"The Spirit of Truth"

*Howbeit when he,the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you (John 16:13, 14).*

An American, with an Englishman, was viewing Niagara Falls. Taking his friend to the foot of the gigantic cataract, he exclaimed, "There is the greatest unused power in the world!"

"Ah, no, my brother; you are mistaken," was the quick reply. "The greatest unused power in the world is the Holy Spirit of the living God." Is the Holy Spirit using us, guiding us? The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, and He will guide us into all truth.

We were visiting the great Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico. How beautiful and wonderful they were - one marvel after another as we threaded our way through twisting and turning passageways, galleries rooms, grottoes, on past the Rock of Ages to the great Throne Room itself. However, we could never have found our way through the labyrinthine ways without our guide, who led us step by step to reveal the marvels and glories to us.

The truth is like that - like a vast cavern. But we must have a guide or we shall lose our way. The Spirit of truth leads us step by step, room by room, passageway by passageway; and He always takes us by the Rock of Ages, the Lord Jesus, into the great Throne Room of the final revelation of God. The Holy Spirit inspired the Holy Scriptures, for "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21). Therefore all that He speaks directly to the heart is in harmony with what is written in the Holy Book. He guides us into "all truth," so that we shall not be one-sided and out of balance. The Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus. How? By receiving the things of Christ and showing them to us. The Holy Spirit is the One who makes real in me what Jesus did for me.

MEDITATION PRAYER: "Shew me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths" (Ps. 25:4).

"The Biggest Promise"

*He that spared not his Son, but deliver him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*

*(Romans 8:32).*

If not a promise in form, this is certainly a promise in fact. It is a mighty sea of promises.

Dr. William Spurgeon of Wales was lecturing in Scotland, and after the lecture an old gentleman approached him and said, "Dr. Spurgeon, I'm glad to meet you. I'm the father of  Henry Drummond."

"Oh, then," said Dr. Spurgeon, "I already know you, for I know your son so well."

If you wish to know what God is like, look at Jesus, for "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Corinthians 5:19). Our unsparing God "spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all." All things belong to Him, and when God gave Jesus to us, with this gift He gave us all things.

One who has ever heard Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman preach will never forget it. In his service one night a man rose and gave this remarkable testimony: "I got off the train at the Pennsylvania Station as a tramp, and for a year I begged in the streets for a living. One night I touched a man on the shoulder and said, 'Please, Mister give me a dime.' As soon as I saw his face I recognized my own father. "Father, don't you know me?' I asked. Throwing his arms around me, he cried: 'I have found you! I have found you!  All I have is yours." Just think of it--I, a tramp, stood begging my father for ten cents, when for eighteen years he had been looking for me to give me all he possessed."

We do not have to beg God or urge Him frantically to give us what we need. In Christ He has given us not only salvation but "all things to enjoy" (1 Timothy 6:17), and has given them freely. Our text today is really a checkbook of faith.

MEDITATION PRAYER: "Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to usward: . . . they are more than can be numbered" (Psalms 40:5).

"Real Love"

*For I am persuaded, 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 seperate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord(Romans 8:38, 39).*

The apostle knew it. The love of God is greater than the measure of man's mind. It is higher, deeper, broader, than all things and all thinking; and nothing can seperate us from it, ever.

A starry-eyed young woman, having written a number of poems, went to an editor and told him she wished to have her poems published in his magazine. "What are they about?" asked the editor. "All about love," was the prompt reply. "Well, what is love?" questioned the editor. "Love," said the young woman, "Is gazing upon a lily pond at night, with the shimmering moonbeams, when the lilies are in full bloom, and ------" "Stop, stop! cried the editor, sternly. "You are all wrong. I'll tell you what love is. It's getting up cheerfully at two o'clock in the morning to fill the hot-water bottle for a sick child. That's real love. I'm sorry, but I don't think I can use your poems." The editor was right. Real love is doing something for somebody who needs our help no matter how hard it is for us to give it. And "God so loved."

Nothing tha happens in life, not even death itself, can seperate us from the love of God revealed in Christ Jesus. The inspired apostle John beheld the height, the depth, the breadth, of the Father's love toward us. Failing to find suitable language to express it, he called upon the world to behold it. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the son of God" (1John 3:1).

"God is love" is written on every opening bud, on every blushing flower, on all the beauties of nature. It is written in the heart of a mother; but clearest of all, upon the cross.

MEDITATION PRAYER: "Let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me" (Psalms 40:11)

"The Lawyer"

*So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God*

*(Romans 14:12).*

Did you ever make out an income tax report? Did you have any trouble with it? Were you afraid that the sharp-eyed Government auditors would find some flaw in it? It is quite a task for many people to make out a simple and accurate statement of their financial affairs, but it would be still more difficult for them to make out a complete report of their lives--thoughts, words, and actions-- that would pass the scrutiny of a holy and righteous and divine judge.

Notice the word in this promise is not may, could, should, but shall. "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God." If we must go to judgement we need a lawyer, an advocate, someone to represent us at court. Let me recommend an advocate who has never lost a case. "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1). He appeared in Pilate's judgement hall, and from there He went to the cross. Then He appeared in the presence of God to make intercession for us. Last of all, to those who look for Him He shall "appear the second time without sin {that is, not dealing with sin} unto salvation" (Hebrew 9:28).

A lady of prominence once needed legal counsel and was advised to consult an eminent attorney. She kept putting it off until finally she could wait no longer, for the court was about to convene. She went to the attorney and began to state her case, but he stopped her, saying: "Madam, you're too late. Yesterday I would have been glad to take your case and appear before the court as your advocate, but now I cannot, for I have just been appointed to be your judge."

God hath committed all judgement unto the Son" because He is the Son of God (John 5:22). Let us hasten to put ourselves and all our interests in His hands so that He may represent us before God.

MEDITATION PRAYER: "Thou dost establish equity, thou executest judgement and righteousness in Jacob" (Psalms 99:4).

*"A New Heart"*

*A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh (Ezekiel 36:26).*

Years ago an American Indian chief, Tedyuskung of the Delawares, was sitting at the fireside of a devout Quaker. Both were silently looking into fire, enjoying each other's company. Suddenly the Quaker said, "I will tell thee what I have been thinking about. It is of a rule given by the Author of the Christian religion, which from its excellence we call the Golden Rule."

"Stop," said the chief; "don't praise it to me. Tell me what it is."

"It is for one to do to another as he would have the other do to him."

"That is impossible. It cannot be done," replied Tedyuskung. Silence again reigned. The chief arose and walked nervously about the room. Stopping before his friend, he said, "Brother, I have been thoughtful of what you told me. If the Great Spirit that made man would give him a new heart, he could do as you say, but not else." And Tedyuskung was right. Only the regenerated heart can please God. More often we should hear the prayer and pray the prayer, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (Psalms 51:10).

"I fell like a contemptible fine lady--all outside and no inside," said Elizabeth Fry before she was converted. It is the heart, the mind, the inside, that must be changed and can be changed only by the power of God.

                                I come in faith to Thee,

                                For all my sins atone.

                                A new heart give to me

                                For this, my heart of stone.

MEDITATION PRAYER: "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit:a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise" (Psalms 51:17).

*"God Loves Backsliders"*

*Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the Lord our God (Jeremiah 3:22).*

God loves backsliders? Here is the proof of it. "Return," He says, "and I will heal your backslidings." God Himself is the only physician who can do that. A backslider is only a Christian grown cold.

In a great bronze foundry, lying side by side, were two heads made of metal. One was perfect, with all the features of a noble, manly face clear and distinct. In the other hand, hardly a feature was discernible. The reason for this was that the metal had been allowed to grow a little too cool. And that's the way it is in the Christian life. Many a believer who might be stamped with the image is marred, the likeness blurred.

How about it, friend; is the metal growing cold? Return - return to God. Sit down and read the fifteenth chapter of Luke, which was written especially for you. It has been called the greatest short story ever written, the story of the prodigal son and the forgiving father. When that boy "came to himself" he said, "I will arise and go to my father." Friend, haven't you come to yourself today? Won't you arise and come back home? "Return," God says,"and I will heal your backslidings." Won't you make part of our text your response to Him, "Behold, we come unto thee"?

The symptoms of backsliding are like those attending a physical decline: loss of appetite, disrelish for food. When you find yourself not enjoying prayer and the reading of the Bible, beware! Begin to pray as never before, feed on the Word of God, exercise in Christian work. Return to the Lord, the Great Physician, and He will heal you.

MEDITATION PRAYER: "O Lord my God, I cried unto thee, and thou has healed me" (Psalms 30:2)

"Loving God Back"

*Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion  on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee (Isaiah 49:15).*

Can a woman forget her child? She may, but it's unnatural. A little girl was told by her busy mother to go and play with her dolls, but the child complained, "I just love them and love them, but they never love me back." And so God keeps loving us and loving us, but often we do not love Him back. Yet He does not forget us, even as a mother does not forget her wandering son, but remembers him as her baby.

"If I am thy child, O God," said Augustine at the time of his conversion, "it is because thou didst gove me such a mother." And surely many of us may say that.

Of the daughter of Pharaoh it is written, "She saw the child" and, behold, the babe wept" (Exodus 2:6). A true woman may resist many things, but no woman with a mother's heart can resist the cry of her own child. How many thousands of mothers have sacrificed their lives for their babies! The story is as old as the world and as sweet as heaven. God uses it to picture His love to us. "Mother is the name for God in the lips and hearts of little children."

A true mother never forgets, never forsakes, She follows her babe through childhood, manhood, and down to the end of the darkest path the world has ever known. She never forgets.

From the great father-mother heart of God comes the promise, "Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." He will not forget, because He loves and cares.

MEDITATION PRAYER: "Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies and thy lovingkindnesses; for they have been ever of old" (Psalms 25:6).

"A Great Investment"

*Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it (Proverbs 22:6)*

"We smiled," said Hazel M. Woodruff, "when a young mother took her three-week-old son to church, 'so that he would always be in the habit of going to church.' Forty years later, when we saw him assisting in the Communion, we remembered his mother's words."

When a thoughtful child was asked why a certain tree in the garden was crooked, he answered, "I spose somebody must have stepped on it when it was a littl fellow." We need to be careful about stepping on little fellows. It is claimed that training is a greater factor than heredity in character development. However that may be, it is primary parental duty. Someday God will ask us, "Where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock?" (Jeremiah 13:20).

In a meeting in London years ago Lord Shaftesbury stated that he had learned from personal observation that nearly all the adult male criminals of that city had fallen into crime between the ages of eight and sixteen' that if a young man lived an honest life up to te age of twenty, he had forty-nine chances to one of living an honorable life.

The governor of Massachusetts not many years ago declard that the average age of six hundred of the seven hundred inmates of the State prison was less then twenty-one. "These," he said, "are not good men fallen after good training, but mostly young men who never were trained."

The apostolic command is, "Bring them {your children} up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). Things of God are to be taught "diligently" to our children. We are to talk of them in the house, out of doors, and everywhere (Deuteronomy 6:7-9). In order to train a child aright, we must ask God, "How shall we order the child, and how shall we do unto him?" (Judges 13:12).

MEDITATION PRAYER: "O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declare thy wondrous works" (Psalms 71:17).

"Humble Me"

*Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall (Proverbs 16:18).*

Pride is a sort of atheism. It puts the glory of the creature above the Creator. Of Lucifer we are told that his "heart was lifted up" because of his beauty (Ezekiel 28:17), and the testimony of Jesus is, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven" (Luke 10:18).

Of the mighty empire of Egypt, God said, "The pride of her power shall come down" (Ezekeil 30:6). That's the direction of pride and haughtiness--downward, always downward. The mighty power of the Philistines was cut off because of pride (Zechariah 9:6, and the pride of Assyria was brought low (Zechariah 10:11). In the fullness of his pride, Nebuchadnezzar viewed the mighty city of Babylon and said, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for . . . te honour of my majesty?" (Daniel 4:30). the words were no more than out of his mouth when his reason was taken from him and he was reduced to the mentality of a beast, and he fed on grass until he learned "that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men" (Daniel 4:17). Of mighty Babylon itself God said, "I am against thee, O thou most proud {pride," margin}" (Jeremiah 50:31).

Why should we have false pride? We have nothing that was not given to us. "If you want to realize your own importance," said Robert Burdette, "put your finger into a bowl of water, then take it out and look at the hole."

When Albert Schweitzer--doctor, philospher, musician, and missionary--was building his hospital in French Equatorial Africa, a native was asked to help. He refused, saying that he was an intellectual. "I once thought I was an intellectual," Schweitzer said as he returned to his work. The greater the man, the greater his true humility. "Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?"

MEDITATION PRAYER: "Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity" (Psalms 39:5).

"Our Refuge And Strength"

*God is our refuge and strength, a very presen help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear. though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea (Pslms 46:1.2)*

This is the song of God's people in every time of trouble. With the key of science men have unlocked a few of the secrets of the universe, and as a result terrible fear is now gripping the world--fear of the universe itself, fear of a cloud shaped like a mushroom. But God is our refuge, therefore we will not fear.

A minister attended a lecture on astronomy, the wonders of God's great creation. He heard of a universe a million light-years away, a universe so vast that our minds sink in contemplation of it. At the close of the lecture a friend said to him, "I feel pretty small tonight."

The minister replied, "I don't. I feel larger than ever." Then he explained that, great as is the universe, God is greater.

Dwight L. Moody's favorite text was Isaiah 12:2: "I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength." He used to say that you can travel first class or second class to heaven. Second class is, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee" (Psalms 56:3). First class is, "I will trust, and not be afraid," and that's the better way.

Let us learn to sing this song of trust, for truly "the eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deuteronomy 33:27).

                            "Other refuge have I none,

                       Hangs my helpless soul on Thee;

                          Leave, O leave me not alone!

                          Still support and comfort me."

                                  --Charles Wesley

MEDITATION PRAYER: "How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings" (Psalms 36:7)

"If I Regard"

*If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me (Psalms 66:18).*

This is a sort of negative promise, but we know that the opposite of it is true: If we do not regard iniquity in our hearts, the Lord will hear us. This text does not refer primarily to some sin that has surprised a person, into which he has fallen by unexpected temptation,

but to sin that is regrded, loved, cherished in the heart. This sort of sin blocks the prayer line to heaven.

In Coleridge's "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" we have a picture of how sin hinders prayer. Unrepentant, but in distress, the ancient mariner tried to pray, but could not.

                    " 'I look to heaven, and tried to pray;

                        But or ever a prayer had gusht,

                     A wicked whisper came, and made

                            My heart as dry as dust.' "

It was only after he repented that he found himself able to pray.

The prophet Isaiah records the warning of God, "When ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood" (Isaiah 1:15).

The prayers of those who plan to go on sinning will not be heard, because they "ask amiss" (James 4:3). "We know that God heareth not sinners," were the words of the healed blind man (John 9:31). An unconfessed sin is like a bullet in the body. There can be no help until it is removed. Man calls sin and accident; God calls it an abomination. Sin is a disconnection in the telephone line to glory; it is static in the radio of prayer. Repentance, and repentance alone, will restore communications when the sinner prays the publican's prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13).

MEDITATION PRAYER: "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin" (Psalms 51:2).

"Faith Overcometh"

*For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith (1 John 5:4).*

"I'm tired, said the little girl to her father, who was swimming in the ocean with her and her little brother. And then the little brother announced, "I'm awfully tired too."

"All right," the father said. "Sister, you are the older and stronger. You can float while I carry little brother to shore. Then I'll come back for you." When the father returned, his little daughter was nowhere in sight. Very much alarmed, he hastened back to shore for help. Then, in a small boat, the men seached up and down the coast until at last they saw the child floating, obviously unafraid. When someone asked her how she managed to stay afloat so long and keep up her courage, she replied, "My father told me that I could, and I believed him."

We must never lose faith in what our Father tells us we can do. In Christ, He has really said to us, "I believe in you." "All things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark 9:23).

"A simple childlike faith in a Divine Friend solves all the problems that come to us by land or sea," said Helen Keller. But our victory is by faith, and even that faith is not of ourselves; "it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8). And this faith of ours may be strengthened, it may grow, and will grow if we feed upon the Word of God, for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rmans 10:17). Our victory comes through--

                 "A faith that shines more bright and clear

                          When tempests rage without;

                       That when in danger knows no fear,

                            In darkness feels no doubt."

                                --William H. Bathurst

MEDITATION PRAYER: "O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed" (Psalms 25:2).

"Our Work Rewarded"

*Be ye strong therefore,and let not you hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded (2 Chronicles 15:7).*

If the service of God is worth anything, it is worth everything. We are to do it with determined diligence. In a time of great stress I received from my father an encouraging letter with this motto for my desk " 'Know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord' " (1 Corinthians 15:58). Indeed, earnest labor for God is not in vain; it 'shall be rewarded."

God had done great things for King Asa and for Judah, but they need encouragement. They were hesitating and feeble and had to be warned and instructed that the Lord would be with them while they were with Him. And so the sequel proved. Great blessing came upon the  king and upon the whole nation, and there was a wonderful spiritual revival. So it will be with us; we shall find our best reward in the Lord's cause when we throw our whole soul into it. Then in the Lord's cause when we throw our whole soul into it. Then will come prosperity to the work of God and in our own experience.

                "O for that flame of living fire

                Which shone so bright in saints of old;

                Which bade their souls to heaven aspire,

                Calm in distress, in danger bold!"

                                             --William H. Bathurst

Let us remember the words of the appostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 16:13: "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." And again, his exhortaion in Ephesians 6:10: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." That is always our priviledge, and may it be our experience.

MEDITATION PRAYER: "I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation" (Psalms 40:10)

"Be Patient"

*Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh (James 5:8).*

Patience means the readiness to await God's time without doubting God's truth. God does things in His own way and in His own time. We are to "rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him" (Psalms 37:7), and not to fret ourselves because of the prosperity of the wicked and the apparent languishing of God's work in the world. We must remember that "those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth" (verse 9). Patience is really a form of faith. It says, "God is working; I will leave things in His hands." It is in our patience that we possess our souls (Luke 21:19).

Bishop Wilberforce and Thomas Carlyle were once talking together about the deep things of life. Carlyle asked, "My lord, have you a creed?"

"Yes, replied the bishop, "and the older I grow the firmer that creed becomes under my feet. There is only one thing that staggers me."

"What is that?"

"The slow progress that creed seems to make in the world."

After a moment of silence, Carlyle ,made this wise remark: "Yes, but if you have a creed, you can afford to wait."

The last appeal in the Song of Solomon (8:14) is "Make haste, my beloved." And the last prayer in the Bible is "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." And to this the Saviour replies, "Surely I come quickly" (Revelation 22:20). Are we growing weary because we do not always see the harvest of our seed sowing? This glorious truth cries to us: "Be patient." Do temptaions strike at us, pain and disappointment worry us? Our text preachesto us: "Stablish your hearts." The King is coming, and only those who have such a hope can afford to wait.

MEDITATION PRAYER: "My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him" (Psalms 62:5).

"Where Does God Walk"

*And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people (Leviticus 26:12).*

We have the same promise in the New Testament, in 2 Corinthians 6:16: "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." Our text was a promise to Israel in the Promised Land, and it is a promise to God's children in every land, in every age, even today. God promises to be with us. He said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5).

Where does God walk? Among His people, where they live. In church on the Sabbath day? Yes. Where else? Toyohiko Kagawa reminds us that God sits on the dust heap, among the prison convicts, with the juvenile delinquents. He stands at the door begging bread. He is among the sick. He stands in line with the unemployed. If we would meet God, we must visit the prison cells, the hospital wards. We must meet the beggar at the door, we must visit the young man or woman who needs help, if we would meet God. Not only is He the God of the universe, the God of Israel as a nation; but He is our God, and we are His people.

"Lord," prayed Augusine, "Thou madest us for Thyself, and we can find no rest until we find rest in Thee."

Remember this, God never forsakes a man unless the man has first forsaken Him.

                      "O God, our help in ages past,

                       Our hope for years to come,

                       Our shelter from the stormy blast,

                       And our eternal home!"

                                                   --Isaac Watts

MEDITATION PRAYER: "Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing: for God is my defence, and the God of my mercy" (Psalms 59:17).

"A Daughter's Hands"

*And, behold, I come quickly: and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be (Revelation 22:12).*

Christ's life here on earth assures us of His kinship with us on earth, and His ascension to heaven enables us to feel our kinship with Him in heaven. He is coming back to receive us unto Himself, that where He is, there we may be also (John 14:3).

The eleventh verse of Revelation 22 marks the close of probation. Then the irrevocable decree goes forth. How long it will be before Christ comes, we are not told; but it is quickly." He comes with rewards. In His coming every human being has an interest, for He will give to "every man according as his work shall be." What have we done with the precious gift of life? How have we used it? In that day the deeds of many a professed Christian will speak louder than his words.

A dying mother called her thirteen-year-old daughter, the eldest of seven children, to her and said: "Mary, you must be mother now to the children. Keep them together. Be patient with Father. He is kind to us when he doesn't drink." And then she was gone. Mary entered bravely upon her holy commission. Two years later a severe fever brought her low. To the deaconess who was ministering to her, she said: "I haven't gone to church because I have had no fit clothes, and I have been too tired at night to say my prayers properly. What can I say to Jesus when I see Him?" The wise deaconess took the small hands, hardened with toil for others, and said, "Don't say anything, Mary; just show Him your hands."

What has our work been? Our work represents our life. What has our life been? How have we used it? Let us think of these things today, "for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ' (Romans 14:10).

MEDITATION PRAYER: "The Lord shall judge the people: judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity" (Psalms 7:8).

"The Impatient Farmer"

*For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry (Hebrews 10:37).*

The world is filled with a vast impatience, which sometimes seems to seep into the hearts of God's children. There is an amusing story of a Chinese farmer who, to make his truck garden produce faster, pulled the plants up a little higher out of the ground each morning. That, he thought, would put him ahead of the other gardeners who just waited for their plants to grow. One day he discovered that every plant had died. "Extremely foolish," we say; yet no more so than our complaints because our prayers are not answered immediately.

From the doubt manifested by Christian workers, it might seem as though the work of God would never be finished. It appears that "the times are out of joint," and some even go to the extreme of believing that God has "forsaken the earth" (Ezekiel 8:12). But God is patient with us, and we must learn to be patient with life. It is not always for us "to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power" (Acts 1:7).

Temptation to impatience will grow as we draw nearer to the fulfillment of the promise of our Lord's return, for is it not commanded us, "Be ye also patient; . . . for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (James 5:8) ? The verse preceding today's text is: "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise."

Obedience to the Word of God, then patience to make the promise sure in its fulfillment--that is what we need. To the patient heart the waiting is just a little while and then the Lord will come, and will not tarry. May it be said of all of us, "Here is the patience of the saints" (Revelation 14:12), and then all the "little while" will be bright.

MEDITATION PRAYER: "Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee" (Psalms 25:21).

"Let Jesus In"

*Behold I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, He will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me (Revelation 3:20).*

If we hear His knock and open the door, He will come in and be our guest--that's the promise. We think of Holman Hunt's great painting in St. Paul's Cathedral in London. The Saviour stands before the door with a lantern in His hand while the shadows of night are pressing in. He knocks at the door, He listens, He waits; but there is no sign of movement from within. One critic called the artist's attention to the missing latch, and was told that it was on the inside of the door. The door represents a man's heart, which, when Christ knocks, must be opened by the man himself.

A small boy, viewing this great picture, "The Light Of the World", asked his father, "Daddy, why don't they let Jesus in?" The father answered, "I don't know." A moment later the little fellow said, "I know why thy don't let Him in. They live in the basement and can't hear Him knock." Could that be the trouble with any of us? Do we live below the level of recognition in spiritual things? If, when we read this promise, we feel our need, let us throw wide the portals of the heart to Him. We do not have to urge Him to come in. He says, "I will come in to him." Shall we not let Him in just now?

                     "Yes, I"ll open this proud heart's door,

                      Yes, I'll let Him in.

                      Gladly I'll welcome Him evermore;

                      O, yes, I'll let Him in.

                      Blessed Saviour, abide with me,

                      Cares and trials will lighter be:

                      I am safe if I'm only with Thee,

                      O, blessed Lord, come in!"

                                             --Horatio R. Palmer

MEDITATI ON PRAYER: "And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee" (Psalms 39:7)

"God's Promises"

*And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee (Jeremiah 1:19).*

This is not a promise of no trouble, but a promise of God's presence in trouble; not a promise of no battle, but a promise of victory in battle; and, above all, a promise that the Lord will be with us. Daniel was not kept out of the den of lions, but the angel of the Lord was with him there. Joseph was righteous, but he went to prison just the same. Was it worth it? Yes. The Scriptures say, "The Lord was with Joseph" (Genesis 39:21). Where? In the prison. The three Hebrew heroes were not kept out of the fiery furnace, but with them in the fire was "the form of the fourth . . . like the Son of God" (Daniel 3:25).

The enemies may roar like lions and be fierce as ravening wolves, but we are not to be "afraid of their faces" (Jeremiah 1:8). God has promised to be with us: therefore, with the apostolic writer we may boldly say, "The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Hebrews 13:6).

            "God has not promised Skies always blue,

             Flower-strewn pathways All our lives through;

             God has not promised Sun without rain,

             Joy without sorrow, Peace without pain.

             But God hath promised Strength for the day,

             Rest from the labour, Light for the way,

             Grace for the trials, Help from above,

             Unfailing sympathy, Undying love."

                                             --Anne Johnson Flint

MEDITATION PRAYER: "Draw nigh unto my soul, and redeem it: deliver me because of mine enemies" (Psalms 69:18).

"The Face of Peace"

*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength (Isaiah 26:3, 4).*

Dozens of books have been written during late years on the subject of soul peace and how to have it, but here is the real secret--trust in God. Robert Louis Stevenson tells the story of a ship caught in a storm off a rocky coast. When the terror of the people was at its highest, one man braver than the rest made his perilous way to the pilot house. There he saw the pilot lashed to his post with his hands on the wheel and a smile on his face. The passenger rushed back to the deck below shouting, "All is well. We shall be saved. I saw the pilot and he smiled at me." That smiling face averted panic and converted despair into hope.

So if by faith we see the face of the Pilot of Galilee, the despair of life disappears, and the soul is filled with peace and hope. To see God's face in Christ brings peace to us. Our Saviour is the "Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6), and He says to all who trust in Him, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27). Do we have His peace?

The ancients used to inscribe by the tombs of their dead, "Non est {He is not}." The difference that Jesus makes is found in Bunyan's sweet words: "The Pilgrim they laid in a . . . chamber, whose window opened toward the sun-rising; the name of the chamber was Peace, where he slept till break of day."

When the mind is stayed on God, there is everlasting strength, and therefore peace. As Herbert Hoover said, "Peace is not made in documents, but in the hearts of men." This inner peace comes to us when we really trust in God, who will fill us "with all joy and peace in believing" (Romans 15:13).

MEDITATION PRAYER: "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them" (Psalms 119:165).

"Repentance"

*But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die (Ezekiel 18:21).*

According to our text today the wicked are those who have sinned. The Scriptures declare that "all have sinned" (Romans 3:23), so this promise is to all. Death has passed upon all men, because all have sinned (Romans 5:12); but "if the wicked will turn from all his sins . . . , and do that which is . . . right, he shall surely live." This is a universal promise to fill a universal need.

We have all sinned, and except we repent we "shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). There are two kinds of repentance. One is that of Judas, the other that of Peter. One is the ice broken; the other, the ice melted. Judas was sorry for the results of his sin; Peter was sorry for his sin. After his repentance, Judas went and hanged himself; but Peter, after his repentance, went to Pentecost. Real repentance is to turn from our sins and to walk in the ways of obedience; in other words, to "do that which is lawful and right." The  thought here us, Obey and live; disobey and perish. The truth of this is seen in the history of civilization, of nations, of individuals. But even obedience is a gift from God, for it is of Him and through Him and by Him that we both will do His good pleasure (Philippians 2:13).

There is no worse imprisonment," says George Albert Coe, "than inability to repent." The time to turn from our sins is now, before the groove of habit becomes so deep that we shall never care, or be able, to get out of it. The only difference between a groove and a grave is in depth. Let us turn from sin today, repent today, begin to walk in the path of obedience today; and we shall have God's promise of life, eternal life. "The Lord is . . . not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

MEDITATION PRAYER: "I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin" (Psalms 32:5).

"Be Not Afraid"

*Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee (Psalms 91:5-7)*

In the early days of the reign of Alexander I, Bible reading and devotion were held in contempt among the upper classes in Russia. Prince Galitzin was appointed one of the official rulers of the church, and he purchased a Bible secretly in order to acquaint himself with the first principles of Christianity. It changed his whole life. Then Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Russia, and all St. Petersburg prepared either to fight or to flee. Galitzin alone remained unmoved and continued work on his palace as though his country were in the midst of profound peace. In astonishment the czar asked, "How is it that you go on building when everyone else prepares to flee?"

"The Lord is my defense, sire," replied Galitzin. "Im as safe here as anywhere." Then he showed him his Bible, the first Bible Alexander had ever seen. The prince opened it to the ninety-first psalm; "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." The czar was profoundly impressed amd wemt to the cathedral for worship before leaving for his campaign. The pastor began to read this same psalm. "Did Galitzin tell you to select that psalm? asked the czar after the service. "No, I prayed the Lord to be guided in my choice."

The czar went a day's march with his army. In the evening, feeling anxious, he ordered his chaplain to read to him, and he began, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High----"

"Stop," cried the czar. "Did Galitzin tell you to read that to me?"

"Certainly not, said the chaplain. "I asked God to direct me."

From that time on, Alexander read the Bible secretly every day.

MEDITATION PRAYER: "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee" (Psalms 56:3).

"Be Strong, Fear Not"

*Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you (Isaiah 35:4).*

This is a promise for us when we are troubled, afraid, or worried. Notice this command of God: "Be strong, fear not." God would not command this if it were not possible. Our deliverance from fear and worry is based on faith. And the promise is: "Your God will come  with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you."

We need to study the whole plan of God and to see the end from the beginning . Full rewards are not given in this life, but there is a judgement day coming. In Hebrews 2:2 we read that every trangression will receive "a just recompence of reward" (Hebrews 10:35). But the greatest reason why we should never worry or be troubled is that the Lord Himself promises to come and save us. He will come to us in Christ at His second coming, but He comes to us now by His Spirit. In fact, He is never far from any one of us, as the great apostle Paul tells us in Acts 17:27.

Years ago I heard Bishop William Alfred Quayle preach, and I shall never forget the words of that great Cornishman. He told about sitting alone in his study at night worrying about some torturing anxiety. About midnight it seemed that God came to him and said, "Quayle, you go to bed. I'll sit up the rest of the night." The Lord had not forsaken him. He was there and knew what to do. He will come and save us, too, if we will let Him. If we believe, we shall cease our worrying and begin to trust. Let us "rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him" (Psalms 37:7).

MEDITATION PRAYER: "O keep my soul, and deliver me: . . . for I put my trust in thee" (Psalms 25:20).

"God Hears"

*The Lord hath heard my supplication; the Lord will receive my prayer (Psalms 6:9).*

Others may not hear me, but the Lord will. Abraham Lincoln said, "I have been driven many times to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go." This promise, which lies sleeping in the psalmist's believing, may be ours by faith. One of the attributes of the true and living God is that He hears prayer. "O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come" (Psalms 65:2).

Billy Sunday once told of a little girl who was obliged to have an operation. Just before receiving the anesthetic she asked the doctor, "What are you going to do to me?"

"My dear, we are going to operate and then you will be well again."

"But, she persisted, "what is going to happen now?"

"Why, darling, we are going to put you to sleep so you will not feel any pain."

Then the child said "But before going to sleep I always say my prayers." And there in the presence of the interns, physicians, and nurses, the little girl climbed down, got on her knees, and said aloud:

                           "Now I lay me down to sleep,

                            I pray the Lord my soul to keep;

                            If I should die before I wake,

                            I pray the Lord my soul to take."

The little girl prayed with the simple faith of a child. In the simplicity of prayer, may we all be as little children. Let us do as did David, who said, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee" (Psalms 56:3), and then we shall be afraid no more.

Let us pray in simple faith, for "the Lord will receive my prayer."

MEDITATION PRAYER: "Thou answeredst them, O Lord our God: thou wast a God that forgavest them" (Psalms 99:8)

"Judge Not"

*For with what judgement ye judge, ye shall be judge: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again (Matthew 7:21).*

This promise of just judgement is really the complement of the golden rule: Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" (Matthew 7:12). Our text for today shows that we shall have done to us exactly what we have done to others.

False judgments have brought untold sorrow to the world. The Sioux Indians used to make the following prayer: "Great Spirit, help me never to judge another until I have walked two weeks in his moccasins."

Dwight Morrow put it in different words when, in giving a reason for his success in dealing with the people of the great republic of Mexico, he said, "I never judge a person until I discover what he would like to be as well as what he really is."

God understands our hearts; He knows what we are trying to do. He also knows our backround and heredity, and takes all these things into consideration.

Our judgment of others may be unfair, because of our own twisted outlook, our inability to see things as they really are. A lady complained to a visiting friend that her next-door neighbor was a poor housekeeper. "Just look," she said, "at those clothes she has hung out on the line. See the black streaks on those sheets and pillowcases!" The friend stepped to the window and looked out. Then she raised the window and looked again. "It appears, my dear," she said that the clothes are perfectly clean, but that the streaks you see are on your own windowpane."

In our judgments let us be sure that the trouble is not in ourselves. In fact, we should be safer if we judged not, lest we be judged (Matthew 7:1). It is best to leave things in the hands of God.

MEDITATION PRAYER: "Judge me, O God, and plead my cause . . . : O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man" (Psalms 43:1).

"Delight In The Lord"

*Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart (Psalms 37:4).*

It is natural for us to set up our desires and then to go about to secure them, forgetting that we should first seek the Lord and His righteousness, expecting that all these things will be added unto us (Matthews 6:33). God's way is just the opposite. He would have us seek Him first and delight ourselves in Him. Then that will have a transforming power upon us. When we delight ourselves in the Lord, He can give us the desires of our hearts because they will be the right desires.

God often overrules in strange ways to bring these right desires to pass. For instance, Columbus, disheartened and discouraged, on his way back to France, stopped at a convent near Huelva. A monk heard his story, and he was the man who intervened in his behalf with Queen Isabella.

On his way to Strasbourg John Calvin found the regular road closed because of war, and was forced to pass through Geneva. There Farel with fiery eloquence demanded that he stay and lead the work of God.

Abraham Lincoln, in sorting over a barrel of rubbish, came upon a copy of Blackstone's Commentaries. That chance discovery awakened desires in his heart that changed the history of the world.

George Whitefield, unable to get along with his brother's wife, gave up his employment as bartender in the Bell Inn. Step by step he went to Oxford, where he came in contact with the Holy Club and became one of the world's greatest preachers. He said that the disagreement he had had with his sister-in-law was God's way of forcing him out of the business of drawing wine for drunkards, and into that of drawing water from the well of salvation for His spirital Israel.

MEDITATION PRAYER: "He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them" (Psalms 145:19).

"Trust And Do Good"

*Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed (Psalms 37:3)*

What a beautiful promise regarding the "faith which worketh by love" (Galations 5:6)! One thing is certain, we neither trust the Lord without doing, nor do we do without trusting. It is not ours to worry and do evil, but to trust and do good. We must have faith, and real faith works. "Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (James 2:17). Works, holy works, are the fruit of faith; and "by their fruits ye shall know them" (Matthew 7:20). It is ours to trust and to do according to our trust.

A child once made a slip as she began to quote the twenty-third psalm. She said, "The Lord is my shepherd; that's all I want." Really, that is all we want, for with Him we have everything. Then the adversaries will not be able to root us out of Emmanuel's land, the providence of God, "the Canaan of His covenant love," as Spurgeon puts it.

But, more than that, someday the whole earth will be given to God's people. "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth" (Matthew 5:5). The Lord puts a "verily" in our promise text for today. In the land of promise, here and hereafter, His children shall be fed. They may not be fed by ravens or by an angel, by an Obadiah or by a widow, but "verily" they shall be fed.

                          "When we walk with the Lord

                           In the light of His word,

                           What a glory He sheds on our way!

                           While we do His good will,

                           He abides with us still,

                           And with all who will trust and obey."

                                               --Rev. J. H. Sammis

MEDITATION PRAYER: "In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness" (Psalms 31:1).

"The Lord Heareth"

*The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles (Psalms 34:17).*

That's a plain, simple, and wonderful promise, Isn't it? It's quite clear from this that the righteous will have trouble, and it will be so severe they will cry out. They will not only desire help, long for it, but will cry out.

We were fortunate in having a number of children in our home, but when they were little they got into trouble. If possible, they would run home to Mother or Father, get as close as possible to the source of help, and let their needs be known in loud voices. What a lesson for us! When we are in trouble we should get close to the Lord and cry out to Him for help. He will hear us and deliver us from our troubles.

Sometimes our troubles come from our own sins. In such cases we must forsake our sins if we wish to be free from the trouble. Sometimes our troubles will last longer than we think they should, but when it is best for us, we shall be delivered out of them. By God's grace, let us not suffer from troubles before they arrive. Dean W. R. Inge has said, "Worry is interest paid on trouble before it comes due." And remember, it is those who cry out for help who will be heard.

        "More things are wrought by Prayer

         Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice

         Rise like a fountain for me night and day.

         For what are men better han sheep or goats

         That nourish a blind life within the brain,

         If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer

         Both for themselves and those who call them friend?

         For so the whole round earth is every way

         Bound by gold chains about the feet of God."

                                                         --Alfred Tennyson

MEDITATION PRAYER: "O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come" (Psalms 65:2).

"Fear God"

*He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him: he also eill hear their cry, and will save them (Psalms 145:19).*

When a student one day entered Pasteur's laboratory, he found the great scientist bent over his microscope. Not wishing to disturb him, the young man started to leave. Pasteur looked up and the student said, "I thought you were praying." Turning again to his microscope, the great but humble man of science replied, "I was."

Prayer consists not only of words spoken, but of a constant attitude in the life of the true Christian. His desire is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. This desire is imparted by the Holy Spirit, therefore God will answer it. God-fearing men desire to be holy, to be useful to God, to be a blessing to others. They desire help in time of need, guidance in times of perplexity, deliverance in trouble. Sometimes these desires are so strong that they cry out in agony as a child might to his father or mother. Then the Lord hears and answers wondrously.

Like Daniel, we are to be men of desires, and God will help us to realize them. If we fear God, we have nothing else to fear, for then our salvation will certain, and that will be our chief desire. The Lord will hear our cry and will save us. Let us often have this great threefold promise upon our tongues. It will bless us as long as we live.

                        "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,

                        Unmuttered or expressed;

                        The motion of a hidden fire

                        That trembles in the breast.

                        "Prayer is the burden of a sigh,

                        The falling of a tear,

                        The upward glancing of an eye

                        When none but God is near."

                                             --James Montgomery

MEDITATION PRAYER: "Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing" (Psalms 145:16).

"The Double Promise"

*The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therin for ever (Psalms 37:29).*

Notice, this is a double promise. First, "the righteous shall inherit the land"; second, they shall "dwell therein for ever." They do not buy it, discover it, merely take possession of it, claim it, see it, hope for it; but they inherit it, and their dwelling in it is never to be disturbed.

What is the land that they inherit? God promised Abraham the land of Canaan (Genesis 13:14-17), a land that He would afterward show him. But this land of Canaan was a type, a symbol, of the entire world, for we read in Romans 4:13 that the promise to Abraham was "that he should be the heir of the world," and that this promise came through faith. This promise was not only to Abraham and his seed, but to all those who are of faith through Christ. So the promise is by grace. "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all" (Romans 4:16).

So all Christians have inherited the right to a part of Abraham's farm, or to a part in all of it. They are heirs with Christ (Romans 8:17) to the inheritance of the land, the entire world. With this promise we remember the words of Christ, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth" (Matthew 5:5). This is really a parallel to our promise text for today.

The usurper still claims authority in this world, but Jesus came that "he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." (Hebrews 2:14). The earth will be renewed and brought back to its Edenic beauty as the eternal home of the saved. It is by faith that we become citizens of God's spiritual kingdom now and are assured a place in His kingdom of glory soon to come.

MEDITATION PRAYER: "Remember thy congregation, which thou hast purchased of old; the rod of thine inheritance, which thou hast redeemed" (Psalms 74:2).