so that you may live? If you had not received this spiritual life from him, you could never have escaped eternal death.

3. You have the pardon of sin from Christ. Christ has purchased this for you, and the purchase has cost him dearly: his own blood, which is of more worth than the treasures of ten thousand worlds. Christ has intervened on your behalf through his work of intercession at the right hand of God. While you were under the guilt of sin, you were bound by the justice of God to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire; but being pardoned, your obligation to future punishment is removed, and you are no more liable to the coming wrath and vengeance of hell than if you had never sinned.

And will you not love the Lord Jesus Christ, who has procured for you so great a privilege? We read of one that had much forgiven her, and she loved much ([Luke 7:47](#)). And have you not had much forgiven? Haven’t your sins

been very numerous and heinous? And has Christ obtained a pardon for all of them? Does this not make you love Christ greatly?

4. You have a robe of righteousness from Christ. You are born naked of original righteousness, and you could not work out any actual righteousness for yourself to cover your nakedness. Whatsoever righteousness you have made for yourself, these deeds are rags that cannot cover you, filthy rags which only pollute and defile you further ([Isaiah 64:6](#)). But Christ has given you the robes of his perfect righteousness to cover and adorn you with. And clothed with them, you are accepted as perfectly righteous in the sight of God.

O how we should love the Lord Jesus for this garment! If your body was naked, and someone gave you clothing so that you might cover yourself, you would love such a person—especially if what you received was fine and expensive clothing. And will you not love the Lord Jesus Christ, who has given you a very expensive garment for covering your soul, the robe of his most pure and unspotted righteousness, which is put upon you by faith?

5. You have peace of conscience from Christ. This is the peace that Scripture tells us “passeth all understanding” ([Philippians 4:7](#)). It passes all understanding to know the worth of it. Those who have this peace would not leave it for any reason; they would part with life, liberty, or property before parting with it. And those who do not have it, but slight and neglect it, yet if they are awakened by the sight of their graves, and when they come to the doorstep of eternity, then they will prize this peace, and would give all the world for it, were it at their disposal.

This jewel of peace you have from Jesus Christ. He has purchased it for you. He bore your punishment so that you might have his peace, and he has promised and bequeathed it to you in his last will and testament: “My peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you” ([John 14:27](#)). In reconciling us to God, he has laid a foundation for this peace in every true believer.

And furthermore, if he has spoken peace to you by giving you well-grounded evidence for your reconciliation; if after raising a storm, he has sent a calm into your spirit, and given you sweet serenity through the testimony of his Spirit that your peace has been made with God—O how should this draw forth your love unto Christ?

6. You have the joys of the Holy Spirit from Christ. We read that the Thessalonians received the Word in much affliction, yet with joy of the Holy Spirit ([1 Thessalonians 1:6](#)). Such are the joys spoken of in the text, which are “unspeakable” and “full of glory” ([1 Peter 1:8](#)). These are not carnal joys, but spiritual; they are of a higher nature and sweeter enjoyment, for they have a higher object, and are the beginning of eternal joys.

If you have these joys in any measure, you have them from Christ. It is he that sends the Holy Spirit from heaven to be your Comforter, to fill your heart with spiritual joys. And shall your heart not also be filled with love for the Lord Jesus, who is the author of them?

7. You have the riches of grace from Christ. If you were poor and close starving to death from hunger out in the cold, and a rich man sent you a chest full of gold and silver, or a cabinet full of jewels worth many thousand pounds, would you not love such a benefactor? The Lord Jesus has given you the riches of his grace, the least measure of which is of more worth than the greatest treasure of gold, silver, and precious stones that has ever been gathered together and heaped up by the wealthiest man that has ever lived upon the face of the earth. And will you not love Jesus Christ, who has given you these inestimable riches?

8. You have the dignity of being made a child of God from Christ. “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!” ([1 John 3:1](#)). This privilege of adoption is bestowed upon you not only by the Father, but also by the Son: “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name” ([John 1:12](#)). In [Psalm 113:7–8](#), we read of some that were raised from the dust, and lifted up from the dunghill so that they might sit with princes. And yet it is a far higher advancement to be lifted up from the dunghill of sin—from being slaves to our lusts, and children of the Devil—to be made the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. All the saints have this honor, and it is Jesus Christ who has conferred it upon us—and will this not endear you with love for Christ?

9. You have the Spirit of prayer from Christ. Being a son, the Spirit of the Son is sent down into your heart, by which you are enabled to say “Abba, Father” ([Galatians 4:6](#)). Through Christ you have access to God through the

Spirit ([Ephesians 2:18](#)). It is the Spirit of Christ that helps your infirmities in prayer; that forms your petitions, and that enables you to pray with faith, life, and fervor ([Romans 8:26](#)). Through Christ you have free admittance to the throne of grace; through Christ you have assistance by his Spirit in prayer; through Christ you have an audience and many gracious returns. O how indebted you are to Christ for these blessings! How then should you love him?

10. You have a title to the kingdom of heaven from Christ. Through Christ you are children, and through Christ you are heirs ([Romans 8:16–17](#)). It is Christ that gives you the first fruits of the heavenly Canaan, the down payment on the future treasure and inheritance which he has promised, and the occasional foretastes of those soul-ravishing pleasures which the saints shall have in fullness and for all of eternity when they are received up into glory. Moreover, it is Christ that will give you possession of the kingdom of heaven in the next life. On the day of his glorious appearance, after he has claimed you as his own before the whole world of angels and men, and has honored you by making you his assessor in judging and condemning the wicked—then he will receive you with acclamations of joy and triumph into the glorious palace of the new Jerusalem, where you shall have the beatific vision and fruition of the glorious Jehovah, and shall be made a partaker of such profound happiness that your heart cannot even conceive of it here below.

And does not the consideration of all of this set your heart on fire with love for Christ? Christian, is there any person like Christ? Is there any love like Christ's love for you? Are there any benefits like the benefits Christ bestows unto you? No, no—he is incomparable. I should think that by this time you would feel your love for Christ burning inside of you like a flame. Or I should think that your love for Christ should be like the waters of the sanctuary spoken of in [Ezekiel 47:3–5](#), which at its entrance was but ankle-deep, a little further knee-deep, then waist-deep—and finally over his head, so that a man might swim. I suspect that you perceive an increase in your love for Christ by considering these various motives; if your love was more shallow at first, I expect that by this time it has gained some depth. When such winds blow upon it, the waters should flow and overflow. Your love for Christ should be raised to a high tide, and should run with a strong current.

And thus I have completed the motives drawn from the consideration of Christ's benefits, each of which is like an orator which calls you to love Christ more.

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

How does the consideration of what Christ has done for you—all the benefits he has conferred upon you—call you to love him more?

Chapter 14

IF YOU WOULD LOVE JESUS CHRIST, CONSIDER THE LOVE WHICH CHRISTIANS HAVE (OR SHOULD HAVE) FOR HIM.

The fourth and last kind of motives for kindling your love unto Christ may be drawn from the consideration of the love which Christians have (or should have) for him. And in this regard, consider:

1. The duty of loving Jesus Christ.
2. The privilege of loving Jesus Christ.
3. The honor of loving Jesus Christ.
4. The wisdom of loving Jesus Christ.
5. The excellence of loving Jesus Christ.
6. The necessity of loving Jesus Christ.
7. The usefulness of loving Jesus Christ.
8. The delightfulness of loving Jesus Christ.
9. The attainability of loving Jesus Christ.



1. Consider that it is your duty to love Christ. If it is your duty to have a natural affection for your parents and children, then it is much more your duty to have spiritual affections for Christ. If it is your duty to have marital affection for your earthly husband or wife, then it is a greater duty to have such love for your heavenly Husband. If it is your duty to love your brothers, sisters, and kindred that love you, then it is a greater duty to love Jesus Christ, who loves you more than any of your family members does. If it is your duty to love your enemies, then it is much more your duty to love Christ, who is your best Friend.

It is the will of your heavenly Father that you should love Christ. The Devil wants you to hate him, but God would have you love him—and whether it is most reasonable for you to obey the will of God or the Devil, I will leave it to you to judge. It is the will of Christ that you should love him. The will of the flesh is against this love—but whose will ought you to comply with? You are not debtors to the flesh, that you should obey its commands

([Romans 8:12](#)); neither are you debtors to any creatures, that you should give them your choicest affections. But you are debtors unto Christ, you owe him your greatest love. Christ has the greatest right to your love—and will you not give unto Christ what is due him? If you are bound to give men their due, are you not much more bound to give unto Christ what is due him? Your best is what is due unto Christ, and do you have anything better than your heart to present unto him? Will Christ accept anything from your hands if you withhold your heart from him? If you had thousands of rams, and ten thousand rivers of oil to offer unto him; or if you had all the treasures of the earth at your disposal, and laid them all down at his feet, it would all be slighted and disregarded by him if you did not also give him your heart.

2. Consider that it is your privilege to love Christ; he will give you leave to do it, and will kindly accept your love. If a beggar fell in love with a princess and sought to marry her, both he himself and his love would be rejected with scorn, anger, and disdain. There is a far greater distance between you and Jesus Christ than there is between the lowliest beggar and the highest princess, and yet the Lord Jesus Christ permits you to love him with a marital love (in a spiritual sense, with regard to the union and nearness of the relationship). And he is not ashamed to entertain your love, despite the tremendous disparity between his greatness and your lowliness. Though you are an ignoble creature and a vile sinner, yet he does not scorn or disdain you; both you and your love may find a ready acceptance with him. It is your duty to love Christ because he commands you to, and it is your privilege to love him, because he allows you to do it.

3. Consider that it is your honor to love Christ. The real honor of any person is not the noble blood that runs in his veins, the high lineage from which he has descended, the great titles which have been conferred upon him, or the most eminent earthly dignities unto which he has been advanced. Even the heathen philosophers have said, *Et genus et proavos, et quæ non fecimus ipsi vix ea nostra voco* ('Our stock, noble ancestors, and what we have not done or deserved ourselves, we can hardly call our own'), and, *Virtus sola est unica nobilitas* ('Virtue is the only true nobility').

Furthermore, the Scriptures tell us that "the vilest men are exalted" ([Psalm 12:8](#)), and that "the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it

to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men” ([Daniel 4:17](#)). By their vices and wickedness princes and nobles may render themselves more vile than the earth beneath their feet, and more base than the mire in the streets.

Now the Word of God only accounts those that are in a state of grace to be truly honorable. The grace of love for Jesus Christ puts a great honor and luster upon all those who have it. There is no greater or higher object for your love than the Lord Jesus Christ, for he is a person of the greatest eminence and excellence. The love of Christ ennobles the heart, and no one else in the world has such a truly great and generous soul as the one who has the greatest love for Jesus Christ.

According to the spirit, so is the man, whether honorable or dishonorable; and according to the chief love, so is the spirit. If your the chief love of your heart is for any inferior thing (namely, any created thing under the sun), then you are debased and dishonored by it. But if the chief love of your heart is for Christ, who is the superior good and superlatively amiable, then you are dignified and made truly honorable. We read of hope (that is, the grace of hope) that it “maketh not ashamed” ([Romans 5:5](#)), and the same may be said of love for Jesus Christ—it will not ever bring you to shame.

Most of the people in this world love things which will eventually make them ashamed. The covetous man will be ashamed of his love of riches, the hedonist will be ashamed of his love of pleasure, and the ambitious man will be ashamed of his love of honors. In the end disappointment, discontent, and unhappiness will bring shame upon those who have inordinate love for created things, especially when they come to reap the bitter fruit of their sin by their everlasting punishment. “What fruit had you then in those things whereof you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death” ([Romans 6:21](#)).

But the love of Christ will not make anyone ashamed. It is no matter of dishonor, and therefore no matter of shame, for anyone to love Jesus Christ with his greatest strength and passion. If the wicked despise and scorn God’s people because of the love that they have for Christ, then the scorn

they receive becomes their glory—even as on the contrary their esteem of any because of their sin instead brings shame and dishonor upon them.

4. Consider that it is your wisdom to love Christ. “Keep therefore and do them, for this is your wisdom and understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear these statutes, and say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people’” ([Deuteronomy 4:6](#)). None have such wisdom and understanding as those who have and keep this statute and commandment to love the Lord Jesus Christ. “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all they that do his commandments” ([Psalm 111:10](#)). The fear of the Lord and the love of Christ always go hand-in-hand, or rather, the former includes the latter—and this is the beginning and chief part of wisdom. Those who have the strongest affections for the Lord Jesus Christ also have the greatest degree of understanding.

The love of Christ is the most reasonable, and therefore the most wise love. The love which is chiefly carried forth toward the object which is most suitable and amiable is also that which is most reasonable. And as it has already been said, there is no more suitable and amiable an object for your affection as the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who love other people or things with their chief love are mistaken in the objects of their love; they incorrectly judge that there is more excellence and desirability in them than there really is, and thus their love is a foolish and unreasonable love, because there is nothing really worthy of their chief love except Jesus Christ.

Those who choose Christ as the object of their chief love make the wisest choice. The excellencies that they see in him are real, and go beyond even what they can possibly sense and understand. Those who are slow of heart in loving Christ are fools, and those who love him most fervently are the most wise. It is your wisdom to love Christ with your greatest and most ardent love; such wisdom will make your face shine in the eyes of good men, and will put a luster upon your spirit in the eyes of God.

True wisdom does not consist in the invention of curious and quaint notions, in the framing of sound and rational deductions, or in the utterance of one’s thoughts in eloquent and florid expressions. But the greatest

wisdom is found in correctly placing the affections—and none have attained such a high pitch of true spiritual wisdom as those that have also attained the highest pitch of love for Jesus Christ.

It is a matter of great wonder when men with the greatest gifts and intelligence, when they hear of Christ, do not fall in love with him, for there is the greatest reason and the strongest arguments for them to love him. And yet in this the Scripture is fulfilled, “I thank thee O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes” ([Matthew 11:25](#)). Some of you are but babes in worldly wisdom and human learning, having no great giftedness in learning, nor the improvement of it by education. And yet if you love the Lord Jesus Christ above all other worldly things, you are far more wise than even the greatest scholars who do not have this love.

5. Consider the excellence of this love for Jesus Christ. As the knowledge of Christ is the most excellent knowledge, “Yea, doubtless I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord” ([Philippians 3:8](#)), so also is the love of Christ the most excellent love. It is a love of the most excellent object, the Lord Jesus Christ; it is a love of the most excellent origination, for it comes down from heaven and is wrought by the Spirit of God; it is a love that renders those who have it most excellent. The wicked, who do not have this love, are like dross; the righteous, who have it, are like gold. The wicked, who hate Christ, are like dirt; but the righteous, who love him, are like jewels. Other loves darken and defile, but the love of Christ brightens the spirit and makes men truly shine as the excellent ones of the earth.

6. Consider the necessity of this love unto Jesus Christ:

a.) The love of Christ is universally necessary. Some may need to do one thing, while others need to do some other thing—but everyone’s greatest need is to love Christ. Some may need to love a certain friend in order to keep him, while others need another friend. One earthly friend cannot serve everyone’s needs. But we all need to have Christ as our friend; he is the only friend that can serve all of our needs. And you must love him above every other friend. It is necessary for those of us who are poor, who have but few or no friends, to love Christ; and it is necessary for those of us who

are rich, who have many friends, to love Christ—for Christ is a friend for those who have no friends, and he is the best possible friend for those who have many friends.

b.) The love of Christ is absolutely and indispensably necessary. It is not necessary for you to climb up into a high seat of dignity or honor, but it is absolutely necessary for your affections to climb up to Jesus Christ who is above. It is not necessary for you to abound in wealth, to have your house and coffers full of riches—but it is absolutely necessary for you to have the riches of this grace of love unto Jesus Christ in your heart.

Nothing is as necessary for your bodily needs as Jesus Christ is necessary for the needs of your soul. He is more necessary than the food that satisfies your hunger, the clothing that covers your nakedness, and the house that shelters you from the weather. You may be poor and in the lowliest condition here on earth, yet if you have this love for Jesus Christ, you may be truly happy while you live, and eternally happy in the next world. But without this love you can never be truly happy, regardless of whatever riches, honors, or friends you may have. Though your earthly delights and enjoyments are ever so desirable, you will be miserable.

You may love people and things in the world with a subordinate love, but you must love Jesus Christ first and foremost, or you will remain under the curse of both the law and the Gospel, and you will not be able to escape the vengeance of hell.

7. Consider the usefulness of this love for Jesus Christ:

a.) The love of Christ is useful in days of prosperity because it gives the heart ballast, so that it will not be overcome by the full gales of a flourishing condition. It is useful in moderating the affections for lawful things, and it is useful for keeping the heart from loving unlawful and sinful things. If Christ does not have your heart, some base and foolish lust will have it—and this will wound your conscience with guilt, and pierce your heart with many sorrows.

b.) The love of Christ is useful in days of adversity; it will help keep the heart from sinking and being overwhelmed by the winds and waves of trouble and affliction. It is useful for preventing the heart from being

extraordinarily moved in the stormiest of times. Not only is faith helpful in keeping the heart steady in the face of amazing fears of evil tidings—love is also helpful in these perilous circumstances. And love is of a strengthening nature, to stay and support the spirit, and to ward off the pressing grief and despondency that often accompanies the darkest and most doleful of days.

c.) The love of Christ is useful for enlivening and exciting us to do our duty. Love for Christ makes his yoke easy to bear, and will enable you to draw it along cheerfully. It makes the burden of duty feel like no burden at all. If you have great love for Christ, you will consider your duty to be a privilege, and the service of Christ to be freedom. None of his commands will be distressing; instead they will all be a joy unto you. If you have great love for Christ, your heart will be inflamed with zeal for your Master's glory, and you will never think that you can ever do too much for him.

d.) The love of Christ is useful for arming you against temptations. If faith is a shield, then love for Christ is a breastplate which protects you from the sharpest darts that the Devil can throw. Love for Christ will garrison your heart against the enemy, and it is a strong defense against any overtures that the Devil may make when he tempts you to sin. 'How can I do this evil thing and offend my dear Lord?' This will be the answer of love which repels the temptation to sin, regardless of the alluring offers that may accompany this sin. Temptations will be powerless to prevail over you if your love for Christ is strong within you.

e.) The love of Christ is useful in preparing you for the cross, and the greatest sufferings that you may be called unto for the sake of Christ. If you have great love for Christ, you will be ready to suffer for him with patience and cheerfulness. The heaviest cross will seem light, disgrace and shame will be accounted as honor, loss will be considered gain, and pains will be seen as pleasures—or at least privileges. A prison will seem to be a palace, and death will be seen as the pathway to true life. O how some have run to the stake and embraced the flames when they have felt the fire of love for Jesus Christ burning strongly within them! And this is how the love of Christ is useful in this life.

f.) But the love of Christ is also useful in death, for the strength of this love will put a beauty upon the face of death, while for most others it appears so

gruesome and grim. If you have great love for Christ, you will see death as Christ's messenger, which is sent to bring you out of the dark prison of life in this world, and to carry you into mansions of glory where your dear Lord resides—and you will not be reluctant to leave this world so that you may live with Christ.

8. Consider the sweetness of this love for Jesus Christ. If there is sweetness in the love of the members of his body, then there is much more sweetness in the love of the Head. If there is delight and comfort in loving Christ's disciples for their Master's sake, then there is much more delight and comfort in loving Christ the Master himself for his own sake. The apostle tells us that there is a comfort in love ([Philippians 2:1](#)); that is, in the love one of another. But the consolations which are found in the love of Christ are far exceeding.

There are no longings of the heart which are as sweet as the strong and fervent outpourings of a love for Christ, especially when Christ draws near and manifests his love unto the soul. Christ rejoices in loving his disciples, and they may rejoice loving him. And this joy that they experience in loving Christ is a full joy: "These things have I spoken unto you that my joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full" ([John 15:11](#)). In the [former verse](#) Christ speaks of his love for them, and here he speaks of his joy in them; they were just as much the objects of his joy as they were the objects of his love—and the fullness of their joy in Christ is found in the measure and strength of their love for him.

"Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck" ([Song of Solomon 4:9](#)). These are the words of Christ to his spouse, the Church, and they express the ravishing delight that he found in her faithful gaze, her glances of love, and the chain of graces that she is adorned with. How then may your heart be ravished with unspeakable delight in gazing upon the beautiful face of Christ, and in the fervent exercise of your love unto him? When a glance, a smile, or an affectionate gesture from his countenance sparks a flame in your heart, and this fire of love for Christ burns brightly, O how sweet this flame is: it goes far beyond what tongue is able to express!

9. Lastly, consider the attainability of this love for Christ. Animals are incapable of loving Christ, but you are able to love him. And as your mind is capable of knowing him, so also is your heart capable of loving him. Others have attained this love, when they were previously as much without it and as much averse to it as you yourself may be now. You are capable of loving him now, but if you live and die without loving him, you will be utterly incapable of it in the next life. You have the means of grace at your disposal, as well as the other graces. And you may obtain the grace of love for Christ if you are diligent in the use of its means.

And thus I have finished the motives for exciting a love for Christ within you.

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

In a sentence or two, summarize each of the arguments the author makes for loving Jesus Christ. Which of these do you find the most compelling? Explain your answer.

Chapter 15

HOW TO OBTAIN THIS LOVE FOR CHRIST WHEN IT IS COMPLETELY ABSENT

The second thing I proposed to encourage you was to give you some directions, and they are:

1. How to attain this love for Christ—
 - a. When it is completely absent (chapter 15)
 - b. When you have it, but in weak measure (chapter 16)
2. How to express this love for Christ (chapter 17).



Thus the first directions shall be how you who are graceless, Christless, and wholly without this love for Christ may attain a love for him.

1. If you would attain this love for Jesus Christ whom you have never seen, you must become thoroughly persuaded that there is such a person, and that he is indeed the same person that the Scriptures have revealed him to be. The reason why heathens and infidels are without love for Christ is because they have never heard of him, and the reason why many professing Christians who have heard of Christ are without love to him is because they are not truly persuaded that there is or ever was such a person as Jesus Christ in the world. If you would attain this love, you must give firm assent to this truth (which is the greatest of them all, and the very pillar and foundation of the whole Christian religion): that Christ truly exists, and that his historical account is not some cunningly-devised fable.

If you have reason to believe that there was such a person as Alexander the Great [1] or Julius Caesar [2] (both of whom lived before Christ's time), then you have even more reason to believe that there was and is such a person as Jesus Christ. You have only secular history for the former, but you have sacred history for the latter; only the writings of men testify of the former, but it is the Word of God in the Holy Scriptures which testifies of the latter. You have as much reason to believe the history of the Gospel as

you do to believe any other history—yea, even more reason to believe the Gospel.

Among the many reasons that might be mentioned for believing the trustworthiness of the Gospel account, I shall suggest only one. The Gospel narrative was written down by unlearned fishermen, and yet it was received as truth by the most learned men in the world at the time in which it was written. Some of these men sealed their belief with their blood—something they would have never done if they had found any reason to doubt its truthfulness. And if there was any reason to suspect its veracity, it would have been easily discovered in the early days, when such a grand fable could not have possibly been accepted among wise and inquisitive men—especially when it would have been in their greatest worldly interest (namely, the preservation of their very estates and lives) to have disbelieved and disowned it. The apostles notwithstanding, if all the learned fathers (whose works we have today, who lived shortly after the time of the apostles, and some of whom suffered martyrdom for Christ's sake) saw reason to believe that Jesus Christ existed—then surely you have a reason to believe, and no solid reason for discrediting the historical narrative which pertains to him in the Gospels.

And once you have become firmly convinced of this, then seek to become fully persuaded that Jesus Christ is indeed the same person that the Scriptures describe and testify him to be. Be persuaded of his beauty, greatness, holiness, wisdom, faithfulness, fullness, and kindness. Be persuaded also of his relationship to God the Father as his only begotten and dearly beloved Son, and of his relationship to his people—especially in his offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, as I have set forth in the motives for stirring up love ([chapter 11](#)). Acquaint yourself with the wonderful account of his birth, his holy life, his powerful works, his heavenly doctrine, his great sufferings, his painful yet voluntary death, and his glorious resurrection, ascension, session, and intercession at the right hand of God. It is necessary for us to know these things which are recorded as history in the New Testament. If you are convinced of these things in your mind, it will prepare your heart for attaining a true love unto Jesus Christ.

2. If you would attain a true love for Jesus Christ, then you must first have a sense of conviction for your sins, and thus see your need for Christ. The

prevailing love of sin is inconsistent with true love for Jesus Christ. Those who love Christ hate sin, and those who love sin have an enmity against Christ. While your heart goes after your covetousness, sensual pleasures, or any other wickedness, it cannot be set upon Christ. Before you can love Christ, your heart must abandon the pursuit of sin.

Therefore strive to obtain a conviction that sin is the greatest evil in the world. Be persuaded what an evil and bitter thing it is to transgress God's law, and by it to affront the highest majesty of the great King of Glory. Look into the Word and law of God, and see what is required there, what is forbidden there—and then look back upon your life by leafing through the ledger of your conscience, so that you may find out what your sins of omission and commission have been. Look upon your transgressions of the law and disobedience to the Gospel, and as you are guilty before God, so labor for a clear sight and deep sense of your guilt, that you are under a curse because of your disobedience, and that you are subject to ruin and eternal destruction on account of your sins.

Look upon sin as the most troublesome thing in the world. If there is any harm in the many calamities which have befallen the children of men, yea if there will be any future suffering in both the extremity and eternity of hell's plagues and punishments—yet be persuaded that there is far more evil in sin, which is the cause of it all. Think how miserable you are while under the guilt and reigning power of sin: the worm is not so vile, the toad is not so full of deadly poison, and the filth of the earth is not comparable to the filth of your sins. Think of how base and disingenuous you have been, how monstrously ungrateful to your Maker and Benefactor, what a traitor and rebel you have been to your Supreme King and Sovereign.

Think of what continual peril and danger you are in of death and hell; how weak the thread of life is, which ties the soul to the body, and may suddenly be cut when you are least expecting it and feel most secure. And if you die in a Christless state, your soul will be immediately transported to a place of irreversible and eternal misery. Be persuaded that you are irrecoverably undone unless the Lord Jesus Christ helps you, that you are lost forever unless the Lord Jesus Christ saves you, and that you cannot escape the dreadful vengeance of God, but must be most horrifyingly and everlastingly tormented amongst the devils and the damned in hell, unless the Lord Jesus

Christ delivers you from the wrath which is to come. The sight and sense of sin, your resulting miserable condition, and thus your indispensable need of Christ, will make way for your love for him. Consider the following examples:

a.) If you were many thousand pounds in debt to a severe creditor and did not have one penny to pay toward it, and he was threatening to throw you into prison, where you would lie, rot, starve, and die without any hope of relief or release unless you could pay the debt; and if you learned of a wealthy man who was willing to stand as your surety, and who in fact paid all of your debt on your behalf—then surely you would have great love for such a friend and benefactor.

Now your sins are debts which go beyond the greatest sum of money that has ever been owed or paid, and you are not able to pay even one farthing to satisfy this debt before the God unto whom you are indebted. And God is strictly just, and a severe creditor; without a full satisfaction of his justice, he will throw you into a prison that is worse than the most nasty and gloomy prison here on earth: the prison of hell, where you must lie without the least degree of relief, or any hope of release. Now the Lord Jesus Christ offers to stand as your surety, and to pay off all of your debt, giving you a full discharge from it! If you were mindful of what a debt sin is, and what a prison hell is—then surely it would put a great love into your heart for such a Friend and Guarantor, the only one who can keep you out of this dreadfully dismal prison, into which you will certainly (and perhaps suddenly) be thrown without him.

b.) If you were sick with some life-threatening disease, and had already seen many physicians who were unable to help you; yet if you had heard of one physician who was willing and able to cure your disease and save your life without pay—then certainly you would be thankful to employ this physician; his kindness would exceedingly engage your love.

Now sin is the soul's sickness, and your case is terminal: when sin is finished with you it will bring forth both temporal and eternal death ([James 1:15](#)). And only the Lord Jesus Christ can cure you of this deadly sickness. He is the only one that can remove your sin, and thereby deliver you from this death of deaths. If you were more aware of the dangerous sickness of

sin, you would prize, employ, and love the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Physician of value in this case.

c.) If you were guilty of murder, theft, high treason, or any other such heinous breach of the law of the land, and you had been apprehended, arraigned, accused, and condemned to be hanged or burned (or an even more tormenting death); and if you heard of a prince that pleaded for and obtained the pardon of such crimes in court on behalf of criminals like yourself; and if he sent you a dispatch signifying his willingness to do the same for you—then surely you would thankfully accept such an offer, and would love this prince who was going to preserve you from death with as much love as you have for your own life.

Now you are guilty of high treason and rebellion against the King of Heaven by having broken his law. You stand condemned according to this law. You will not be hanged or beheaded for it—you shall be burned in the unquenchable fire of hell. But the Lord Jesus Christ is the Prince of Glory, a Friend in the court of heaven who has procured a pardon for many such malefactors—and he is sending you a letter signifying his willingness to procure your pardon if you would have him. If you have a sense of your crime and danger, you will certainly plead with Christ to save you, and you will not withhold your love from someone that would show you such an unparalleled favor.

3. If you would attain true love for Christ, you must first get an interest in Christ; you must lay ahold of Christ by faith so that you may be united with him and related to him. It is faith that creates this love in those who regard Christ as precious, but he is slighted by unbelievers, and they cannot love him. Without union to Christ you will have no affection for Christ; the foundation of this love is rooted in the relationship to the Beloved, and this union to and interest in Christ only comes by faith. Therefore, if you would embrace Christ in the arms of your love, you must first lay ahold of Christ and receive him by the hand of faith.

All of the excellencies and motivations for loving Jesus Christ will be nothing to you without this interest and relationship. Christ is a most beautiful, lovely, and gracious person, but you will not see him in this way if you lack the eye of faith. He is great and powerful—but in your case this

is ominous, because without interest in him his power is engaged against you. He is pure and holy, but while you remain in your sins, you are most odious in his sight. He is wise and knows all things, and therefore he is privy to all of your sins. He is most true, and therefore will fulfill his threatenings against those who remain in their trespasses. He is wealthy, but without an interest in him, you have no share in his generosity. He is kind, but his kindness only extends to those who are related to him—and what is this to you as an unbeliever? He is a Shepherd to his sheep, but you are a goat; he is a Captain to his soldiers, but you are his enemy; he is a Teacher to his disciples, but you are one of the Devil's scholars; he is a King who rules over his subjects with kindness, but you are a rebel; he is a Priest who has made propitiation for his people, and who makes continual intercession for them—but you trample his blood under your feet. He is a Friend and Benefactor to his people, but you are a stranger; he is a Brother and Husband to his people, but you do not hold either of these relationships; he is a Redeemer unto his people, but you remain a slave and a captive.

The light which he gives is most sweet, but you are darkness. The life which he imparts is most excellent, but you are dead in your sins and trespasses. He gives a pardon for sin, but you remain under guilt; he gives peace of conscience, but your conscience is still wounded and seared. He gives the joy of the Holy Spirit, but you are in danger of eternal sorrow. The robes of his righteousness are most rich, but you are naked; the riches of his grace are immeasurable, but you are still poor. The dignity of being made a child of God is most admirable, but you are a child of the Devil. Jesus Christ gives his people access to God through prayer, but you remain at a distance. He grants his people a title to the kingdom of heaven, but if you continue in your present state, you will eventually be shut out of the palace above and thrust down into the prison of hell below.

Now what shall we make of all these motives to draw forth a love for Christ, if you have no relationship with him? It is union with Christ by faith which puts life into these motives. And so that they might indeed draw you to love him, I would urge you to seek out this relationship with Christ without further delay. You must have it, or you are irrecoverably lost and will be miserable for all eternity. And this is something you can obtain for yourself; others who are as vile and lowly as yourself have obtained it. Christ is calling you; therefore be persuaded to come to him, and join

yourself to him by faith, so that you may have an interest in Christ and all of his benefits.

Question. Someone may ask, ‘What is this faith that gives us an interest in Christ? What is it to believe?’

Answer. To this I answer, that it is to receive Christ: “But to as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in his name” ([John 1:12](#)). Therefore be persuaded to receive Christ and accept him upon the terms of the Gospel. Receive and take hold of Christ by the hand of faith. And so that you may do this:

a.) You must let go of the sin you are holding on to. If you hug sin in your bosom, and harbor wickedness in your heart, you cannot receive and share fellowship with Christ there. You must thrust out sin if you would let Christ in.

b.) You must let go of your hold on the world. I am not saying that you must throw away the property and possessions which God has provided, unless it is to part with some proportion of it for the purposes of mercy and charity, and unless you are called to leave it all rather than to forgo Christ or any of his truths. But instead, you must let the world go from out of your heart; the world must not sit upon the throne of your heart—that seat must be reserved for Christ. If you would receive Christ, you must first remove an inordinate and primary love for the things of this world from your heart.

c.) You must let go of your hold on self. You must part with your own righteousness and all self-confidence. If you would receive the fullness which is found in the Lord Jesus Christ, you must first be humbled and emptied of yourself.

And then:

a.) Receive Jesus Christ as your High Priest to reconcile you unto God, trusting only in his merits and mediation.

b.) Receive Jesus Christ as your Prophet to instruct and lead you in all truth by his Word and Spirit.

c.) Receive Jesus Christ as your Sovereign Lord and King to rule over you.

d.) Receive Jesus Christ as your Captain to tread down your spiritual enemies beneath your feet.

e.) Receive Jesus Christ in all his relationships of Shepherd, Friend, Brother, and especially in the relationship of Husband. Join yourself to him, and make yourself over to him, dedicating and devoting yourself to him, and giving yourself up to be guided, guarded, provided for, and governed by him.

This is what is meant by receiving Christ, and this is what it is to believe. If you join yourself to Christ by faith in this manner, it will unite you with him and give you a relationship with him, and you will soon feel a vigorous love for Christ springing forth to work, act, and bring forth such fruit in your life as shall show evidence that a love for Christ is rooted within your heart.

4. If you would attain true love for Jesus Christ, be diligent in the use of every means which God has appointed for it. I shall instance only two:

a.) Be diligent in hearing the Word preached. As “faith cometh by hearing” ([Romans 10:17](#)), so love for Christ is wrought by the same means. “Hear and your souls shall live,” says the prophet ([Isaiah 55:3](#)); and to this I would add, hear that your hearts may love. Though your eyes cannot see him, your ears may kindle a love for the Lord Jesus within your heart. Lydia’s heart was opened while hearing Paul preach ([Acts 16:14](#)), and when you hear your minister preach Christ, your heart may be opened to receive and embrace him in the arms of your dearest love. “As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, as on us at the beginning” ([Acts 11:15](#)); while Peter was preaching and the Gentiles were hearing, the Holy Spirit was sent down from heaven and fell upon upon. And thus while you are hearing the Word, God may send forth his Spirit to work this grace of love for Jesus Christ within your heart.

b.) Be earnest and diligent in praying to God for this love. Confess and bewail to him your lack of this love; tell him you deserve a double *anathema* because you do not love Christ, and cannot love him of yourself—that you could as easily lift up a mountain to heaven as lift up your heart unto Christ. Tell him that nonetheless, you desire for him to draw up your love for Christ by his Spirit. Beg of him that he would put out the fire of lust and all inordinate love for created things, and that he would kindle a

fire of love within you for this most lovely Jesus which no corruption in your heart may be able extinguish. And in your prayers present your heart to the Lord Jesus, offering it up to him freely, and desiring that he would accept it, that he would take hold and possession of it, building a throne and an everlasting habitation for himself there.

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. What three directions does the author give for one who would obtain a love for Jesus Christ, when no love is present?
2. Do you struggle with believing that Jesus Christ truly exists?
3. How is it that a sense of your own sinfulness could increase your love for Jesus Christ?
4. What things are meant by the term “receiving Christ”? Have you received Christ in this manner? Explain how this is made manifest in your daily life.

Chapter 16

HOW TO OBTAIN THIS LOVE FOR CHRIST WHEN IT IS PRESENT, BUT IN WEAK MEASURE

Having given directions for how you may obtain a true love for Christ when you are completely without it, I now come to giving directions for how you may increase this love for Christ when you have it, but in a low degree and weak measure. Would you increase your love for Christ?

1. Be much in contemplation of Christ. Frequently consider what motives there are for loving him, and press them upon your spirit, laboring to awaken and stir up your heart into a vigorous exercise of this love. Spend time in secret retirement contemplating the superlative excellencies and perfections of Christ's person, how wonderful and matchless his love is—its height cannot be reached, its depth cannot be fathomed, and its breadth cannot be comprehended! Meditate often upon his benefits and how incomparable his tokens of love to you are. And while you are musing, you may feel the fire burning; while you are looking, you may feel your heart leaping; while you are admiring him, before you know it, your heart will become like the chariots of Ammi-Nadib ([Song of Solomon 6:12](#))—they will run to him. O what ravishments of love, what transports of soul have some believers found in their private meditations, when their souls have seen Christ in his beauty!

Therefore go often to the mount of divine contemplation, and when you are there look upward to heaven and think to yourself:

‘Yonder, yonder above the shining sun is the more glorious Son of Righteousness, my beloved Jesus, the Son of God! He is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. And although he is high above me in both place and dignity, yet he thinks of me and pleads for me. He has sent me many gifts through his Spirit. I can ask for anything in his name, and if it is truly for my good, I shall have it by his means ([John 16:23](#)).

O dear Jesus, how lovely you are! You are the darling of heaven, the delight of the Father, and the admiration of angels! With what bright

glory and shining luster are you arrayed! You are clothed with the most excellent majesty and honor! You are girded with infinite might and power! The beauty of your face is most wonderful! Your smiling face is most sweet and delightful!

And does this lovely fair One, this fairest of ten thousand, this most excellent and altogether lovely Person bear a special love for me? For such a vile worm as me? For such a dead dog as me? For such an undeserving, ill-deserving, and hell-deserving sinner as me? O what a marvelous kindness this is—what infinite riches of free grace! Does he know me by name? Has he given himself for me and to me? How shall I not give him my heart? Am I written in his book, redeemed with his blood, clothed in his righteousness, and made beautiful by his image? Has he conferred the dignity of being made a child of God upon me, and prepared a place in the Father's house for me? O how wonderful! O how admirable!

And what shall I render unto him? What returns shall I make? Had I a thousand tongues, should I not employ them all in speaking his praise? Had I a thousand hearts, should I not present them all as a meager offering of thanksgiving unto him?

And yet am I slow of heart to love this dear and sweet Jesus? O my soul, awake! Awake from your dullness and stupor! Shake off the sleep which glues your eyelids together so tightly; shake the dust of the earth from your eyes, for it keeps you from seeing your Beloved! O my soul, arise! Lift yourself up, unfetter your feet, cast off what weighs you down and take flight. Mount up with wings, soaring above the sky and the visible heavens to the place where this lovely and dear Jesus is.

Take your leave of the world and everything that pertains to it. Bid farewell to the flattering honors, deceitful riches, and gilded pleasures that are here below; bid them *adieu* and leave them to those that place their chief happiness in them. Though the earth may have your body for awhile, do not allow it to have your heart and chief affections any longer.

O my soul come, ascend, and soar aloft to the heaven of heavens! The way into the Holy of Holies is accessible; the veil is torn in two and the

Forerunner has gone in so that you too may enter with your thoughts, desires, loves, hopes, and joys. There you may see, admire, and embrace your dear Lord. There your passion may find an appropriate object for its love—your dear Lord Jesus, who will not reject or despise you, but will kindly entertain your love and give it the most full and sweet returns.

There your heart will find a room to dwell in, yet not like the lodging of a traveler, who stays for the night—but a home in which to reside and take up its eternal habitation. Let your heart be your forerunner, so when your body drops away from you, you may know where to go and be received, for your heart will have been there long before.

Why do you hang downward, O my soul? Why do you bend so much to the earth and earthly things? What is here below that is not beneath you and altogether unworthy of your love? How empty, vain, and thorny these things are! Don't waste your time wearying yourself for very vanity; don't prick and wound yourself with these things anymore.

What ails you, O my soul, that you are so slow to love Christ? Is it because you cannot see him with your eyes? You shall see him with those eyes in a little while, when he comes in his glory, and your body is raised up, repaired, and fit to bear such a sight. You cannot see the wind, but you hear it blowing and feel it on your face; and can you not hear Christ's voice in his Word? Do you not feel the breath of his Spirit in his ordinances? You yourself are invisible, O my soul! Are you so drenched in the flesh that visible objects have more power to captivate your heart than this most glorious Object (though for now invisible) does?

Do you question and doubt his love to you? Is this what dampens and discourages your affection? Whose image is it which is engraved upon you—is it not the image of Christ? What writing is it that lies upon your heart? Is it not God's law, written there by Christ's Spirit? Whose attire are you adorned with—what beauty is this which has put upon you? Is it not the very beauty of Christ? Where did you receive those bracelets, that ring, those jewels, and that chain of graces? Are they not tokens of love which Christ has given you? And yet you doubt his love?

If you are feeling a strong sense of your own corruption, yet do you not also perceive some grace, though it may be weak? Do you not have some love for Christ, though it may be small? Aren't your desires chiefly after him, which is evidence that your chief love is for him? And isn't this the case with all of those whom Christ loves? Doesn't Christ love first? And yet will you question his love? Then banish your fears and silence your doubts, O my soul, and awaken yourself to climb up to heaven by Jacob's ladder, which has been let down for you. Settle your love upon Jesus Christ and those things which are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God.'

Such private contemplations of Christ and pleading soliloquies with your own soul when you are alone will cultivate growth in your love for Christ.

2. Would you have great love for Christ? Then be much in reading and studying the Scriptures. The Scriptures are a mirror in which Christ may be seen. He cannot be seen face-to-face in this world: this is the happiness of the triumphant Church in heaven, but not the militant Church here on earth. What may be discerned of Christ here is seen through the mirror of the Scriptures and Gospel-ordinances. And this is the mirror which is spoken of in [2 Corinthians 3:18](#): "We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory." Christ is the glory of the Lord, the brightness of his Father's glory ([Hebrews 1:3](#)).

Would you have great love for him? Then be often looking, viewing, and beholding him through the mirror of the Scriptures; for by beholding him often, you will be increasingly transformed into the likeness of his holiness and love—and this is the beginning of your glorification. The Scriptures have the image of Christ engraved upon them: the image of the Father is imprinted on the Son, and the image of the Son is imprinted upon the Scriptures. In them you may see a picture of Christ and the beauty of Christ; at least some of his features are sketched there by the hand of God, though not as fully as you will see them when you behold him face-to-face in heaven. And yet his beauty is depicted there in such a way that you are now capable of beholding it.

Would you have great love for Christ, whom you have never seen? Then look often upon his image and representation in the Scriptures. The Scriptures are Christ's love letters. In the second and third chapters of the Revelation, Christ sends an epistle to each of the seven churches in Asia. Yet in a manner of speaking there are many other epistles and love-letters in the Scriptures—especially in the New Testament, where Christ gives many kind expressions of the endearing love he has for his people. Read and study Christ's love letters often, especially the parts of Scripture in which Christ can be clearly seen expressing his kindness and love. For example, see how kindly Christ expresses himself in [John 14:1–3](#), [13](#), [16–23](#), [27](#); [15:9](#), [13–16](#); [16:7](#), [22–24](#), [26–27](#), [33](#); [17:9–11](#), [15](#), [20–24](#); [20:17](#). Frequently read and consider such places.

Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly ([Colossians 3:16](#)), and this will feed and maintain your love for Christ, for this is a means of having Christ dwell in your heart not only by faith, but also by a most endearing love.

3. Would you have great love for Christ? Then be much in prayer to God for this love. “Peace be unto the brethren, and love with faith from God the Father” ([Ephesians 6:23](#)). Not only is peace from God (who is called the God of peace), and faith from God (who works it by his almighty power)—but love is also from God, for he is the God of love; he circumcises the heart to love both himself and his Son.

This love for Christ is a grace of the Spirit which God freely gives and powerfully works. The beginning of it, its increase (yea, every measure and degree of it) is from him. If you would obtain a high measure of love for Christ, you must apply yourself unto God in prayer, and diligently seek it from him there.

If you would have great love for Christ in your heart, you must be on your knees at the throne of grace regularly, humbly acknowledging the lack or weakness of your love for Christ. Bewail your sins which dampen your affections, and earnestly entreat him to work your heart into a strong love. Be persistent in your prayers for this! Appeal to God with the same request day by day; pleading with him for it, and filling your mouth with arguments of faith and fervent desire.

Tell him that regardless of the love and loveliness there is in Christ, and whatever beauty there is to draw forth your love—yet of yourself you are utterly unable to put forth the least motion of true affection for Christ.

Tell him that this love for Christ, though it is your duty, yet it is his gift; and that although you know you ought to perform this duty, yet you cannot unless he first instills it within you. Tell him how easily he can kindle this fire of love for Christ within your heart and fan it into flame.

Tell him that he has directed you to ask and you shall receive ([Matthew 7:7](#)); that whatever you ask according to his will he hears ([1 John 5:14](#)); and that it is his will for you to love Christ not only in truth, but also in strength ([Deuteronomy 6:5](#)). Tell him that you desire to have great love for Christ, that these desires only come from him, and therefore you earnestly desire that they would be fulfilled.

Tell him that if you do not love Christ greatly, you will tend to have too much love for created things, which will displease him. Therefore you are appealing for such a love for Christ as may overpower all other loves, and keep your heart from all inordinate affections for anything beneath or beside the Lord Jesus Christ.

Plead with him, telling him how much it will be for his glory if you had great love for Christ, and that by it you would be enabled to honor him more in the world.

Plead with him, telling him how much it will be for your own good. Tell him that if you asked corn, wine, and oil; or if you asked for wealth, honor, or creature comforts in abundance, that these things might be a snare unto you that brings you harm. But a strong love for Christ is both necessary and useful, and would surely tend toward your well-being. Urge him to fulfill his promise of circumcising your heart so that you may love him ([Deuteronomy 30:6](#)), pleading for his faithfulness in this.

And thus if you persist in prayer for a great love unto Christ, and will not be denied, you shall receive it.

4. Would you have great love for Christ? Then obtain great faith, for faith works love to both the Father and the Son. And the measure of your love

will be commensurate with the measure of your faith. Those who are without any faith are also without any love. Those who have a weak faith also have a weak love—and those who have the strongest faith have the greatest love.

The strongest faith gives the clearest revelation of Christ's infinite excellencies and perfections. It is not the eye of sense or reason which sees Christ; whatever sight we have of Christ comes by revelation, and this is discernible only by faith. "Faith is the evidence of things not seen" ([Hebrews 11:1](#)), and by faith the unseen Christ is seen as the most excellent person, and the most suitable object for our love—and the more clearly the object of our love is beheld, the stronger will that love be.

Moreover, faith is not only the eye of the soul with which we may see Christ, but it is also the hand of the soul, which not only takes hold of him, but which also receives from him of his fullness grace for grace, and as a result more of this grace of love for him.

Our communion with Christ is also by faith. Now the more intimate our acquaintance and fellowship is with those whom we love, the stronger our love for them will be. The strongest faith brings us the greatest intimacy, fellowship, and familiarity with Christ—and therefore it is a means of obtaining the strongest love for him.

Therefore endeavor to obtain a strong faith, and to live each day in the powerful exercise of it, for the more you live by faith, the more you will dwell in the love of Christ.

5. Would you have great love for Christ? Then labor to obtain much of the Spirit and his light. There must not only be the mirror of the Scriptures and the eye of faith, but also the light of the Spirit, so that you may have a clear view of this lovely Lord Jesus.

Labor to obtain a great degree of the Spirit's activity within you. The Spirit is like a wind which blows the sparks of love in your heart into a flame.

Labor to obtain the indwelling of the Spirit within you, so that the promise which Christ gives to his disciples may be made good in you as well: "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may

abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you” ([John 14:16–17](#)).

6. Would you have great love for Christ? Then labor for clear evidences of his love for you. The perception of Christ’s loveliness may elicit some love, but full and well-grounded convictions of Christ’s love for you will heighten your love for Christ more than anything ([1 John 4:19](#)). Doubts about Christ’s love causes fears, and fears cause the heart to contract—and therefore are the opposite of love, which is the expansion and enlargement of the heart. “Perfect love casteth out fear” ([1 John 4:18](#)); more love leads to less fear, and conversely, less love is found where there are greater doubts and fears. Those who harbor doubts about Christ’s love for them may genuinely love Christ, but they cannot love him strongly.

You will love a less lovely person who loves you more than you will a more lovely person that hates you. The love that this person has for you is one of the most attractive and engaging features, yea one of the greatest enticements and inducements to love. Therefore labor for a persuasion that this infinitely lovely Person has an infinite love for you, so that you may be able to say with Paul, “[He] loved me and gave himself for me” ([Galatians 2:20](#)).

Look diligently into the Word of God and examine the characteristics of those who are loved by Christ; then look carefully into yourself to see whether your face will find its reflection in the mirror of the Scriptures. Do you see the attributes of the new man within you? Have you experienced a gracious change? Is there now light where darkness once was? Is there now life where there was once death? Is there now love where before there was only hatred? Do you see the law of God written upon your heart, where previously everything was ruled by the lawlessness of sin? Does your will and heart bend toward God, Christ, and heaven, when before it only ran to the things of this world, sin, and hell? Pray earnestly to God that he would give you a full sense of assurance, so that you will no longer doubt that you are indeed effectually called, and that you are indeed united and related to Jesus Christ.

Diligently seek every manifestation of Christ's love in his ordinances. Do not permit yourself to rest in the external part of those ordinances, but seek Christ within them; follow him from Sabbath to Sabbath, from ordinance to ordinance, and always be looking for him and toward him, until he turns around, looks at you, and gives you his gracious smile. Patiently seek the manifestation of himself which he has promised unto those that love him ([John 14:21](#)). Wait for the Holy Spirit to descend upon you from heaven ([1 Peter 1:12](#)) and to pour a sense of his love into your heart ([Romans 5:5](#)).

Now if you were to obtain such confident assurance from the Spirit of Christ, O the joys that you would have in him! O the love that you would have for him! And as your joy would be unspeakable, so also would your love be unspeakable too—for you would feel such a heart-warming love for Christ burning within you, as would go quite beyond the ability of the tongue to describe with words.

7. Would you have great love for Christ? Then learn to deepen your hatred for sin. Watch and pray, striving and fighting against it as the worst of all evils, and as that which greatly displeases your Lord. Bewail your sins of incursion daily, and labor in such a way that your sins of infirmity may be less and less every day. Take heed of those sins which tend to surprise you with their suddenness. And above all defend against premeditated sins; do not comply with any of the temptations to gross miscarriages, for they are like water cast upon the fire of your love for Christ. Such sins will put out its flame and leave only a few undetectable sparks in the corner of your heart.

Do not willingly allow sin to have any room in your heart. And if it does abide in you, and you cannot thrust it out completely, then do not let it dwell within you peacefully. Disrupt sin as much as you can; wage war with your remaining lusts every day. Do not permit a day to pass without wounding it by stabbing at it, or bludgeoning it with some blows. Reduce the amount of room that sin occupies within your heart as much as you can; the more room sin has in your heart, the less room Christ will have there (*cf.* [Romans 13:14](#)).

And in particular, take heed of an inordinate love for this world and the things of it, for this will dampen your love for Christ. The more the world

has of your love, the less Christ will have. You may have a subordinate love for the people and things of this world, but do not allow any person or thing to have your chief love—only Christ should have that. Only Christ should receive your rapt affection; anything beneath him should be secondary. Love everyone under the Lord, in the Lord, and for the Lord's sake. Every intemperate attachment to world must be crucified to the cross of Christ. If you would have a living and active love for the ever-living Lord Jesus Christ, you must learn to have dying affections for perishing things.

8. Would you have great love for Christ? Then primarily seek the fellowship of those that have the greatest love for Christ. You may fetch light from their light, and you may fetch warmth from their fire. Dead embers are rekindled by those that are living, and your dead heart may be revived with love for Christ by the companionship of those that have hearts which burn for him.

And moreover, be ready to speak of and for Christ in any company as the opportunity presents itself. Diligently watch for such occasions. Shut your ears to and reprove any profane and filthy conversation. Be ready to divert a discussion from topics that are trivial and superficial to that which is sober and substantial. Gracious speech tends to the edification of yourself and others. Study and practice the art of drawing everyone into conversations that promote love and affection for the Lord Jesus Christ, and not into strife and contention. And while you are endeavoring to warm others with this love, you may find that you are warmed by it as well.

9. And lastly, would you have great love for Christ? Then be much in the exercise of this love, for in so doing it is increased and intensified. Use legs and have legs; if you exercise this love frequently, it will gain strength and activity. Strive to carry out some vigorous acts of love for Jesus Christ every day.

You may pause to look lovingly to Jesus Christ in prayer while engaged in the mundane business of your everyday life and callings. But especially labor to have your love flow out to Christ most vigorously when it comes to the express worship of God. In your daily times of private devotion and in family worship let love for Christ draw forth tears from your eyes, at least causing grief and sorrow in your heart by the acknowledgement of your

sins, by which he has been dishonored and displeased. Let love for Christ draw forth an earnest desire for him, and the fellowship, manifestations, and comforts which he gives to none but those who are his own. Let love for Christ put requests into your mouth, arguments into your requests, and fervor into your arguments as you plead with him for further supplies of his grace at the throne of grace, and that you may be brought into greater intimacy with him.

You should express your love for Christ every day, but especially on the Lord's Day, when nearly the whole day should be spent in the public and private exercise of religious worship. Put all of your love for Christ into such exercises. When you attend upon him in the ordinances, you must bring not only your body before him, but also present him with your heart—especially in public prayer, the hearing of the Word, preaching, and the singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.

In every ordinance you should lift up your heart unto the Lord, but above all when you approach the Lord's Table; all of your graces should be in exercise there—especially the grace of love unto Jesus Christ. There your eye should affect your heart; when you see the representation of your crucified Lord, and think what manner of love he bore for you, and that he would submit himself unto such a death for you—O how this should affect your heart! This is where your love for Christ should manifest itself with the greatest degree of vigor and strength.

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. The author prescribes nine things to focus on, if you have love for Christ, but in weak measure. List them, explaining the author's rationale for each of these approaches to kindling a love for Jesus Christ within you.
2. If you have weak love for Jesus Christ, is there any area (or areas) of the above list that might have contributed to creating such a state of affairs in your heart?

Chapter 17

HOW TO EXPRESS THIS LOVE FOR CHRIST

Having given directions for how to attain love for Christ in truth and strength, I now come to the last sort of directions: how you should show your love for Jesus Christ.

In general, show your love for Christ in your obedience to him. “If ye love me, keep my commandments” ([John 14:15](#)). Be faithful in the performance of all known duties which Christ commands, and be careful to avoid all known sins which Christ forbids. Let it be your great care to please Christ, regardless of whom may be displeased by it; and your great fear offending Christ, regardless of whom may be offended by your strictness. Show your love:

1. In the sincerity of your obedience,
2. In the willingness of your obedience,
3. In the universality of your obedience,
4. And in the constancy of your obedience.



1. Show your love for Christ in the *sincerity* of your obedience. Hypocrites will do some things which Christ commands, but it is from carnal motives, and with carnal designs. But let your love for Christ be the motive, and the honor of Christ the aim of your obedience. Obey Christ because you love him, and with the goal of pleasing him. Whatever you do, do it heartily unto the Lord ([Colossians 3:23](#))—and above all things, desire and endeavor that what you do may find acceptance with him. “Wherefore we labor, that whether present or absent we may be accepted of him” ([2 Corinthians 5:9](#)).

2. Show your love for Christ in the *willingness* of your obedience. Some will obey Christ, but they perform their duties with great reluctance. The commandments of Christ are burdensome, wearying, toilsome, and grievous to them. They are seldom eager for any duty, but wait until they are scourged into doing it by the rods of affliction, or spurred and pricked

forward by a goading conscience. O the indifference and unwillingness that most have for the spiritual part of the service of Christ!

Now this is evidence of an absence of love for Christ in either the truth of it, or at least in measure and degree. Instead, let your love show itself in the willingness of your obedience; serve the Lord with a willing and ready mind, with an eager and cheerful spirit that looks upon the service of Christ as an honor, and esteems every duty as a privilege. If you have any constraints unto obedience, let them be the constraints of love (*cf.* [2 Corinthians 5:14](#)). If you are forced to obey Christ, let there be no violence but the violence of love. If you are dragged to your duty, let it be by no other cords than the cords of love. Let love be the spur and goad which drives you forward, so that you may not only walk but run in the ways of Christ's commandments with an enlarged heart.

3. Show your love for Christ in the *universality* of your obedience. Hypocrites will perform some duties which serve their own interests and carnal designs, yet they completely omit and neglect other duties. Instead, let your love for Christ show itself in your respect for all of his commandments. And although you cannot attain perfect obedience on this side of the veil, yet let your obedience be universal. Do not merely obey Christ in those duties which are seen by men, but also in the private and spiritual duties no eye but the eye of God can see—those that depend upon the exercise of the mind, such as meditation, contemplation, self-examination, and private prayer. And by this you may be distinguished from all the hypocrites in the world.

4. Show your love for Christ in the *constancy* of your obedience. “Ye did run well, who did hinder you, that ye should not obey the truth?” ([Galatians 5:7](#)). Some hypocrites make a zealous profession of faith for a time, and may seem at first to outstrip many that are sincere; but soon they tire and are weary not only in well-doing but also of it. They are quick to stumble and fall—not only falling down, but also falling off; not only falling back, but also falling away. And thus they turn into fearful apostates.

Instead, show your love for Christ not only in setting out well, but also in continuing your Christian course well until the end of your life. Begin well, and patiently continue in well-doing. Persevere in your obedience: “Be not

weary in well-doing, knowing that in due time ye shall reap if ye faint not” ([Galatians 6:9](#)). And if you are faithful unto death, Christ has promised to give you the crown of life ([Revelation 2:10](#)).

More particularly, show your love for Christ:

1. By learning, keeping, asserting, and maintaining Christ’s truths.
2. By your public spiritedness and zeal for Christ’s honor and interest.
3. In your vigorous resistance and opposition toward Christ’s enemies.
4. By following Christ’s example.
5. In your readiness to take up Christ’s cross and bear it patiently.
6. In your desire for Christ’s presence here, and a longing for Christ’s second appearance on the last day.



1. Show your love for Christ by learning, keeping, asserting, and maintaining Christ’s truths:

a.) Learn Christ’s truths. Acquaint yourself with them by diligently reading the Scriptures and other books that may be helpful to this end. First learn the foundational truths of the Christian religion, and then proceed further by learning those truths which are superstructory. Receive whatever truths you find a basis for in the Scriptures not only for the light they bring into your mind, but also for the love they instill in your heart. If the branches of truth are in your head, the leaves of truth are in your profession, and the fruit of truth is your actions—then let the root of truth also be in your heart.

b.) Having learned the truths of Christ as they are found in Jesus, do not permit them to hang loosely in your understanding—but fasten, fix, and firmly bind them in your mind. Hold tightly to the truths of Christ; prize them above all jewels. Do not part with them upon any terms. Let everything else go—your estate, your liberty, and even your very life—rather than letting go of any of this rich treasure which Christ has entrusted unto you.

c.) Assert the truths of Christ. Do not be ashamed or afraid to own any of the truths of Christ in this most adulterous and rebellious generation, but instead profess your belief in Christ and his truths. Endeavor to make the

light of these truths shine abroad, casting forth such bright beams in the dark world where you live that others may be brought to the knowledge of the truth by it.

d.) Endeavor to maintain Christ's truths. Earnestly contend for the doctrine of faith once delivered to the saints. Endeavor to convince naysayers, and to defend Christ's truths from those faulty and corrupt teachings and opinions which, like leaven, are very apt to spread and infect the minds of men.

2. Show your love for Christ through your public spiritedness and zeal for Christ's honor and interest. Let your affections be public, and not private, narrow, contracted or centered only within you.

Let your love be a public and general love. Do not merely love your friends and family, but love all of Christ's disciples, though they may be of different persuasions and interests than you—for they all bear the image of Christ. And do not merely love your friends, who love you in return, but love also your enemies, who hate you—for this is the command of Christ.

Let your desires be public desires. Long for the welfare of the universal Church, and of all God's people throughout the world. And pray accordingly for their peace and prosperity, endeavoring as you have the opportunity to promote the public good more than you do your own private advantage. Do not seek your own things, but the things of Jesus Christ.

Let your griefs be public griefs. Grieve not only for your own sins, but also for the sins of others—for by them Christ is dishonored in the world. Grieve not only for your own afflictions, but also for the afflictions of others: "Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them, and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body" ([Hebrews 13:3](#)). You are in the same mystical body with all of Christ's afflicted members, and when some members suffer, the rest should suffer too, by way of sympathy. Their wounds should cause you to bleed, and their sorrows should cause you to grieve. Stand ready to provide relief unto them, especially Christ's disciples who are in distress. Satisfy every need that you have both the capacity and the opportunity to fulfill.

Employ all of your talents for the Master's glory, and endeavor to promote the interest of the Lord Jesus Christ to the utmost of your ability:

a.) *Among those who are outside the church.* If you yourself are called, then labor to call others unto Christ, even as Andrew called Peter, and Philip called Nathaniel unto the Messiah ([John 1:40–41](#), [44–45](#)). If you have found the Messiah (or rather, if you have been found by him), then let your love for Christ and the souls of others prompt you to strive for the conversion of your family members, friends, and acquaintances.

Remind your unconverted friends of the miserable condition they are in while they remain under the guilt and reigning power of sin, and that they are slaves to the Devil and their own lusts. Remind them of the death and fearful consequences that await all unpardoned sinners. Tell them about Christ, and that he is the only Savior and Redeemer of mankind. Tell them how able and willing he is to save them if they will seek him and apply themselves unto him. Tell them that it was not long ago that you were in the same condition with them, living in the practice of the same sins, and travelling on the same path toward destruction, and that the Lord has shown you mercy in your conversion, and in bringing you into a state of salvation. Tell them that there is mercy for them as well if they would look for it, that God's grace is most free, that his mercy is most plentiful, and that Christ is most gracious, not casting out any that come to him. Tell them about the beauty of Christ's person, of the surpassing love which he has shown to fallen mankind in dying for them, and that although he was dead, yet now he is alive and lives forevermore to intercede for those that choose him and make use of him as their Advocate.

Therefore persuade them to break away from their sins by repentance (lest they ruin both their bodies and souls in hell) and come to Christ without delay, accepting him on the terms laid out in the Gospel. And if you cannot manage these arguments well yourself, then try to persuade them to hear such ministers and sermons as by God's blessing have been effective for your own conversion. And thus you may be instrumental in enlarging the kingdom of Christ, which is one of the best ways to express your love for Christ.

b.) *Among those who are within the church.* Labor to promote the interest of Christ among those that are true Christians by working diligently to secure, strengthen, enliven, and encourage them in the ways of the Lord. Communicate the experiences which you have had as you see the need

arising, but in a way that tends not so much to your own praise as it does your Master's honor. Strive to be both a shining and burning light in the place where you are; be eager to put forth every good word and work. Look upon yourself as a devoted servant of Christ, and that you are not your own. Therefore lay yourself out to the utmost for him, giving all diligence to glorify him with your body and spirit, with your position and possessions, and with your gifts and talents—for all of these are his, and ought to be at his disposal.

3. Show your love for Christ in your vigorous resistance and opposition to Christ's enemies. There are three great enemies of Christ (which by your baptism you are engaged to fight against), namely, the Devil, the flesh, and the world. These three war against both Christ and your soul. This trinity of adversaries are united in purpose and have combined themselves together against his anointed. They are doing their utmost to break his bands, untie his cords, and undermine his government. They would pluck the crown off of Christ's head and take the scepter from his hand if they could reach them. They would like to deprive Christ of all his power here on earth and confine him to his territories in heaven—but all of their attempts to do so have been and always will be in vain.

Christ has tried the strength of these enemies and triumphed over them, but there is still some life and power left within them to war against the children of God. You are a soldier of Christ who is mustered beneath his banner; show your allegiance and love for your Captain and General by manfully maintaining the spiritual combat against his and your spiritual enemies. Fight the good fight of faith, resist unto blood, do not yield for any reason. Turn your eye and ear away with disdain when these enemies try to entice and allure you. Take stout resolution in opposing them when they assault you with their greatest fury. Do not hearken to any of the Devil's suggestions, the world's temptations, or the cravings of the flesh, for they will draw you into the ways of sin—or at the least, pull you away from the ways of Christ. Resist and oppose, laboring to gain some victories over these adversaries every day.

But in particular, learn to master the flesh, and the other two will soon be vanquished. Christ showed his love for you by submitting himself to be crucified for your sake; show your love for Christ by crucifying the lusts

and affections of the flesh. Mortify the flesh by denying its sinful desires. And when you deny your carnal reason, wisdom, will, affections, interests, and inordinate appetites for the sake of Christ; when you crush pride, envy, revenge, malice, and anger; when you deny inordinate love, desires, grief, passions, and lusts for the sake of Christ and because he commands it—these are all acts and evidences of love for Christ, and you should exercise yourself in showing this love for Christ every day.

4. Show your love for Christ by following his example. Your imitation of him reveals the affection you have for him. Show your love for Christ by laboring to be like him in both his likeness and in walking as he himself walked when he was here on the earth, so that you may be like him in both your inward disposition and your outward behavior:

- a.) Christ was lowly, so be humble and modest in your own esteem.
- b.) Christ was meek, so be gentle, receptive, and not easily provoked.
- c.) Christ loved God, so make God the object of your love.
- d.) Christ hated sin, so make sin the object of your hatred.
- e.) Christ condemned the world, so crucify any affections you have toward it.
- f.) Christ was compassionate to those that were in distress, so strive to make your heart the same way.
- g.) Christ made it his habit to worship publicly in the synagogues, to pray with his disciples, and to spend time in private prayer—so be in attendance of the public assemblies of God's people, worship God in your family, and be often upon your knees at the throne of grace in private.
- h.) Christ's mind was a heavenly mind, so let the same mind be in you.
- i.) Christ's will was submissive to his Father's will, so let the same will be in you.
- j.) Christ's words were gracious and edifying, so let your speech always be kind and uplifting unto others.

k.) Christ's life was an active life; he was always doing good and was holy in everything that he did—so be active and diligent in serving God by doing good unto others, and be holy as Christ was holy in every aspect of your behavior.

And thus may you show your love for Christ in following his example, and in emulating him in everything that you are capable of imitating.

5. Show your love for Christ in your readiness to take up Christ's cross and bear it patiently. This is not to say that you should desire to suffer for Christ, but I am convinced that a strong love for Christ will not permit you to decline such suffering. Do not go out of God's way to seek suffering, and do not go out of God's way to escape suffering. If your duty leads you to the cross, do not turn back or to the side, but take it up cheerfully. And when you have taken it up, bear it patiently, and do not throw it off—but wait until God takes it from you. When it is your duty to suffer for Christ, look upon it as your privilege and be glad for the opportunity, rejoicing that you have anything to part with for the sake of Christ, be it a good name, a good estate, or good friends. And if it is your liberty or your life that you are called upon to surrender, then remember that such expressions of love are very honorable and very pleasing to your Lord and Master.

6. And lastly, show your love for Christ in your desire for Christ's presence here, and in your longing for his second coming on the last day:

a.) Desire Christ's gracious presence here, and the manifestations of it—that he would come to you according to his promises, that he would draw near to you, and that you might feel that he is near. Desire to obtain a clearer view of Christ and more intimate fellowship and communion with him. Above all, seek his company and fellowship, so that you may walk with him and converse with him, having a daily interaction between Christ and your soul. Endeavor to remove any distance and strangeness that is between you. Let your love express itself in a desire for Christ when he is absent, and in delight when he is present. Rejoice exceedingly in the Lord when he graciously manifests himself unto you. Admire his beauty and delight in his smile; admire his love and delight in having his favor. Let your love manifest itself in this way every day.

b.) Also desire and long for the second appearance of Christ on the last day. When he says, “Surely I come quickly,” do you say, “Amen, even so, come Lord Jesus” ([Revelation 22:20](#))? Look upon time as slow of heel and wing because it runs no faster and flies no more swiftly. Look to the end of time and long for it, because then your eyes shall see him whom your soul loves; because then you shall see Christ descend from the throne of God with such brightness of majesty and beauty that it will delight you with wonder and joy.

Say, ‘When, Lord Jesus, will you take up your great power, clothe yourself with authority, and come down to judge the world? When will you open the everlasting gates of heaven, which have been closed for so long? When will you descend from heaven with a shout and the sound of the great trumpet, sending your angels to gather all of the elect from the four winds, so that all those who love you may be together with you in one assembly? When shall I put on garments of immortality and be caught up in the clouds to meet you on the day of your triumph? When shall the day of my coronation come, and the day when I shall be admitted into the glorious mansion which you have prepared for me in your shining palaces above? When will you reveal yourself to me and grant that I may behold you face to face? When will you show me the Father and allow me to see him directly? When will you show me the glory which you had with the Father before the world began, and grant me not only to see it, but also to share in it? When will you open the treasures of your love and receive me into the nearest, closest, and sweetest embraces of it? When will you allow me to drink from those rivers of pleasure that are found in you? O hasten, Lord! Hasten your glorious appearance, that you may be glorified before the whole world, and that I may be glorified with you and taken to live and reign with you, being made perfectly happy in enjoying you fully and forevermore!’

Thus I have finished with these directions for obtaining a love for Jesus Christ. Now the last thing is to give a use of exhortation.

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. How are love for Christ and obedience to him inextricably intertwined?
List four characteristics that should mark obedience to his commandments.

2. List and summarize the author's particular ways of expressing love for Jesus Christ ([pp. 103–110](#)). Which of these speak most loudly to you?

Chapter 18

A WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT

And what do you say now, after I have given you all of these motives for exciting and persuading you to love Christ, and the directions for obtaining such love? Shall it all be in vain?

What do you say, sinner? Shall Christ have your heart, or not? Will you harbor vile lusts in your heart that will damn you and keep out the Lord Jesus Christ, the only one who can save you? Shall all of that which I have written concerning the love of Christ come to nothing? My Lord and Master has sent me to woo you and to win your heart for him; will I be successful or not? Will you accept of my message? Will Jesus Christ, the most lovely person, find entertainment with you?

If any person or thing in the world which you love most dearly deserves your love as much as Christ does, then shut your ears to everything I have said, and let my words vanish into thin air. Lock the door of your heart against the Christ who stands there knocking, and give a final and absolute refusal to give him any room there.

But if you cannot find one more worthy of your love than Christ in the whole world; if there is nothing here below but that which is unworthy of your affection; if every inferior thing that has your chief love only debases and defiles you, and will certainly ruin and destroy you forever if you do not remove your heart from them—then O be persuaded to open the everlasting doors of your heart without further delay and let Christ in. Set Christ upon the highest seat of your affections; give Christ your chief love and your whole heart. With grief and hatred let go of sin and embrace the Lord Jesus Christ in the arms of your dearest love.

And if you do these things, then I would say unto you as our Savior did to Zaccheus when he entertained him in his home: “This day is salvation come unto you” ([Luke 19:9](#)). O what a happy day has come unto you! If you would heartily entertain Christ in your heart, this would be the happiest day since the day you were born—for this would be the day of your conversion,

a day in which the angels would rejoice ([Luke 15:10](#))! And though grief and trouble might assail you for awhile because of your sin, yet even this would prepare the way for spiritual joy: “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning” ([Psalm 30:5](#)). And O the joy which you will have on the day of your coronation—a day when every tear shall be wiped from your eyes ([Revelation 21:4](#)), and when you shall be admitted into the glorious presence of the Lord, where there is fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore ([Psalm 16:11](#)).

And what do you say, believer? You that have some love for Christ, shall everything that I have written here be a means of raising and intensifying your love for him? Your love for Christ has been mixed with other things; will you now love Christ more purely? Your love for Christ has been very weak; will you now love him more strongly? Your love for Christ has been but a spark; shall it now break forth into flames? Shall there be no fire after so much kindling and fanning of these embers? When you consider the beauty of Christ’s person, that his love is so incomparable, and that his benefits are so innumerable, does this not set your heart ablaze with love for him?

And will you not now love him more dearly and ardently than ever before? Will you be persuaded to take your heart off of the pursuit of earthly things and follow hard after your Lord in heaven—and to settle your love upon him in such a way that it is never withdrawn again? Will you love the Lord Jesus Christ (whom you can never love too much) greatly? Will you dwell in the love of Christ, and be more frequent and fervent in manifesting it in your actions?

And if you do, then O what comfort you will find in this love, and what sweetness you will taste in the sense of Christ’s love for you! This would be the surest evidence that Christ loves you (for he loved you first, [1 John 4:19](#)), and consider how this would sweeten your passage through the valley of affliction, and the valley of death. This would sweeten the bitter cup, and make a sweet cup even more sweet.

In life, the sense of Christ’s love will be better than life itself ([Psalm 63:3](#)); and in death this will be the only stay and support you will have, for nothing else can give any well-grounded comfort in the hour of death.

Death rages and plays the tyrant everywhere, shooting his arrows here and there. Sometimes he smites those that are older than you, and sometimes those that are younger; sometimes it is those that are weaker than you, and sometimes those that are stronger; sometimes it is those that are better, and sometimes those that are worse. Sometimes the righteous are smitten, and sometimes the wicked; sometimes it is the profane, and sometimes the saints—everyone must be awake and prepared for him.

And what will give you comfort when you come to the brink of this abyss? You may have the love of your children, family members, and dear friends who weep and mourn at your bedside, wringing their hands and looking upon you with sad faces, grieved to part with you—but what comfort can all their love yield unto your departing spirit? Their love may upset you and make you even more unwilling to die and leave them, because they are so unwilling to part with you. But to perceive the love of Christ will be a comfort indeed, because he is a friend that you are not departing from but going to see.

O the delight that you may have on that day (even when your friends look most sad, and death looks most grim) when trembling joints, clammy sweats, a weak pulse, a falling jaw, rattling throat, and other symptoms give notice of your approaching death! Then you may think to yourself:

‘I have now come not only to the door of eternity, but also to the gate of my Father’s house, where many saints have gone before me, many angels are waiting for me, and where my dearly beloved Jesus is. He has prepared to receive me into an eternal habitation! Here there are friends around my bedside, who before long will carry me to the grave, where my body will be fed upon by worms. But there are also angels by my bedside waiting for my soul, and as soon as it is loosened from this dying carcass, they will carry me to paradise! Within a few minutes I shall be with my dearest Lord, where my faith will be swallowed up in vision, my hope in fruition, and my love will come to perfection. O the glorious light that is about to shine into every corner of my mind! O the love, joy, and inexpressible delight I shall have when I come to see, enjoy, and live forever with my most dearly Beloved!’

This (and only this) will make you willing to die, and the presence of Christ’s love will sweeten your passage through the dark door of death.

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

Take time to reflect upon the things that you have read in this book. Where do you stand in your love for Christ? What is your desire? How will you see it brought to fruition? Pray for the Holy Spirit's aid. Consider enlisting the help of a friend or two that will help hold you accountable.

APPENDIX

Christ's Manifestation of Himself Unto Those That Love Him

“And he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him.”

[John 14:21b](#)

We read in [Luke 4:22](#), “And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.” Never have such gracious and sweet words been spoken from the lips of any man that has ever lived, as those which proceeded from the lips of Christ when he was here on earth.

And among all of Christ's words, those which he spoke to his disciples on the night he was betrayed are superlatively sweet (see John chapters 14–16). And none are more sweet than the words of this text: “And he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him” ([John 14:21b](#)).

In the former part of this verse we have the character of one that truly loves Christ: “He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me” ([John 14:21a](#)). In the latter part of the verse, which is my text, we see the benefit of one that truly loves Christ, and this is composed of three promises which Christ makes unto such a person:

1. “He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father,”
2. “And I will love him,”
3. “And will manifest myself unto him.”

It is the last of these promises which I shall address by way of an appendix to this treatise of the love which true Christians ought to have for Christ—and that is the promise of Christ manifesting himself unto those who love him. Now here is the point of doctrine:

Christ will manifest himself unto those who love him.

In handling this point I will show:

1. What it means to have Christ manifest himself unto those that love him,
2. That Christ will indeed manifest himself to those that love him,
3. How Christ manifests himself to those that love him,
4. When Christ will manifest himself unto those that love him,
5. Where Christ will manifest himself unto those that love him,
6. And finally, I will make some points of application.

Section 1

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HAVE CHRIST MANIFEST HIMSELF UNTO THOSE THAT LOVE HIM?

1. Christ manifests himself when he reveals the excellency of his person more clearly; when he further unveils himself to display the beams and rays of his transcendent soul-ravishing beauty with greater brilliance and brightness than he ever had before—they having had but a dim and dark view of his majesty previously.

Now this is done when Christ imparts the Spirit of wisdom and revelation unto them more fully. The apostle prays for this on behalf of the believing Ephesians—that the Lord would give them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation to enlighten their understanding in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ ([Ephesians 1:16–18](#)). They had the Spirit before, and some knowledge of Christ before; but here he prays that God would give them a fuller measure of the Spirit, to give them a clearer view of Christ, and that the eyes of their understanding might be increasingly enlightened to a more spiritual vision of the surpassing beauty and excellency of the person of Jesus Christ.

Until the end of their lives, even the most enlightened Christians are capable of further growth in the knowledge and sight of the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore the apostle Peter gives this exhortation: “But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” ([2 Peter 3:18](#)).

2. Christ manifests himself when he makes a deep impression upon his disciples by giving them a sweet sense of his presence. Christ is never really absent from those who love him, but sometimes he may seem to be so. They may feel that he is far away, and he may (and often does) withdraw the sense of his presence: “I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himself and was gone” ([Song of Solomon 5:6](#)). Christ manifests himself when he draws near to his people and makes them feel that he is near, giving them a sweet sense of his presence through the powerful breathings of his Spirit upon them, whereby their hearts are

enlivened, enlarged, and drawn forth toward him, stirring their graces into powerful exercise.

3. And chiefly, Christ manifests himself when he reveals his love unto those that love him. He allows them to see not only the beauty of his face, but also the smile that is upon it. He shows them the kindness of his countenance, and in so doing lets the light of his countenance shine upon them, shedding the sense of his love into their hearts, and giving them a sweet impression of assurance through his special love for them.

Thus at times Christ looks and speaks kindly unto his people. Now this sweet language is not spoken into the ear of the body, but inwardly and by his Spirit unto the soul, saying:

‘I am your salvation and your Savior. I have loved you with an everlasting love, and my love is unchangeable. The mountains shall depart and the hills shall be removed, but my lovingkindness shall never depart or be removed from you. I have given myself for you, and I have given myself to you—and I will never regret giving you this gift. I have chosen you and called you for myself, and have joined us together—and I will never regret this choice, nor will I ever permit you to be taken from me.

You are on my heart, and I am keeping you in my hand. No power on earth or in hell shall be able to take you away from me. I have given you my grace, and I will show you my glory. Before long I will appear in the world and take you for myself, that where I am, you may also be.

Therefore dry your tears, clear your countenance, and banish your fears. Droop no longer and despair no more, but be of good cheer. For your sins are forgiven you; your name is written in my book, and no one can blot it out. You have a true love for me, and thus my Father himself loves you, and I love you with a most endearing love—therefore do not question or doubt my love for you any longer.’

And this is how Christ manifests himself and his love unto those that are desperate and discouraged.

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

What does it mean to have Christ manifest himself unto those that love him? Have you felt this sweet communion with him in the past? Describe your experience.

Section 2

CHRIST WILL INDEED MANIFEST HIMSELF TO THOSE THAT LOVE HIM

Christ will indeed manifest himself unto those that love him. This is evident from the way his love compels him to manifest himself, and because his word obliges him to do so.

1. His love compels him to manifest himself unto those that love him. The love of Christ is like a fire; it cannot be concealed for very long. And there is no fire that is as strong as the love of Christ for his people.

Joseph had a great love for his brothers, despite all of their unkindness toward him. And although he concealed himself for a time, speaking harshly to them, yet after they were cognizant of their fault and filled with perplexing fears, he could conceal himself no longer. “Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all that stood by him. He wept aloud, and said unto his brethren, ‘I am Joseph’” ([Genesis 45:1](#)). And, “Joseph said unto his brethren, ‘Come near me; I am Joseph, your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt’” ([v.4](#)).

So also, Christ may conceal himself from his people for a time, despite the love he has for them, and the love they have for him. Sometimes this is caused by some unkindness that they have shown him. Yet when they become aware of their fault, and are full of grief and perplexity for their offences, then his love will not permit him to hide himself much longer. His love will compel him to reveal itself and say, ‘I am Jesus Christ, your Savior. Come near to me, my brothers. Come near to me, so that you may have a clearer sight of me, and that you may know me and know that I do indeed love you.’

2. The word of Christ also obliges him to manifest himself to those that love him. It is Christ’s promise here in the text, “He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him” ([John 14:21b](#)). Christ’s word is sure; his name is true and faithful—and the ordinances of the heaven may sooner fail, than Christ fail his word and promise.

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

Describe why the author is certain that Christ will indeed manifest himself unto those that love him.

Section 3

HOW DOES CHRIST MANIFEST HIMSELF TO THOSE THAT LOVE HIM?

How does Christ manifest himself unto those that love him?

1. In this world Christ only manifests himself in part and darkly. While it is here, the soul is not capable of a clear and complete manifestation of Christ. This is a happiness that is reserved for the next world: “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is” ([1 John 3:2](#)). And, “Father I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me” ([John 17:24](#)). In the next world Christ’s disciples shall resemble Christ perfectly, and shall have a perfect manifestation of him, for they shall see him as he is; in the next world they shall behold his glory.

Now the luster and brightness of Christ’s glory is so great that if he should now let forth the brilliant radiance of it upon them, it would dazzle and amaze them. It would strike them blind—yea, it would strike them dead. Because of their weakness it is necessary for Christ to keep a veil upon his face when he reveals himself. Thus Christ reveals himself but in part because at present we cannot bear the full expression and manifestation of himself.

As the Queen of Sheba said concerning Solomon’s wisdom and prosperity:

“It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts, and thy wisdom; howbeit I believed not the words, until I came and mine eyes had seen it; and behold the one half was not told me, thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame thereof.”

[1 Kings 10:6–7](#)

Christ’s disciples have not heard or seen even one half of their Master’s excellencies. It has not now entered into their hearts to conceive what beauties, glories, and most admirable perfections are hidden in their Beloved. Not only does Christ’s love exceed their knowledge, his loveliness

does also. There are such dimensions of most wonderful glory in the person of Christ that they infinitely transcend the capacity of even the most elevated minds to comprehend fully.

Christ truly manifests himself to those that love him, yet it is but in part (and that but a small part); it is only darkly, and with the beams of a more obscure light:

“For we know in part, and prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part, then I shall know as I am known.”

[1 Corinthians 13:9–12](#)

We ministers prophesy in part; we can tell you but a little of what there really is in Christ. And both we and you know but in part—our understanding and expression of Christ’s excellencies are now childish. But hereafter there will be a perfect manifestation of Christ, and then all of the imperfections in our knowledge of him will be removed.

Now you may see Christ, but it is through a glass darkly. Hereafter you will see him face to face. Indeed it is said, “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” ([2 Corinthians 3:18](#)). There is now in Gospel-times a relatively open exhibition of Christ, in comparison to what there was under the Law. The veil of symbolism which covered (and in great measure hid) Christ from view is now removed. And although this veil is removed from us, yet Christ’s face remains obscured; there is a glass which remains between our eye and Christ’s face—namely, the glass of ordinances, which, though it helps us to see him, yet it keeps us from the clearest sight of him. We see but through a glass darkly; our eyes need this glass to help our weakness, and in order that we may see what we can. But there is a time coming when we shall no longer need to use this glass of ordinances, for when we see Christ face to face in heaven, we will know him even as we are known by him.

2. Christ gradually manifests himself unto those that love him. He does not show what he intends to reveal of himself and his love all at once and altogether, but does it by degrees—a little at one time, and a little at another; a little in this ordinance, and a little in that. Today he may let some of the warm beams of the light of his countenance shine down upon the soul, but eventually the clouds arise to obscure this light, and darkness falls upon the spirit. Sometimes Christ opens the curtain and looks in upon the soul, giving a gracious smile, but soon the curtain is drawn and his face is hidden again. Now he appears, and then he disappears; he manifests himself at one time, yet withdraws himself at another. And thus he leads his people on from one glimpse of himself to another, until at last he brings them home to the full sight of himself in glory.

3. Christ manifests himself most sweetly unto those that love him, especially after long absence. When the soul has been seeking him and cannot find him, wandering in the wilderness overwhelmed by fears, perplexing doubts, doleful despondencies, and sinking grief—after a dark night alone, O how sweet is the dawning of a light from on high! O how comforting are the bright rays of morning's first light! When he shines down upon their dark, despairing, and sorrowful spirits, reassuring them that they are most certainly his dearly beloved, that he has not forgotten them, that he will not forsake them, and that he has a more tender love for them than a mother does for her infant child—O the joy that comes upon their spirits! O the bliss that arises in those souls! O the songs which stream forth from those mouths!

‘This is our Beloved,
we have waited for him!
This is our dear Redeemer,
we have trusted in him!’

And yet a tongue cannot express the delight, the joy, and the gladness of heart which arises from the manifestation of Christ's presence and love. It is like the joy of a bountiful harvest, the joy of a bridegroom on his wedding day, the joy of a great victory and the taking of great spoils from an enemy, and the joy of a poor man who finds a great treasure—and the greatest delight which has ever been found in the sweetest earthly pleasure is not

worthy of being compared to the joy and delight which fills the heart and soul of one to whom Christ has manifested himself.

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

The author lists three things to remember regarding the manifestation of Christ unto those that love him. What are they, and how can you find encouragement from a remembrance of each of them?

Section 4

WHEN WILL CHRIST MANIFEST HIMSELF UNTO THOSE THAT LOVE HIM?

When will Christ manifest himself unto those that love him?

1. Sometimes Christ manifests himself quickly and after but a little seeking. Some young converts have early discoveries of Christ and his love; they are cast down for a little while, and Christ quickly comes unto them and lifts them up again. Weeping endures but for a night (and that a short summer's night), and joy comes early in the morning (cf. [Psalm 30:5](#)). They have the spirit of bondage which awakens them to fear, yet by and by the Spirit of adoption graciously visits them, revealing unto them their relationship to the Father, and the Savior's love for them (cf. [Romans 8:15](#)).

2. Sometimes Christ tarries long before manifesting himself. Some take a long time to seek Christ, and it can be just as long before they find him. For some, Christ waits a long time to show them his grace, often making them wait for a prolonged period before revealing his lovingkindness unto them. Yea sometimes even those who seek him early do not find him quickly. Christ makes some wait a long time in order to exercise their faith, patience, love, and obedience—and so that he may prepare them for an exceptionally sweet comfort which he intends to give them when he reveals himself unto them.

3. Sometimes Christ manifests himself suddenly unto those that love him. “Or ever I was aware my soul made me like the chariots of Amminadib” ([Song of Solomon 6:12](#)), or before they are aware of it, they see “the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof” ([2 Kings 2:12](#)), and the Lord Jesus comes to them in the chariots of salvation, and with such glory and luster that it both transports and amazes them.

Some Christians that truly love Christ have sought him in this and that ordinance, yet have not found him. They have been looking, waiting, and hoping that Christ would reveal himself at this time or another, yet still he has hidden himself, leaving them disappointed. And this has been to their grief; they have lamented it before God, and have been afraid that they

would never see him at all. Their spirits have been ready to fail and sink within them, and in discouragement they have been tempted to think that all of their labor would be in vain. And yet they have resolved to seek him until their dying day. Though he might slay them, yet they will put their trust in him (cf. [Job 13:15](#)).

And behold, when they least expected it, and their hope was ready to give up the ghost—then suddenly they meet Christ, finding the One that their souls love. Suddenly the veil of the temple has been torn in two, and they have seen their Beloved in the Holy of Holies. In an instant the clouds have fled; their darkness has passed away, and the light has shined down upon them. The north wind of trouble has ceased, and the sweet southern gales have blown in. And in this they enjoy such breathings of the Spirit that they see and feel the very presence of Christ—and such a sweet sense of his love fills them with soul-ravishing joy.

4. Christ manifests himself unto those that love him at the most suitable time. Although he does not always manifest himself when they desire it most, yet he manifests himself when they need it most. Now they need it most when they are at their lowest point—when their spirits are humbled, when in their own esteem they are poor and lowly, or when they are broken by trouble and affliction.

Humility and patience in affliction prepares the way for Christ to manifest himself. Christ often reserves his cordials for the saints that are fainting, and reveals the sweetest consolations of his love in the time of their greatest adversity. And this is especially true when the trouble is borne for his sake; at those times he is graciously present. John had his visions when he was banished to the island of Patmos for the Lord's sake. And when everyone else abandoned Paul at his defense before Nero, then the Lord came to him, stood by him, and strengthened him.

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

Discuss the over-riding theme of the timing of Christ's manifestation of himself unto those that love him. Explain how you can derive comfort from this in times when Christ seems distant.

Section 5

WHERE WILL CHRIST MANIFEST HIMSELF UNTO THOSE THAT LOVE HIM?

Where will Christ manifest himself unto those that love him? He will be found in the way of his ordinances. That is where he walks; that is where he appears unto his people.

Sometimes Christ manifests himself in the way of *private ordinances*, when his people seek him in their times of family worship, in their prayer-closets, when they speak of him in conference, or when they think of him in meditation and contemplation.

At other times Christ manifests himself unto those that love him in the way of *public ordinances*, in public prayer, fasting, hearing the Word preached, or when they are feasting at his table. Christ frequently manifests himself most sweetly unto his disciples at the Lord's Supper. The Lord appears there in a special way; he reveals himself in the breaking of bread, even as he did to the disciples that went with him on the road to Emmaus ([Luke 24:13–35](#)). It is there, in his banqueting house, that he provides a feast of his love. Indeed there are many who can say by experience that if they have ever met with Christ at any time in their lives and in any ordinance, they have met with him at this sacrament; there he has unveiled his face, there he has revealed his love, there he has breathed his Spirit upon them, and there they have found and felt the Lord to be near unto them.

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

Where does Christ typically manifest himself unto those that love him? How can a remembrance of this encourage you in your daily Christian walk?

Section 6

USE 1: TO THOSE THAT HAVE NO LOVE FOR CHRIST.

I come now to the application. And in order that I may give a portion to each, I shall speak in turn—

1. To those that have no love for Christ (section 6).
2. To those that have some love for Christ, but are without these manifestations ([section 7](#)).
3. To those that both love Christ and have received the manifestations of his love ([section 8](#)).



Use 1. The first use concerns those who have no love for Christ at all. And to you I say, Christ will manifest himself only unto those that love him. This is the children's bread; it does not belong to you, because you do not belong to Christ. This is a choice and most rich privilege, but you have nothing to do with it: *Procul ite profani* ('The profane remain at a distance').

Depart, all of you who are profane—all of you who are unclean, all of you who are ungodly, every one of you that is an unbeliever! For if you are without faith, you are also without love for Christ. See that you do not come near, as if to lay your unclean hands upon this most excellent promise. Never look for any manifestation of Christ's love unto you while you continue to go on in your ways of sin, and while you are in your natural state.

Objection. Some may be ready to say, 'So what if Christ does not manifest himself unto us? Let us have our honors and dignity; let us have our wealth and plenty; let us have our friends and delights, and let us depart from those who seek after the lofty and mystical experience of Christ's manifestation.'

Answer. Sinners, is this the language of either your tongue or your heart? If so, let me tell you that one day you will sing another tune and be of another mind; one day you will acknowledge that all the happiness which you so

eagerly pursued in the sweetest things this world has to offer was nothing but a dream that was thin, light, and insubstantial. You will see that it was all vain and empty when it has fled away, leaving nothing behind but the sting of bitter grief, inward wounds, groans, and dread—and leaving you at the sight of approaching death with only the apprehension of an approaching wrath and eternal torment in hell. O what would you give on that day for an interest in Jesus Christ, and a well-grounded persuasion of his special love for your soul? The manifestation of Christ's love will not appear to be an inconsequential thing on that day—for nothing else can support and secure you as you approach the borders of the grave and the confines of eternity.

And furthermore, let me tell you that have no love for Christ, that although Christ will never manifest himself unto you in a way of love, yet there is a day coming when he will manifest himself unto you with vengeance and with a most furious anger. On the day of judgment Christ will be revealed from heaven, not only to those that love him, but also to those that hate him—for every eye shall see him, and he will come as a flaming fire to take vengeance upon those who have not obeyed the Gospel's precept to love him.

The consideration of this should awaken you to fear, and cause you to flee from the sin which will otherwise bring about your eternal downfall and ruin. And O that you would be persuaded to apply yourself unto the Lord Jesus Christ by faith, so that you may have an interest in him and in the great salvation which he has purchased for you, and which is freely offered to you in the Gospel! For this faith in Christ would create a love for Christ, and would put your soul into a capacity for receiving the manifestation of Christ's love for you.

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

Do you have love for Jesus Christ, or are you chasing after the temporary pleasures of this world? Are the two mutually exclusive? (See [Matthew 6:24](#).) What will the end result be for those who live a life devoted to worldly honors, wealth, friendships, and pleasure?

Section 7

USE 2: TO THOSE THAT HAVE SOME LOVE FOR CHRIST, BUT
LACK THESE MANIFESTATIONS OF IT.

Use 2. The second use concerns those who have some love for Christ, but are without the manifestations of it. Of these there are two sorts:

1. Those who have never had these manifestations of Christ's love.
2. Those who have had them but have since lost them.



1. Perhaps you have never had these manifestations of Christ's love. It may be that you are a young and new Christian: a little while ago you were a leading scholar in the school of the Devil, having served diverse lusts with all of your strength and might. But recently the Lord has hedged up your way with thorns, opened your eyes so that you might see your sins, making you sensible of your danger. But as of yet, your eyes have not been opened to any comfortable sight of your Savior. Indeed Christ has been revealed unto you as able and willing to save you, and you have been drawn by the Word and the Spirit to take hold of him, and to give yourself up unto him—but as of yet you are in the dark with regard to your spiritual state. You are under doubts and fears of unsoundness and rottenness at heart, that you are a hypocrite and shall fall away, even as others who have made a profession like yourself have done. You fear that you shall one day perish by the hand of Saul, that the Devil and your own lusts will be too hard for you, and will prevail over you in such a way as will pull you back into the ways of sin, and thereby pull you down into the bottomless pit of hell.

This causes a sense of dread to fall upon your spirit, and a fearful apprehension of God's wrath and future vengeance. This fetches many a sad and heavy sigh from your breast, and many salty tears from your eyes. You are greatly troubled and bowed down, going mourning all day long.

And yet you are resolved to continue attending unto these ordinances, and to wait there upon the Lord and for the Lord. You are resolved that you will

be the Lord's, notwithstanding all of these discouragements, and although you do not know whether he will own you. You are resolved to give Christ your heart, and you will venture your soul upon him, though you do not know whether you are accepted by him.

To you I would say by way of encouragement, certainly you are one who loves Christ and is loved by him—and Christ will manifest himself unto those who have such love. Let me tell you that Christ is not far from you, regardless of how you may feel. Though he may be out of your sight, yet you are not out of his; his eye is upon you and his heart is inclined toward you. He hears all of your sighs, he sees all of your tears; he pities you and sympathizes with you in all of your griefs.

He loves you, and he will soon let you know it. He is now preparing you for a sweet revelation of himself, and before long he will give it to you. If you continue to seek him, you shall certainly find him—maybe sooner than you expect. Perhaps this is the time when Christ will manifest his love unto you. It may be while you are reading this discourse that you obtain a glimpse of his face, and hear his voice saying unto you, “Be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven you” ([Matthew 9:2](#)).

Lift up the hands that hang down; lift up the heart that is cast down. Dejected soul, look up, for your Savior is in front of you. Open your eyes and look; look with the eye of faith—can you not see a marvelous beauty in his countenance? Do you not perceive the smile that is upon his face, and how he smiles upon your soul? Do you not feel his Spirit sweetly breathing upon your heart, reassuring you of the special love he has for you? Can you not hear him knocking at the door of your heart? Can you not hear him calling out to you, saying, ‘Open to me, and I will come in and sup with thee’? ([Revelation 3:20](#)).

This is the voice of your Beloved—make haste and open unto him! Open all of the faculties of your soul! Lift up the everlasting gates unto the King of Glory, and send forth the handmaidens of your desires, so that they might invite the Lord in. Let your faith take hold of him and usher him into your soul—and then embrace him in the arms of your dearest love. Entertain this Guest in such a way that he will lodge with you forever.

2. Or perhaps you previously had some manifestations of Christ, but have since lost them. Your Beloved has withdrawn himself and is now gone: you call him, yet he does not answer; you seek him, but cannot find him. At one time, when your Lord was present, and frequently paid you gracious visits, you saw many secret smiles upon his face, had many comfortable words spoken to you from his mouth, and received many love-tokens from his hand.

In former days, when you had your evidence of his love clearly written out before you and sealed by the Spirit, how exceedingly did you then rejoice in the sense of Christ's love? How did you feast yourself upon the lavish endowment of Gospel-privileges which he bestowed upon you? O how you admired what free grace you had! O the sweet meltings of heart in the kindly sense of sin! O the enlargements of desire which you had in your prayers! O the burning love for Christ which you have often felt within your heart! O the lively hope and inexpressible delight you had in seeing the glory of God!

But now there is a strange decay of grace within you; things have changed, and you are not the same person that you were before. You have withdrawn yourself from Christ, and he has withdrawn himself from you. You have let down your guard, and the Devil has triumphed over you through his trickery. He has watched for an opportunity and entangled you in the snares of some sins.

While you have carelessly gone to the furthest limits of your duty and ventured upon the borders of sin, the Devil has sent forth a squadron of temptations—not with fiery darts, but with silken cords—in order to parley and plead with you, to entice and persuade you to go just a little further. They have told you what pleasant fruit is growing just beyond your borders, how sweet and delicious it is to the taste; that there are mines full of silver and gold where you may quickly unearth valuable resources for yourself; and that you may find honor and esteem there—and would you turn your back upon all these things? Would you be so meticulous and legalistic that you will not dispense with a little duty in order to step a little way over the hedge to find such great delights and advantages?

And if you have hesitated, they have told you that it was very debatable whether the confines of duty did not indeed reach beyond the place that this would bring you, and presenting the example of others who have made the same religious profession, yet have often gone this far—and why then should you hesitate? And if it was a transgression, it was just a small transgression; they do not want you to go very far—and what person doesn't transgress these boundaries from time to time? And besides, you may easily repent and find mercy if God is offended by it; you can quickly retire and return into your former limits.

Then while you have stood parleying with these temptations, their silken cords have been fastened to you, and before you are aware of it, you are being drawn along, partly willing and partly unwilling. You are enticed to commit some sins, complying with some of your lusts and indulging yourself in satisfying them. And in this you have been beguiled and tricked; you have been secretly wounded and inwardly defiled—and thus you are distressed to see that your assurance of salvation has been obscured in such a way that you cannot perceive it.

In former times worldly affections seemed to be mortified within you; they were dead and buried after you had pierced and wounded them so many times. O how they bled and fainted; they grew so weak that they seemed to be giving up the ghost—and you thought that surely they would never return to their former vigor within you again. In those days your love for Christ was strong and active; it burned within you. O the zeal that you had for your Master's honor!

You seemed to have no interest in advancing anything but the interest of Christ in this world. You disregarded your own interests because they were all swallowed up in the interest of Jesus Christ, which was the one thing you had the highest thoughts and cares for. Everything else was compelled to bow before it, and was made to yield unto it. But now your affection for Christ has cooled, and is more distant. If there is a fire of love for Christ still within you, it is not a fire of blazing flames or red-hot coals, but a few scattered sparks that will not give light or heat, and can scarcely be seen, if at all.

The worldly affections which seemed to be dead within you have now recovered their vigor, vitality, spirit, and strength. Behold the eager desires that you have for worldly things, and how you pursue them with zeal. This world has your thoughts as you draw up your plans for living in it; this world has your tongue as you frequently converse about it; this world has your hand and your time—but worst of all, this world has your heart as well, for it has jostled Christ off of his throne and is presently usurping his seat there.

Therefore is it any wonder when your Beloved is offended to see your love for him declining, to see your heart leave him so that it might prostitute itself unto created things by giving the affection due him unto anything in the world? This is the reason that Christ has turned his face from you (or if he looks upon you at all, it is only with frowns), for you have lost your first love; you have lost your first sight of him, and you have lost your first taste of the love of Christ (*cf.* [Revelation 2:4](#)).

Now your spiritual joys and comforts have fled from sight. They are lost and gone; only the bare remembrance of them remains, and the only delights you have are those that come in through the door of sense—nothing comes through the door of faith, for your sensual pleasures have expelled and banished your spiritual delights. The rich privileges that are yours in the Gospel do not have the same savor and sweet relish that they had with you before, because your spiritual appetite has been slaked by minding and savoring so many worldly things.

O the mischief that indulged sin has done unto you! O the wounds sin has given you—and they are made even deeper and more dangerous because they are unfelt! O how sin has defiled your conscience and stained your profession of faith! O the havoc which sin has made of your graces and comforts! You still have the leaves of an outward profession, but where is your fruit to be found? And if you have some fruit, is it not withered and sour—not the sweet, ripe, and mellow fruit which you previously had in your flourishing state? Surely the Lord is at a distance from you.

And O what need you have for remembering from where you have fallen; for ransacking your hearts so that you may find out your sins; for deeply humbling yourself; for repenting, grieving, and mourning; for turning your

laughter into weeping, and your joy into heaviness; and for quickly returning to the Lord and doing your first works. For if you do not, fearful judgments are likely to befall you, and the Lord may be compelled to awaken you with a vengeance, and to make you a terror unto yourself and all those around you. Do not provoke the Lord by running away from him in this manner, or he may follow after you with a storm, as he did with Jonah, and devour you in the floods and waves of dreadful afflictions, in order that he may reduce and restore you, keeping you from being drowned in utter perdition and eternal destruction.

Perhaps the Lord has already scourged you for your faults with the rods of affliction and the disappointment of some outward loss and trouble. He may have put bitterness in the breasts from which you have been suckling, and mingled gall into the cup of those pleasures you have been drinking from. Perhaps you have already started to consider your wicked ways, and have seen what an evil and bitter thing it is to backslide from the Lord; you have had the thought that it was best with you when you were nearest to Christ.

Perhaps God has dealt with you as he told the Israelites he would do with them when they had backslidden:

“Behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns,
and make a wall,
that she shall not find her paths.
And she shall follow after her lovers,
but she shall not overtake them,
and she shall seek them,
but she shall not find them.
Then shall she say,
‘I will go and return to my first husband,
for then it was better with me than now.’”

[Hosea 2:6–7](#)

And now you are seeking your Beloved, but he has withdrawn himself from you, and seems to take no notice of you. You call, cry, sigh, weep, lament, complain, seek, and wait—and yet he withholds from you all the particular manifestations of his love. Perhaps doubts have arisen from this, and fears

have grown upon your spirit, overwhelming you with inward troubles so that you feel as though you are about to sink.

Let this doctrine be an encouragement unto you: continue to diligently seek the Lord and wait patiently for him, for he will manifest himself unto you again according to his own time (which is the best time). He may try you for a time, to see if you will follow after him in the dark; he may make you wait a while for him—but have you not made him wait a long time for you? And yet if you persevere in seeking after him diligently, you shall find that it will not be in vain.

And what would you say, you backsliding soul, if the Lord manifested himself unto you at this time? Would you not abuse his kindness? If he were to reveal his love unto you again, would you not grow more obstinate and carnal? If he were to renew your assurance of salvation at this time, so that you could see it clearly, would you not obscure it again by your sins? If he would speak peace unto your conscience at this time, wouldn't you just return again unto your folly? If he would restore unto you the joys of his salvation, and send the Holy Spirit down from heaven to you to be your Comforter and to dwell with you, wouldn't you just grieve and quench the Spirit, and provoke him to depart from you again—and this time depart more dreadfully than before?

It may be that the Lord will try you; it may be that the Lord will draw near and reveal himself and his love unto you. It may be that the Lord will now look upon you with kindness, and by his Spirit speak kindly unto you in secret—for now you are longing, looking, hoping, and waiting. Perhaps this will be the time that you see his face and the smiles that are upon it; that you will feel the sweet showers of his love upon your heart through his Spirit—or perhaps he will at least give you a glimpse, a glance, or a little taste of it, and in so doing shall ravish your heart.

In any case, continue to wait for him, pleading with earnest desires and persistent requests, that he may return unto you with these manifestations of his lovingkindness. Pray along these lines:

‘Come Lord Jesus, come quickly! Make haste, O my beloved; make haste unto my soul that is thirsty for you, even as the parched land

thirsts for the sweet showers that fall from heaven, and as the hunted deer thirsts for the cool and refreshing streams of water.

O when shall I drink of those waters of life which you who are their fountain and spring have to give? When shall I taste again how good you are? When shall I see you again and feast my soul upon your love? When Lord, O when will you return to me? Will you cast me off forever? Will you never be favorable unto me again? Have you closed your heart to me in anger? Shall this cloud always sit upon your brow? Shall this veil cover your face forever?

It is true, Lord, that I have sinned grievously, and have greatly offended you—but have I not, do I not truly repent? Is there anything in the world so dreadful to me as the remembrance of my failures? I acknowledge my offenses, my foolishness, and my horrible ingratitude—but shall my sins always be a wall of separation between me and my Beloved?

Are you not tender-hearted? Are your mercies not plentiful? Is there not forgiveness with you, so that you may be feared and loved more dearly? Do you not forgive freely and without scolding? Have you not promised to be found by all of those who diligently seek you? And have you ever failed to keep your word to anyone? Shall I be the first?

Are not the chief and earnest desires of my soul after you? Is there not dearth and drought in everything that is less than you? Nothing else can give me satisfaction! Have I not renounced the world as my portion? You could send me to the world for help and comfort—the same world which I have over-earnestly desired and loved, and over-eagerly sought for contentment and happiness—but is this your way? Is this how you deal with those that are grieved for their sin, and ashamed of their folly?

Haven't you promised to manifest yourself unto those that love you? Don't I love you? You who know all things, do you not know that I love you? Though my love is imperfect, yet is it not true? Though it is weak, yet is it not sincere? If it were otherwise, how is it that I desire you above every person and thing in this world? Isn't this the product

of true love? And will you therefore fail to make good on your promise to manifest yourself unto me?

And if I had the manifestation of your love, would it not cause my love for you to grow and increase? Wouldn't I love you more dearly and strongly if I had a clear sight of your love for me, to persuade and assure me?

Lord, it is true that I am altogether unworthy of such favor—but have you ever bestowed this favor upon anyone because they deserved it? Are not all of your gifts freely given? And am not I as capable of receiving your free grace as anyone else? The more unworthy I am, the more I shall admire you; the more you have forgiven me, the more I shall love you—and may I not have a taste of your lovingkindness now?

Hasten, my Beloved, O hasten unto me, and be as a roe upon the mountains of spices ([Song of Solomon 8:14](#))! Do not veil your face from me any longer; do not conceal your love; but now, O now draw near, and make me exceedingly glad in the light of your countenance, in the beauty of your face, and the smile that is upon it.'

Desiring and pleading with the Lord in this manner may prevail upon him and lead him to return unto you again, saying—

'Soul, I have heard your prayer, your longing, and your cries. Your pleading has persuaded me to return to you, and thus fulfill your desires. Come soul, and look up; lift up your eyes and see! Here I am; behold me, behold me! I come to bring glad tidings of great joy unto you this day. I assure you that I am yours, that everything which is mine is yours also, that you are mine—and shall be mine forever.'

What words can be found that are as sweet and comforting as these, when they are spoken by the Spirit unto the hearts of those from whom Christ was formerly withdrawn?

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. Have you ever experienced the manifestation of Christ's love? Explain.

2. What encouragement does the author give for those who have never experienced the manifestation of Christ's love, or those who have formerly experienced it, but lack those manifestations at present?

Section 8

USE 3: TO THOSE THAT BOTH LOVE CHRIST AND HAVE THE MANIFESTATIONS OF HIS LOVE

Use 3. The third use concerns those of you that both love Christ and have the manifestations of his love within your souls. In your case, I would encourage you to do three things:

1. Rejoice in the Lord.
2. Admire his free grace.
3. Labor to retain these manifestations of his love unto you.



1. If you have the manifestations of Christ's love unto you, then rejoice in the Lord. Of all the people in the world you have the greatest reason for rejoicing, for you are the happiest person alive.

a.) A great abundance of *wealth* cannot make men happy, for the richest people often have thorns of great discontent which pierce their hearts, and the stings of great guilt which wound their consciences.

b.) *Great honor* and *worldly dignity* cannot make men truly happy, for the vilest men are often exalted, and those that occupy the highest places also find them to be most slippery, quickly casting them down into destruction. And despite the security they may have in this life, they are usually utterly consumed with terror when the grim visage of death appears and summons them to depart.

c.) The sweetest *worldly delights* cannot make men happy, for they are attended with vanity, and their outcome is vexation of spirit. Every sensual and sinful pleasure is also the seed of pain and everlasting torment.

Only those who are related and united to Jesus Christ are truly happy, for they are reconciled to God through him, and entitled to the kingdom of heaven. But you who are not only related to Christ, but also have the manifestations of his love unto you—you are the happiest of them all; you

have the greatest reason for taking comfort. For you know that Christ is yours and you are his; you know that Christ loves you, and that his unchanging love for you will never end.

If you know that Christ loves you, you have reason to rejoice, for by it you may know for certain that you are one of his elect—that God has chosen you according to his eternal and unchangeable decree. The assurance of this can yield an inexpressible sweetness unto you, particularly if you consider that he has chosen so few from the fallen race of mankind (and none of his fallen angels), and that there was not the least foreseen motive compelling him to save you.

If you know that Christ loves you, you may know for certain that you have an effectual calling, conversion, and wonderful union with Christ—and O what matter of joy it is to consider how God has called you out of the darkness and into his marvelous light ([1 Peter 2:9](#))! How he has delivered you from the snare of the Devil and the bonds of your own lusts, setting your soul at liberty! How he has wrought a miracle in your first resurrection from the grave and spiritual death of sin, and put forth the same power in your new creation (and the changing of your nature) as he did when he first created the world! How he has divorced your heart from your sins, and so wonderfully united and espoused you unto the Lord Jesus—and by this union and relationship has entitled you to all the privileges that Christ has purchased!

If you know that Christ loves you, you may know for certain that you are justified through his merits and mediation—and O what matter of joy this is, to think that all of your sins have been pardoned, and that no one can lay any sin to your charge, because God has justified you! That there is no one that can condemn you, because Christ has loved you, and out of love has died for you, and is now making intercession for you at the right hand of God ([Romans 8:33–34](#)). To be acquitted from all guilt, and no more liable to future wrath than if you had never sinned; and when you had no righteousness of your own, to be accepted as perfectly righteous in the sight of God by the imputation of Christ's perfect righteousness! Who has a reason for rejoicing, if you do not?

If you know that Christ loves you, you may certainly say that you are the sons and daughters of the Lord almighty—and will you not rejoice when of children of the Devil, children of disobedience, and children of wrath, you are instead made the children of God, the glorious Jehovah, the supreme Sovereign and King of the whole world; and when you have not merely an empty name, but are entitled to all the privileges of his children?

If you know that Christ loves you, you may know for certain that he will keep his interest alive in you, preserve his grace in your heart, and enable you to persevere in faith and holiness—despite all of the alluring temptations that you may meet with in the world, despite all of the suggestions and oppositions of Satan, and despite all of the powerful workings of your remaining lusts and corruption, all of which combine together to use their great power and policy in trying to extirpate your grace, draw you into sin, and entice you to abandon the ways of God.

And O what matter of comfort it is that the Lord Jesus Christ who loves you has pledged to keep you in his hand, and by his unseen but mighty power to enable you to resist and overcome sin, and to persevere in his ways unto the end, so that you may triumph and say with the apostle,

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.”

[Romans 8:35,37](#)

And you may be persuaded as Paul was, greatly rejoicing that—

“Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus your Lord.”

[vv.38–39](#)

If you know that Christ loves you, you may know for certain that your prayers are being heard by God. And although they may be imperfect and tainted with sin, yet they are mingled with and perfumed by the sweet incense of Christ’s merit, which makes them accepted by God. And what a

comfort it is to know that whatever you ask of the Father in the name of your dear Lord Jesus, if it is for his glory and your own good, he will certainly procure it for you.

To conclude, if you know that Christ loves you, you may know for certain that you are heirs of the kingdom of heaven, and that as certainly as you are alive, you shall attain eternal happiness in the joyful appearance and fruition of your Lord. And as certainly as you have the first fruits, so also shall you have the harvest; as certainly as you have the deposit, so also shall you have the inheritance—and as certainly as you see Christ here by faith, so also shall you see him in glory in heaven, and be made perfectly happy in the eternal and full enjoyment of him.

O how you should therefore rejoice in the Lord! Rejoice in his person, and rejoice in his love! Rejoice in his benefits: rejoice in what you have, and rejoice in what you hope to have by him! Rejoice in what you see, feel, and taste now; and rejoice in those foresights and foretastes of your happiness to come! “Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice” ([Philippians 4:4](#)).

2. If you have manifestations of Christ’s love unto you, then admire his free grace in these manifestations.

When Christ had promised to manifest himself unto those that loved him, Judas (the brother of James, not Iscariot—for he was the traitor and had no true love for his Master) said to him, “Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?” ([John 14:22](#)). This is not a question of *inquiry*, one which pertains to the way and manner that Christ would manifest himself unto them, but is rather a question of *admiration*: τί γέγονεν ὅτι ἡμῖν μέλλεις ἐμφανίζειν σεαυτὸν (literally, ‘What has occurred, that you are about to manifest yourself unto us?’). ‘What have you done?’ Or, ‘What has come to pass?’ ‘How can this be so?’ Or, ‘Why would you do such a thing?’ His question did not expect an answer (and we do not find one to it), it is simply an expression of his amazement that Christ would manifest himself unto them.

Thus how should you wonder that the Lord Jesus Christ should manifest himself unto you! O that the Lord Jesus, whose name is wonderful, and who has so many wonders within himself; a person of such great eminence and

excellence, who has such a crown of glory upon his head, such robes of glory upon his back, and upon the vesture of his garment and his thigh is written the name, 'King of Kings and Lord of Lords'—that this most excellent person should manifest himself unto you, when he conceals himself from the greatest princes of the earth who could by their interest, authority, and influence highly promote his glory—yet instead he manifests himself unto you who for the most part are lowly and ordinary, poor and despised by the world; that although he hides himself from most of the great wise and prudent scholars of this world who by their intelligence and education might magnify his name and spread his fame—yet instead he manifests himself unto you who for the most part are less educated and more obtuse; that while Christ hides himself from many moral men who have escaped the gross pollutions of the world—yet instead he reveals and manifests himself unto you who before your conversion were notoriously guilty of the most foul sins; that when Christ manifests himself unto so few, that you should be counted among those few—how many wonders are in all of this!

O that this glorious Person should send down another glorious Person from heaven (namely, the Holy Spirit—which is more significant than sending down all of the glorious angels that are in heaven) to reveal Christ's love unto you!

O that he should make use of the foolishness of preaching as a means of accomplishing this great thing; that while a man of passions and infirmities similar to your own is opening and applying the Scriptures unto you, the Lord is using this means to unveil and open the treasures of his love unto you!

O that your humble, fervent, and believing prayers should ascend from the earth up to the throne of God that is in heaven, and that they would move the Lord Jesus to come down not in person but by his Spirit—that prayer should open heaven's gate and have such prevalence in manifesting this revelation of Christ, even though the best prayers of the best men are contaminated with sin!

O that while you are sitting at the Lord's table, the Lord himself should give you a visit; and while you are eating bread and drinking wine at the

sacrament, that he should permit you to see, feel, and taste of him and his love with your spiritual senses! It was wonderful humility in Christ that when he could have commanded the most stately horses (yea, even lions, elephants, or unicorns!), that instead he should ride to Jerusalem upon a donkey; and when Christ has the chariots of so many thousand glorious angels which he could have commanded and ridden in triumphantly, yet when he reveals himself unto his people, instead he makes use of such plain ordinances—how many wonders are in all of this!

O how we should admire his wonderful grace and love, saying, “What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?” ([Psalm 8:4](#)), for we are such unworthy wretches! And, ‘Why should you manifest yourself unto us? Even so, dear Jesus, because it seemed good in your sight.’

And you especially have reason to admire and wonder at the manifestations which Christ has given of himself and of his love unto you, when you consider the excellence of these revelations in comparison to any other thing you have beheld. If you have seen the most rare works of art and human invention, the most curious paintings, the most stately edifices, or any other works of the most ingenious contrivement; if you have gazed upon those wonders of nature which far exceed those of art—the beautiful frame of the heavens above your head, and the glorious luminaries of the sun, moon, and stars in their wonderful light and motion; the earth beneath your feet when it is garbed in its finest attire—when the fields are clothed with grass in the spring, or enriched with corn in the summer; if you have seen the most pleasant brooks and streams of water, the most stately groves with lofty and broad shade trees; the most flourishing orchards richly laden with a variety of the most delicious fruit; the most delightful gardens with the finest flowers casting forth the most fragrant perfume; if you have seen all sorts of birds in the air, all sorts of beasts on the earth, and all sorts of fish in the sea; if you have seen the most handsome men that have ever been born, or the sparkling beauty of the fairest women—what is the sight of all of these things, the most lovely objects that have ever been visible to the eyes of man?

The sight of all of these things is inferior and contemptible, and not worthy of being compared with the sight of the Lord Jesus Christ by the eye of the

soul—for whatever beauty and loveliness there is in everything that has been created, there is infinitely more beauty in Jesus Christ. All visible beauty is but a shadow, but substantial beauty is found in Christ. All visible beauty is fading like the flower that soon withers and the leaf that soon fades, but everlasting beauty is found in Christ. All visible beauty is lowly and inferior—yea even deformity—when compared with the transcendent loveliness of Christ.

There is no discovery to the eye of the mind that can compare to the discovery of Christ unto the eye of faith. The greatest improvement of the light of nature is but a dim lamp when compared to the spiritual light of the knowledge of Christ; no light shines so clearly and brightly, no light is so pure and sweet as that which reveals the Lord Jesus Christ unto the soul. The discovery of Christ dispels clouds from the mind and expels lusts from the heart; it brightens the understanding and cleanses the affections; it warms the heart with love and fills the heart with comfort; it quiets and purifies the conscience; it gives the sweetest peace and tranquility to the spirit, bringing in unspeakable spiritual joy and the fullness of glory.

Therefore O how you should admire the riches of grace and kindness that the Lord Jesus Christ has shown you, and that he would reveal himself unto you—especially when this revelation is so admirable, excellent, desirable, and useful, lifting you up into a far higher degree of excellence than even the most accomplished persons in the world that have not made this discovery.

3. To conclude, if you have these manifestations of Christ and his love unto you, labor to retain them. In a word, take heed of indulging yourself in any sins, for this may provoke him to depart from you and withdraw the sweet and comfortable influences of his Spirit. And be diligent in the use of every means and ordinance public or private by which you may maintain daily communion and fellowship with him.

FOR DISCUSSION OR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. In what ways can the believer rejoice in the Lord?
2. What does it mean to admire the free grace of the Lord Jesus Christ?
What aspects of it do you find particularly compelling?

3. What straightforward advice does the author give for retaining the manifestation of Christ's love unto you?



Scripture References & End-Notes

From Other Titles in this Series:

[Ephesians 6:12](#), “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.”

From the Foreword:

[Matthew 15:8](#), “This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.”

[Revelation 2:4](#), “But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first.”

[Revelation 3:15–16](#), “I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! ¹⁶So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth.”

From Biographical Preface:

[Proverbs 10:7](#), “The memory of the righteous is a blessing,
but the name of the wicked will rot.”

[John Vincent](#) (1591–1646) - Puritan pastor who was frequently fired from his posts for preaching his nonconformity; it is said that no two of his seven children were born in the same county!

[Nathaniel Vincent](#) (1639–1697) - English nonconformist minister who was imprisoned several times for preaching according to his Puritan convictions. He wrote several books from prison which have remained popular, including *The Spirit of Prayer*, *The Cure of Distractions in Attending Upon God*, and *The Love of the World Cured*.

[2 Timothy 3:14–15](#), “But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it ¹⁵and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.”

[Charles II of England](#) (1630–1685) - King of England, Scotland, and Ireland who lived in exile in Europe after his father's execution by revolutionaries in 1649. He was restored to the throne in 1660, and soon after began working to re-establish Catholic doctrine and polity in the Church of England.

[Thomas Case](#) (1598–1682) - Presbyterian pastor and member of the Westminster Assembly who was initially a strong supporter of theocracy, but later endorsed the Restoration. He was deprived of his post at St. Mary Magdalen in 1650 after voicing his opposition to the execution of Charles I. In 1651 Case was imprisoned in the Tower of London for about six months, alongside Christopher Love and others, for being privy to the plot to restore Charles II to the throne. At the Restoration he was made a chaplain to the king.

[sequestered](#) - by this term it is meant that the post was left vacant for some time after the dismissal of its former occupant.

[Act of Uniformity of 1662](#) (the Bartholomew Act) - an act passed by the Parliament of Charles II which sought to enforce conformity with the Church of England, and in particular the *Book of Common Prayer*. Furthermore, all ministers were required to be ordained through the episcopacy. About two thousand Puritan pastors were ejected from their pulpits because of their refusal to acquiesce to its demands.

[1 Corinthians 1:21–25](#), “For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. ²²For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, ²³but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.”

[Thomas Doolittle](#) (1632–1707) - Puritan pastor who, after being deprived of his pulpit in 1662, instead devoted his life's work to the education and mentoring of young people. To this end, he established a successful boarding school first in Moorfields, and then in Bunhill Fields. Pastor Doolittle was also a prolific author, who published about twenty books.

[Psalm 91:4–6](#), “He will cover you with his pinions,
and under his wings you will find refuge;
his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.

⁵You will not fear the terror of the night,
nor the arrow that flies by day,
⁶nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness,
nor the destruction that wastes at noonday.”

[Luke 21:10–19](#), “Then he said to them, ‘Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. ¹¹There will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and pestilences. And there will be terrors and great signs from heaven. ¹²But before all this they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors for my name’s sake. ¹³This will be your opportunity to bear witness. ¹⁴Settle it therefore in your minds not to meditate beforehand how to answer, ¹⁵for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict. ¹⁶You will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and some of you they will put to death. ¹⁷You will be hated by all for my name’s sake. ¹⁸But not a hair of your head will perish. ¹⁹By your endurance you will gain your lives.’”

[Psalm 41:1–7](#), “Blessed is the one who considers the poor!
In the day of trouble the LORD delivers him;

²the LORD protects him and keeps him alive;
he is called blessed in the land;
you do not give him up to the will of his enemies.

³The LORD sustains him on his sickbed;
in his illness you restore him to full health.

⁴As for me, I said, ‘O LORD, be gracious to me;
heal me, for I have sinned against you!’

⁵My enemies say of me in malice,
‘When will he die, and his name perish?’

⁶And when one comes to see me, he utters empty words,
while his heart gathers iniquity;
when he goes out, he tells it abroad.

⁷All who hate me whisper together about me;
they imagine the worst for me.”

[1 Peter 1:8–9](#), “Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, ⁹obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.”

[From “Author’s Preface”:](#)

[Revelation 2:4–5](#), “But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. ⁵Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.”

[Revelation 3:15–16](#), “‘I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! ¹⁶So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth.’”

[Exodus 10:21–22](#), “Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, a darkness to be felt.’ ²²So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was pitch darkness in all the land of Egypt three days”

[From “Introduction”:](#)

[1 Peter 1:8–9](#), “Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, ⁹obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.”

[2 Timothy 3:1–5](#), “But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. ²For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, ⁴treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.”

[Proverbs 23:26](#), “My son, give me your heart,
and let your eyes observe my ways.”

[2 Corinthians 10:3–6](#), “For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. ⁴For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. ⁵We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, ⁶being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete.”

[Matthew 16:24–26](#), “Then Jesus told his disciples, ‘If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ²⁵For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. ²⁶For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?’”

[1 Peter 1:1–2](#), “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, ²according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: may grace and peace be multiplied to you.”

[Acts 2:4–6](#), “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

⁵Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. ⁶And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language.”

[Acts 2:37–41](#), “Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’ ³⁸And Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.’ ⁴⁰And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, ‘Save yourselves from this crooked generation.’ ⁴¹So

those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.”

[1 Peter 1:1–2](#), “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, ²according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: may grace and peace be multiplied to you.”

[1 Peter 1:3–5](#), “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵who by God’s power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

[1 Peter 1:6–7](#), “In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

[Psalm 30:4–5](#), “Sing praises to the LORD, O you his saints,
and give thanks to his holy name.

⁵For his anger is but for a moment,
and his favor is for a lifetime.
Weeping may tarry for the night,
but joy comes with the morning.”

[1 Peter 1:8–9](#), “Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, ⁹obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.”

[Proverbs 23:26](#), “My son, give me your heart,
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[Revelation 2:4–5](#), “But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. ⁵Remember therefore from where you have fallen;

repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.”

[Revelation 3:15–16](#), “I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! ¹⁶So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth.”

[Matthew 6:21](#), “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

[Mark 12:28–30](#), “And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, ‘Which commandment is the most important of all?’ ²⁹Jesus answered, ‘The most important is, “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.”’”

[Matthew 15:8](#), “This people honors me with their lips,
but their heart is far from me;
⁹in vain do they worship me,
teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.”

[From Chapter 1:](#)

[1 Peter 1:1–2](#), “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, ²according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: may grace and peace be multiplied to you.”

[Ephesians 1:11–14](#), “In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ¹²so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. ¹³In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.”

[2 Timothy 1:8–14](#), “Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the

power of God, ⁹who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, ¹⁰and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, ¹¹for which I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher, ¹²which is why I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me. ¹³Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.”

[1 Peter 2:9–10](#), “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”

[2 Timothy 2:21](#), “Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work.”

[1 Thessalonians 5:23](#), “Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

[1 Corinthians 6:15](#), “Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never!”

[Romans 6:13](#), “Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.”

[1 Peter 1:1–2](#), “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, ²according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of

the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: may grace and peace be multiplied to you.”

[John 1:29](#), “The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, ‘Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!’”

[1 Thessalonians 5:23](#), “Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

[From Chapter 2:](#)

[Matthew 1:20–21](#), “But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.’”

[From Chapter 5:](#)

[John 21:15–17](#), “When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?’ He said to him, ‘Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.’ He said to him, ‘Feed my lambs.’ ¹⁶He said to him a second time, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love me?’ He said to him, ‘Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.’ He said to him, ‘Tend my sheep.’ ¹⁷He said to him the third time, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love me?’ Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, ‘Do you love me?’ and he said to him, ‘Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Feed my sheep.’”

[Luke 22:54–62](#), “Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest’s house, and Peter was following at a distance. ⁵⁵And when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat down among them. ⁵⁶Then a servant girl, seeing him as he sat in the light and looking closely at him, said, ‘This man also was with him.’ ⁵⁷But he denied it, saying, ‘Woman, I do not know him.’ ⁵⁸And a little later someone else saw him and said, ‘You also are one of them.’ But Peter said, ‘Man, I am not.’ ⁵⁹And after an interval of about an hour still another insisted, saying, ‘Certainly this man also was with him, for he too is a

Galilean.’ ⁶⁰But Peter said, ‘Man, I do not know what you are talking about.’ And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. ⁶¹And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, ‘Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times.’ ⁶²And he went out and wept bitterly.”

[Matthew 22:34–38](#), “But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. ³⁵And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ³⁶‘Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?’ ³⁷And he said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸This is the great and first commandment.’”

[From Chapter 6:](#)

[Ephesians 6:24](#), “Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love incorruptible.”

[Jeremiah 3:10](#), “Yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah did not return to me with her whole heart, but in pretense, declares the LORD.”

[Matthew 10:37](#), “Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.”

[Exodus 20:12](#), “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.”

[Ephesians 5:25–28](#), “Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, ²⁶that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. ²⁸In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.”

[Matthew 5:44–45](#), “But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵so that you may be sons of your Father who is in

heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.”

[Luke 24:32](#), “They said to each other, ‘Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?’”

[Song of Solomon 8:6–7](#), “Set me as a seal upon your heart,
as a seal upon your arm,
for love is strong as death,
jealousy is fierce as the grave.
Its flashes are flashes of fire,
the very flame of the LORD.
⁷Many waters cannot quench love,
neither can floods drown it.
If a man offered for love
all the wealth of his house,
he would be utterly despised.”

[Song of Solomon 5:9–16](#), “What is your beloved more than another
beloved,
O most beautiful among women?
What is your beloved more than another beloved,
that you thus adjure us?

¹⁰My beloved is radiant and ruddy,
distinguished among ten thousand.

¹¹His head is the finest gold;
his locks are wavy,
black as a raven.

¹²His eyes are like doves
beside streams of water,
bathed in milk,
sitting beside a full pool.

¹³His cheeks are like beds of spices,
mounds of sweet-smelling herbs.

His lips are lilies,
dripping liquid myrrh.

¹⁴His arms are rods of gold,

set with jewels.
His body is polished ivory,
bedecked with sapphires.
¹⁵His legs are alabaster columns,
set on bases of gold.
His appearance is like Lebanon,
choice as the cedars.
¹⁶His mouth is most sweet,
and he is altogether desirable.
This is my beloved and this is my friend,
O daughters of Jerusalem.”

[Song of Solomon 6:4–5a](#), “You are as beautiful as Tirzah, my darling,
as lovely as Jerusalem,
as majestic as troops with banners.

⁵Turn your eyes from me;
they overwhelm me.”

[Song of Solomon 6:10](#), “Who is this that appears like the dawn,
fair as the moon, bright as the sun,
majestic as the stars in procession?”

[Philippians 3:20–21](#), “But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await
a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹who will transform our lowly body to be
like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all
things to himself.”

[Exodus 34:29–35](#), “When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, with the
two tablets of the testimony in his hand as he came down from the
mountain, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he
had been talking with God. ³⁰Aaron and all the people of Israel saw Moses,
and behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near
him. ³¹But Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the leaders of the
congregation returned to him, and Moses talked with them. ³²Afterward all
the people of Israel came near, and he commanded them all that the LORD
had spoken with him in Mount Sinai. ³³And when Moses had finished
speaking with them, he put a veil over his face.

³⁴Whenever Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he would remove the veil, until he came out. And when he came out and told the people of Israel what he was commanded, ³⁵the people of Israel would see the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face was shining. And Moses would put the veil over his face again, until he went in to speak with him."

[John 3:34](#), "For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure."

[John 8:28](#), "So Jesus said to them, 'When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me.'"

[1 Corinthians 2:6–8](#), "Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. ⁷But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. ⁸None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."

[Psalm 24:7](#), "Lift up your heads, O gates!
And be lifted up, O ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in."

[1] Author's note: Some see [Psalm 24:7](#) as a description of Christ's ascension, with the angels and saints making way for his triumphant entrance, and for him to claim possession of his heavenly palace.

[Colossians 1:15–20](#), "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent. ¹⁹For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross."

[1 John 4:19](#), “We love because he first loved us.”

[From Chapter 8:](#)

[John 14:23–24](#), “Jesus answered him, ‘If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. ²⁴Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father’s who sent me.’”

[Acts 9:1–5](#), “But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest ²and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. ³Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. ⁴And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?’ ⁵And he said, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ And he said, ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.’”

[1 John 2:15](#), “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

[Matthew 6:19–21,24](#), “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. ²⁴No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.”

[2 Timothy 3:1–5](#), “But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. ²For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, ⁴treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.”

[From Chapter 9:](#)

[John 14:18](#), “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.”

[John 14:21](#), “Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”

[Revelation 22:20](#), “He who testifies to these things says, ‘Surely I am coming soon.’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!”

[Song of Solomon 8:14](#), “Make haste, my beloved,
and be like a gazelle
or a young stag
on the mountains of spices.”

[Revelation 22:20](#), “He who testifies to these things says, ‘Surely I am coming soon.’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!”

[Psalms 84:1–2](#), “How lovely is your dwelling place,
O LORD of hosts!
²My soul longs, yes, faints
for the courts of the LORD;
my heart and flesh sing for joy
to the living God.”

[Psalms 84:10](#), “For a day in your courts is better
than a thousand elsewhere.
I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God
than dwell in the tents of wickedness.”

[Psalms 27:4](#), “One thing have I asked of the LORD,
that will I seek after:
that I may dwell in the house of the LORD
all the days of my life,
to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD
and to inquire in his temple.”

[1 John 4:20](#), “If anyone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen.”

[John 14:15](#), “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”

[John 14:21](#), “Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”

[From Chapter 10:](#)

[1 Corinthians 16:22](#), “If anyone has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed. Our Lord, come!”

[Acts 2:1–4](#), “When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. ²And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. ⁴And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

[Acts 4:7–20](#), “And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, ‘By what power or by what name did you do this?’ ⁸Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, ‘Rulers of the people and elders, ⁹if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed, ¹⁰let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing before you well. ¹¹This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. ¹²And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.’

¹³Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus. ¹⁴But seeing the man who was healed standing beside them, they had nothing to say in opposition. ¹⁵But when they had commanded them to leave the council, they conferred with one another, ¹⁶saying, ‘What shall we do with these men? For that a notable sign has been performed through them is evident to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. ¹⁷But in order that it may spread no

further among the people, let us warn them to speak no more to anyone in this name.’ ¹⁸So they called them and charged them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹But Peter and John answered them, ‘Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, ²⁰for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard.’”

[Acts 5:40–42](#), “And when they had called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. ⁴¹Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. ⁴²And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus.”

[Romans 15:18–19](#), “For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed, ¹⁹by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ.”

[2 Corinthians 11:23–29](#), “Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one—I am talking like a madman—with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. ²⁴Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. ²⁵Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; ²⁶on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; ²⁷in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. ²⁸And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches. ²⁹Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to fall, and I am not indignant?”

[2 Corinthians 12:10](#), “For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

[2 Corinthians 5:14–15](#), “For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; ¹⁵and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.”

[Philippians 1:21](#), “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”

[Ignatius of Antioch](#) (ca.35–ca.108) - bishop of the church of Antioch and one of the Early Church Fathers, he was a disciple of the apostle John who was martyred for his faith.

[Polycarp](#) (69–155) - disciple of the apostle John who was appointed pastor of the church at Smyrna, he was martyred for refusing to burn incense in worship of the Roman Emperor. Shortly before his death he said, “Eighty and six years I have served him, and he has done me no wrong. How then can I blaspheme my King and Savior? Bring forth what thou wilt.”

[Jerome](#) (347–420) - Christian pastor, theologian, and author who is best known for translating the Bible into Latin (the *Latin Vulgate*).

[Matthew 12:34–35](#), “You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. ³⁵The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil.”

[From Chapter 11:](#)

[Matthew 28:18–20](#), “And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’”

[John 7:7](#), “The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify about it that its works are evil.”

[Matthew 5:16](#), “In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in

heaven.”

[Psalm 119:140](#), “Your promise is well tried,
and your servant loves it.”

[Colossians 2:1–3](#), “For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face, ²that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God’s mystery, which is Christ, ³in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”

[Isaiah 59:14–15](#), “Justice is turned back,
and righteousness stands far away;
for truth has stumbled in the public squares,
and uprightness cannot enter.
¹⁵Truth is lacking,
and he who departs from evil makes himself a prey.
The LORD saw it, and it displeased him
that there was no justice.”

[Matthew 5:3](#), “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

[Colossians 1:19–20](#), “For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.”

[2 Corinthians 5:21](#), “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

[Ephesians 3:20–21](#), “Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, ²¹to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”

[2 Peter 1:3–4](#), “His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, ⁴by which he has granted to us his precious and very

great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.”

[Hebrews 1:3–4](#), “He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.”

[Philippians 2:5–7](#), “Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.”

[2 Peter 1:17–18](#), “For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, ‘This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,’ ¹⁸we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain.”

[From Chapter 12:](#)

[Job 6:15–17](#), “My brothers are treacherous as a torrent-bed,
as torrential streams that pass away,
¹⁶which are dark with ice,
and where the snow hides itself.
¹⁷When they melt, they disappear;
when it is hot, they vanish from their place.”

[Psalms 46:1–3](#), “God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.
²Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way,
though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea,
³though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble at its swelling. *Selah.*”

[Hebrews 2:17–18](#), “Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the

service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.”

[John 15:13–14](#), “Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command you.”

[Romans 4:22–25](#), “That is why his faith was ‘counted to him as righteousness.’ ²³But the words ‘it was counted to him’ were not written for his sake alone, ²⁴but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, ²⁵who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.”

[John 16:7](#), “Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.”

[Romans 8:34](#), “Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.”

[John 14:2](#), “In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?”

[John 10:28](#), “I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.”

[Romans 8:28](#), “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.”

[1 John 4:19](#), “We love because he first loved us.”

[John 14:18](#), “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.”

[Luke 16:22–23](#), “The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried, ²³and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side.”

[2 Corinthians 5:8](#), “Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord.”

[John 6:40](#), “For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”

[Philippians 3:20–21](#), “But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.”

[Matthew 24:31](#), “And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”

[1 Thessalonians 4:16–17](#), “For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.”

[Matthew 25:34](#), “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’”

[From Chapter 13:](#)

[Ephesians 5:6–11](#), “Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷Therefore do not become partners with them; ⁸for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹(for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), ¹⁰and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.”

[Colossians 1:13–14](#), “He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”

[1 Peter 2:9](#), “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”

[John 9:1–34](#), “As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. ²And his disciples asked him, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?’ ³Jesus answered, ‘It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. ⁴We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.’ ⁶Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man’s eyes with the mud ⁷and said to him, ‘Go, wash in the pool of Siloam’ (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

⁸The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, ‘Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?’ ⁹Some said, ‘It is he.’ Others said, ‘No, but he is like him.’ He kept saying, ‘I am the man.’ ¹⁰So they said to him, ‘Then how were your eyes opened?’ ¹¹He answered, ‘The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, “Go to Siloam and wash.” So I went and washed and received my sight.’ ¹²They said to him, ‘Where is he?’ He said, ‘I do not know.’

¹³They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, ‘He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see.’ ¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, ‘This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.’ But others said, ‘How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?’ And there was a division among them. ¹⁷So they said again to the blind man, ‘What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?’ He said, ‘He is a prophet.’

¹⁸The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹and asked them, ‘Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?’ ²⁰His parents answered, ‘We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. ²¹But how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for

himself.’ ²²(His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.) ²³Therefore his parents said, ‘He is of age; ask him.’

²⁴So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, ‘Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner.’ ²⁵He answered, ‘Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.’ ²⁶They said to him, ‘What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?’ ²⁷He answered them, ‘I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?’ ²⁸And they reviled him, saying, ‘You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.’ ³⁰The man answered, ‘Why, this is an amazing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. ³¹We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him. ³²Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. ³³If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.’ ³⁴They answered him, ‘You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?’ And they cast him out.”

[Ephesians 2:1–7](#), “And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ²in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—³among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. ⁴But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—⁶and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.”

[John 11:1–44](#), “Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ²It was Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill.

³So the sisters sent to him, saying, 'Lord, he whom you love is ill.' ⁴But when Jesus heard it he said, 'This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.'

⁵Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. ⁶So, when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. ⁷Then after this he said to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judea again.' ⁸The disciples said to him, 'Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone you, and are you going there again?' ⁹Jesus answered, 'Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. ¹⁰But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.' ¹¹After saying these things, he said to them, 'Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him.' ¹²The disciples said to him, 'Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover.' ¹³Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest in sleep. ¹⁴Then Jesus told them plainly, 'Lazarus has died, ¹⁵and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.' ¹⁶So Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him.'

¹⁷Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. ¹⁸Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off, ¹⁹and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. ²⁰So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, but Mary remained seated in the house. ²¹Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²²But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.' ²³Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' ²⁴Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' ²⁵Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, ²⁶and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?' ²⁷She said to him, 'Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.'

²⁸When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in private, 'The Teacher is here and is calling for you.' ²⁹And when she heard it, she rose quickly and went to him. ³⁰Now Jesus had not yet come into the

village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him. ³¹When the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there. ³²Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, ‘Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.’ ³³When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled. ³⁴And he said, ‘Where have you laid him?’ They said to him, ‘Lord, come and see.’ ³⁵Jesus wept. ³⁶So the Jews said, ‘See how he loved him!’ ³⁷But some of them said, ‘Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?’

³⁸Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. ³⁹Jesus said, ‘Take away the stone.’ Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, ‘Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days.’ ⁴⁰Jesus said to her, ‘Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?’ ⁴¹So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, ‘Father, I thank you that you have heard me. ⁴²I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me.’ ⁴³When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, ‘Lazarus, come out.’ ⁴⁴The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, ‘Unbind him, and let him go.’”

[Luke 7:36–50](#), “One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee’s house and reclined at table. ³⁷And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, ³⁸and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment. ³⁹Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, ‘If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner.’ ⁴⁰And Jesus answering said to him, ‘Simon, I have something to say to you.’ And he answered, ‘Say it, Teacher.’

⁴¹‘A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴²When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?’ ⁴³Simon answered, ‘The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt.’ And he said to him, ‘You have judged rightly.’ ⁴⁴Then turning toward the woman he said to Simon, ‘Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. ⁴⁵You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet. ⁴⁶You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. ⁴⁷Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little.’ ⁴⁸And he said to her, ‘Your sins are forgiven.’ ⁴⁹Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, ‘Who is this, who even forgives sins?’ ⁵⁰And he said to the woman, ‘Your faith has saved you; go in peace.’”

[Isaiah 64:6](#), “We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment.
We all fade like a leaf,
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.”

[Philippians 4:4–7](#), “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. ⁵Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; ⁶do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

[John 14:27](#), “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”

[1 Thessalonians 1:6–7](#), “And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia.”

[1 Peter 1:8–9](#), “Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, ⁹obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.”

[1 John 3:1–3](#), “See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ²Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. ³And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.”

[John 1:12–13](#), “But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.”

[Psalm 113:7–8](#), “He raises the poor from the dust
and lifts the needy from the ash heap,
⁸to make them sit with princes,
with the princes of his people.”

[Galatians 4:4–7](#), “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, ‘Abba! Father!’ ⁷So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.”

[Ephesians 2:18](#), “For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.”

[Romans 8:26](#), “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.”

[Romans 8:16–17](#), “The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow

heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.”

[Ezekiel 47:3–5](#), “Going on eastward with a measuring line in his hand, the man measured a thousand cubits, and then led me through the water, and it was ankle-deep. ⁴Again he measured a thousand, and led me through the water, and it was knee-deep. Again he measured a thousand, and led me through the water, and it was waist-deep. ⁵Again he measured a thousand, and it was a river that I could not pass through, for the water had risen. It was deep enough to swim in, a river that could not be passed through.”

[From Chapter 14:](#)

[Romans 8:12](#), “So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh.”

[Psalm 12:7–8](#), “You, O LORD, will keep them;
you will guard us from this generation forever.

⁸On every side the wicked prowl,
as vileness is exalted among the children of man.”

[Daniel 4:16–17](#), “Let his mind be changed from a man’s, and let a beast’s mind be given to him; and let seven periods of time pass over him. ¹⁷The sentence is by the decree of the watchers, the decision by the word of the holy ones, to the end that the living may know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will and sets over it the lowliest of men.”

[Romans 5:1–5](#), “Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ²Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.”

[Romans 6:21–22](#), “But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.

²²But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.”

[Deuteronomy 4:5–6](#), “See, I have taught you statutes and rules, as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. ⁶Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.’”

[Psalms 111:10](#), “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;
all those who practice it have a good understanding.
His praise endures forever!”

[Matthew 11:25–26](#), “At that time Jesus declared, ‘I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; ²⁶yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.’”

[Philippians 3:8–11](#), “Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—¹⁰that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.”

[Philippians 2:1–2](#), “So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ²complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.”

[John 15:9–11](#), “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. ¹⁰If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹These

things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.”

[Song of Solomon 4:9](#), “You have captivated my heart, my sister, my bride; you have captivated my heart with one glance of your eyes, with one jewel of your necklace.”

[From Chapter 15:](#)

[1] Alexander the Great (356–323 B.C.) - Greek king of Macedon who created one of the largest empires the world had known. He was undefeated in battle and is widely considered to be the greatest military commander in history.

[2] Julius Caesar (100 B.C.–44 B.C.) - Roman politician and brilliant general who sparked a civil war that gave birth to the Roman Empire.

[James 1:14–15](#), “But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.”

[John 1:12–13](#), “But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.”

[Romans 10:17](#), “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”

[Isaiah 55:1–3](#), “Come, everyone who thirsts,
come to the waters;
and he who has no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without price.

²Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
and your labor for that which does not satisfy?

Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good,
and delight yourselves in rich food.

³Incline your ear, and come to me;

hear, that your soul may live;
and I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
my steadfast, sure love for David.”

[Acts 16:14](#), “One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul.”

[Acts 11:15](#), “As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning.”

[From Chapter 16:](#)

[Song of Solomon 6:12](#), [KJV] “I went down into the garden of nuts
to see the fruits of the valley,
and to see whether the vine flourished,
and the pomegranates budded.

¹²Or ever I was aware, my soul made me
like the chariots of Ammi-Nadib.”

[John 16:22–24](#), “So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. ²³In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. ²⁴Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.”

[2 Corinthians 3:18](#), “And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord¹, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.”

[Hebrews 1:3a](#), “He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.”

[John 14:1–3](#), “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ²In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.”

[John 14:13](#), “Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.”

[John 14:16–23](#), “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, ¹⁷even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. ¹⁸I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.’

²²Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, ‘Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?’ ²³Jesus answered him, ‘If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.’”

[John 14:27](#), “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”

[John 15:9](#), “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love.”

[John 15:13–16](#), “Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.”

[John 16:7](#), “Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.”

[John 16:22–24](#), “So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. ²³In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. ²⁴Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.”

[John 16:26–27](#), “In that day you will ask in my name, and I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf; ²⁷for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.”

[John 16:33](#), “I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

[John 17:9–11](#), “I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. ¹⁰All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. ¹¹And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.”

[John 17:15](#), “I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one.”

[John 17:20–24](#), “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²²The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, ²³I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. ²⁴Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.”

[John 20:17](#), “Jesus said to her, ‘Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, “I am

ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.”””

[Colossians 3:16](#), “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.”

[Ephesians 6:23](#), “Peace be to the brothers, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

[Matthew 7:7–8](#), “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ⁸For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.”

[1 John 5:14](#), “And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.”

[Deuteronomy 6:5](#), “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.”

[Deuteronomy 30:6](#), “And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.”

[Hebrews 11:1](#), “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”

[John 14:16–17](#), “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, ¹⁷even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.”

[1 John 4:19](#), “We love because he first loved us.”

[1 John 4:18](#), “There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.”

[Galatians 2:20](#), “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

[John 14:21](#), “Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”

[1 Peter 1:12](#), “It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.”

[Romans 5:3–5](#), “Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.”

[Romans 13:14](#), “But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.”

[From Chapter 17:](#)

[John 14:15](#), “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”

[Colossians 3:23–24](#), “Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, ²⁴knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.”

[2 Corinthians 5:9](#), “So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him.”

[2 Corinthians 5:14–15](#), “For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; ¹⁵and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.”

[Galatians 5:7](#), “You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?”

[Galatians 6:9](#), “And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.”

[Revelation 2:10](#), “Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.”

[Hebrews 13:3](#), “Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body.”

[John 1:40–41](#), “One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. ⁴¹He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, ‘We have found the Messiah’ (which means Christ).”

[John 1:44–45](#), “Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. ⁴⁵Philip found Nathanael and said to him, ‘We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.’”

[Revelation 22:20](#), “He who testifies to these things says, ‘Surely I am coming soon.’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!”

[From Chapter 18:](#)

[Luke 19:9–10](#), “And Jesus said to him, ‘Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.’”

[Luke 15:10](#), “Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

[Psalm 30:4–5](#), “Sing praises to the LORD, O you his saints,
and give thanks to his holy name.

⁵For his anger is but for a moment,
and his favor is for a lifetime.
Weeping may tarry for the night,
but joy comes with the morning.”

[Revelation 21:3–4](#), “And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their

God. ⁴He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.’”

[Psalm 16:11](#), “You make known to me the path of life;
in your presence there is fullness of joy;
at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”

[1 John 4:19](#), “We love because he first loved us.”

[Psalm 63:1–4](#), “O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you;
my soul thirsts for you;
my flesh faints for you,
as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.

²So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary,
beholding your power and glory.

³Because your steadfast love is better than life,
my lips will praise you.

⁴So I will bless you as long as I live;
in your name I will lift up my hands.”

[From Appendix Introduction:](#)

[John 14:18–21](#), “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”

[Luke 4:22](#), “And all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. And they said, ‘Is not this Joseph’s son?’”

[John 14:18–21](#), “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹Whoever has my commandments

and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”

From Section 1:

[Ephesians 1:16–21](#), “I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, ¹⁷that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, ¹⁸having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might ²⁰that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.”

[2 Peter 3:18](#), “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.”

[Song of Solomon 5:6](#), “I opened to my beloved,
but my beloved had turned and gone.
My soul failed me when he spoke.
I sought him, but found him not;
I called him, but he gave no answer.”

From Section 2:

[Genesis 45:1–8](#), “Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him. He cried, ‘Make everyone go out from me.’ So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. ²And he wept aloud, so that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. ³And Joseph said to his brothers, ‘I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?’ But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his presence.

⁴So Joseph said to his brothers, ‘Come near to me, please.’ And they came near. And he said, ‘I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into

Egypt. ⁵And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are yet five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. ⁷And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. ⁸So it was not you who sent me here, but God. He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt.’”

[John 14:18–21](#), “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”

[From Section 3:](#)

[1 John 3:2](#), “Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.”

[John 17:24](#), “Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.”

[1 Kings 10:6–7](#), “And she said to the king, ‘The report was true that I heard in my own land of your words and of your wisdom, ⁷but I did not believe the reports until I came and my own eyes had seen it. And behold, the half was not told me. Your wisdom and prosperity surpass the report that I heard.’”

[1 Corinthians 13:9–12](#), “For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. ¹¹When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. ¹²For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.”

[2 Corinthians 3:18](#), “And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.”

[From Section 4:](#)

[Psalm 30:4–5](#), “Sing praises to the LORD, O you his saints,
and give thanks to his holy name.

⁵For his anger is but for a moment,
and his favor is for a lifetime.
Weeping may tarry for the night,
but joy comes with the morning.”

[Romans 8:15](#), “For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, ‘Abba! Father!’”

[Song of Solomon 6:12](#), “Before I was aware, my desire set me
among the chariots of my kinsman, a prince.”

[2 Kings 2:11–12](#), “And as they still went on and talked, behold, chariots of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. ¹²And Elisha saw it and he cried, ‘My father, my father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!’ And he saw him no more.”

[Job 13:15](#), “Though he slay me, I will hope in him;
yet I will argue my ways to his face.”

[From Section 5:](#)

[Luke 24:13–35](#), “That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. ¹⁶But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷And he said to them, ‘What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?’ And they stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, ‘Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?’ ¹⁹And he said

to them, ‘What things?’ And they said to him, ‘Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. ²¹But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. ²²Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, ²³and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. ²⁴Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see.’ ²⁵And he said to them, ‘O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?’ ²⁷And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

²⁸So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, ²⁹but they urged him strongly, saying, ‘Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.’ So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. ³¹And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. ³²They said to each other, ‘Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?’ ³³And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, ³⁴saying, ‘The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!’ ³⁵Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.”

[From Section 6:](#)

[Matthew 6:24](#), “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.”

[From Section 7:](#)

[Matthew 9:2](#), “And behold, some people brought to him a paralytic, lying on a bed. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, ‘Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven.’”

[Revelation 3:20](#), “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.”

[Revelation 2:4](#), “But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first.”

[Hosea 2:6–7](#), “Therefore I will hedge up her way with thorns,
and I will build a wall against her,
so that she cannot find her paths.

⁷She shall pursue her lovers
but not overtake them,
and she shall seek them
but shall not find them.

Then she shall say,
‘I will go and return to my first husband,
for it was better for me then than now.’”

[Song of Solomon 8:14](#), “Make haste, my beloved,
and be like a gazelle
or a young stag
on the mountains of spices.”

[From Section 8:](#)

[1 Peter 2:9](#), “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”

[Romans 8:33–34](#), “Who shall bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.”

[Romans 8:35–37](#), “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ³⁶As it is written,

‘For your sake we are being killed all the day long;
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.’

³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.”

[Romans 8:38–39](#), “For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

[Philippians 4:4](#), “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.”

[John 14:22–23](#), “Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, ‘Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?’ ²³Jesus answered him, ‘If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.’”

[Psalm 8:3–4](#), “When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,
⁴what is man that you are mindful of him,
and the son of man that you care for him?”

¹ or, “reflecting the glory of the Lord”



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