

AN  
ADDRESS  
TO  
CHRISTIAN CHURCHES.

BY  
A. B. CHILD, M.D.

"I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me."  
"I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." "Abide in me, and I in you."  
"The branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." "I am the vine, ye are the branches." "Without me ye can do nothing." "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you."

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## ADDRESS TO THE CHURCHES.

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DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD,

MY BROTHERS AND MY SISTERS:

EARNESTLY and deeply does my soul call upon the purer and the holier feelings within, as I attempt to address these few lines to my fellow-Christians to call up your minds to considerations which have afflicted and lacerated my own soul.

I am, with my fellow-Christians of whatever name throughout the world, a member of that body called the *Christian Church*. I am, in common with you, responsible to my God and to my Saviour for whatever I give in countenance or support to a system which, intended in righteousness and good faith, may, in practice, be contrary to the deep and earnest instructions of my Master, for he "is the way." Jesus Christ is and must be my Master; no other can be. "In him I abide;" my soul, my spirit, my love, my life is dedicated to his service.

And as I dedicate myself to him and his service my

mind is enlightened, and I see as I never saw before ; I feel as I never felt before. My affections are awakened, my love is aroused, my wisdom is quickened, and I irresistibly speak forth to you from the superabounding fulness of my soul.

Let us now “walk about Zion, and go round about her, and tell the towers thereof.” Let us “mark well her bulwarks, consider her palaces,” for the God of Zion “is our God forever and ever.” Let us go within her palaces ; and within the inner sanctuary of the Holy City let us draw up the curtain of the soul, and read the hearts of the followers of Jesus Christ.

And now, by the light of Christ’s own words, with the veil that hides the inmost thoughts drawn up, what read we written on the hearts of those who call themselves Christians ?

Do we behold the love of God supremely reigning ?

Is the great command of Christ, “even to do to others as we would that others should do to us,” deeply engraven on our hearts ?

Do the robes of righteousness, in ample folds of purity, enshroud our souls ?

I pause and ask, Is even justice, the mighty equalizer of human rights, found always here ?

Are the poor and the rich led by the Lamb of God in the same pathway of humility heavenward together ?

Is the whole great flock of Christ, in one harmonious

concert, all-lovingly going hand in hand, one in thought, one in soul, doing every duty well, to sooner gain the promised land of love ?

Are all the sayings of Jesus Christ with watchful care adhered to ?

Is the world all overcome ?

Is there no love of earthly treasures ?

Is every Christian here willing to spare the ornaments of his own house to make a house for a brother who has none to repose in ? — to spare always the luxuries of his table, and give to those who have no food ? — and wear garments of simplest fabric to clothe those who have no garments ?

Is the Christian found here who has given the “widow’s mite” ? — who has sold all his earthly possessions to make the sum of human suffering less ?

Is the other cheek all ready to be turned when one is smitten ?

Is the cloak all ready to be given when the coat is taken ?

Is there no trumpet-sound when alms are given ?

Do we read in every Christian’s heart perpetual prayer to God ?

Do our garments of charity spread out in flowing folds over all God’s children ?

Are the ten commands of God, each and every one, by all obeyed ?

Is there one steady, burning light of true Christian

love and sympathy shining over the walls of Zion's Holy City on all the darkened world around?

Is there one heart of *perfect purity* in this vast congregation of professing Christians?

Is there one *true* follower of Jesus Christ within the Holy City of the living God on earth?

To all these questions a still small voice within us answers, No; the gentle breezes echo back the answer, No; nature all around, in one harmonious sound, responds and answers, No; the religion we profess to love and follow in thunder-tones proclaims again the answer, *No! No!*

The ruling love here seen within the Christian's heart is the love of earthly riches. In almost every heart it is so strong that every so-called Christian deed is the offspring of this love.

Luxury, ease, pomp, and power; honor and renown; worldly pleasures, "precious stones, pearls, and fine linen; purple, silk, and scarlet; and all manner vessels of most precious wood and of brass; and iron and marble; cinnamon and odors, wine and fine flour, beasts and sheep, horses and chariots," — ALL THESE are purchased by the merchandise of gold and silver, treasures that our Saviour commands us to "lay not up."

Our affections are set on these things; *we love them*; we love them far more than we love the realities of the immortal soul, where the holier feelings of our being

are quickened to a belief in the existence of things not seen.

“Heaven and holy angels shall rejoice, the apostles and the prophets of God shall rejoice,” when Christians shall cease to love earthly riches; for this love is antagonistic to spirituality — is an enemy to the love of God.

The treasures our affections most fondly cling to are possessions of Mammon; our lives are devoted to his service, and with reverential love we yield in obedience to his dictates.

Too long, dear friends, *too long* have we, true followers of Mammon, been falsely called the followers of Jesus Christ. In vain shall we try to serve two Masters; we “cannot serve God and Mammon.” One is a God of sin and darkness, whose realms are flooded with disease and death; the other is our own Father, God — a God of love and truth, “whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and whose dominion endureth forever.”

O, blind, deluded souls are we! Disobedient followers of our great Master! Why do we pretend to serve a God of love, when all our actions contradict the pretence? Should we not be more true to life to tear the Christian banner down and tread it underneath our feet, and serve the god of riches without disguise?

Man, made in the image of his God; with mind that triumphs over matter; that even counts the stars, and measures out their distances; soars among the heavenly

spheres in thought ; and almost rules the storms and waves, — how *can* he fall to such a degradation, to kneel and worship at the shrine of Mammon !

When our Saviour was offered the kingdoms of this world in all their glory, he answered, “ *It is only the Lord our God that we shall worship and serve.* ”

Near two thousand years has this example stood before the Christian church without one perfect imitation. And near two thousand years has the command “ lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth ” been daily read but to be broken.

What “ stuck the feather on the ” Christian woman,  
“ And on her finger laid the heavy load of jewelry ” ?

What brings within the Christian church these ornaments of dress ? This is a meaning question ; and from the smallest to the largest ornaments brought within these sacred walls by Christian persons does this question apply : What brings within the Christian church these ornaments ?

Is it the dictates of reason ?

Is it the gentle voice of the finer faculties of the soul ?

Is it the moans of starvation ?

Is it the sighs of poverty ?

Is it meekness ?

Is it Christ's example of humility ?

Is it a hungering and thirsting after righteousness ?

Is it the new command of Christ to “ love one another ” ?

From these interrogations, these high and pure incentives to holiness, there is no answer; but far back on the waves of progression, on to the darker waves of selfishness, we may read the answer; and I do not err, my beloved friends, in saying that it is a pure love of self that makes all this display.

How carefully has she nurtured the misdirected faculties of the soul; and how perfectly have they unfolded in the poisonous flower of fashion.

“Take no thought for the body, what ye shall put on.” Are these words not omitted in the rules that govern her life? “Where the treasure is, there will the heart be also.” Do not the material treasures that adorn her person claim more of her heart’s best love than the “kingdom of God and his righteousness”?

Beneath these glittering baubles, beneath the gaudy show of these frail fabrics, sleeps the germ of immortality; the precious gem, the talent buried, the living soul that can never, never die; that emanated from the great life Principle, from the great, good God of love, and was there placed to grow, to expand, to unfold, to bloom, and then reach back to its great Parent, God, to be folded forever in his arms of love.

Phantom is her god, and here he reigns the victor. He vauntingly wears the laurel crown, and tells his sorrowing victim it is the crown of life; he tells her these are the robes of righteousness that Christ has left for her to wear. And she believes, for did she not, she could not wear them.

O reason, here dethroned ! When shall thy reign begin, when shall thy victory be ? O love ! where are thy genial rays ? O wisdom ! where are thy sunbeams ? O lamp of God ! where are thy rays of heavenly light to shine within and beam without the holy city of the living God ?

What thoughts are in her soul when flashes of reality flit across her brow ? In darkened words, written on clouds of deeper darkness, I read, —

“ A sigh — a murmur. Old age is coming ; I dread it. The vigor and the strength of my youth will then be gone ; the wrinkled and the time-worn visage of decrepit years shall then come over me ; the vivacity and the beauty of life will be dimmed ; and the joys of youth shall all have passed away.

“ And when old age is fully here, Death will come knocking with his summons. O death ! that I might be forever blotted from thy book of remembrance, and never claimed by thee ! I know the horrible certainty of death. But, O, beyond — what uncertainty ! O, speak it not ! O, the dark valley, the shadows, the curtains, that hide from our mortal view the unknown future ! We know not what lies beyond this life. O, do not speak of death, but let these gloomy thoughts be forever driven from my mind !

“ This world is now before me, all a tangible reality. It is not an uncertainty. And how it blooms in beauty ! How temptingly it holds its nectar draught of happiness ! With all its pleasures, how invitingly it

draws itself to me! Can I resist? Why should I? Why should I not enjoy this world of beauty? I will. I'll drink its pleasures in, and satisfy my soul. I'll drink to sleep the thought of death. I'll drink to drunkenness, and drive away the fabled watch-guards of my inner life, whose watchful care, 't is said, would guard my soul's best interest. Why should I care for unseen things? Away with all these visions! they are deceptions, delusions, phantoms, madness, and would drive me mad; they are all the devil's work."

It was thus her soul soliloquized; and thus in dark distrust of immortality her soul in doubt goes shrouded. Why should her soul not turn and choose to drink from the stream that flows from the great fountain of Christ's love to his faithful followers? From the swelling stream of bliss — the stream that flows from God to all his creatures? Why should the pearly drops flow forever by unseen? Why should the fulness of perennial joy flow by her thirsting, aching soul, when a cooling draught from heaven's stream might fill her life interior?

O, may she drink no longer from the dark waters of sin and folly! May she starve and dwarf her soul no longer, for in the insipid stream of selfishness there are no beams of life eternal, no heavenly light of wisdom, no genial rays of pure love to make the soul unfold in fragrance!

An angel voice thus speaks to her: "Dear wandering soul, why live on vanity and pride? Turn, and

leave those things of folly that crush the spirit down ! Turn, and kneel in deep humility at the shrine of holy love ! Turn, and seek the bright immortal crown that waits in paradise for thee !”

Now, my dear friends, I come to ask two questions, which are to the Christian momentous ; to the world they are momentous ; and are replete with interest for the temporal and eternal happiness of the souls of humanity : —

*Can we perfectly imitate the example that Christ in his life has given us ?*

*Can we perfectly obey his commands ?*

These questions demand our deepest consideration, for on the affirmative answer of these questions hang the success, the triumph, the glory, the grandeur, and the yet unknown power of the true church militant that Christ has instituted here on earth.

Can we follow the example of our blessed Lord, or can we not ? Can we obey his commands, or can we not ?

On the negative answer of these questions the Christian church has reared her superstructure ; and it is this decision of the church that has made the house of God a place “ to ask the alms of public gaze.”

It is this decision of the church that has made the house of God a place to meditate, and lay deep business plans how best that we can lay up treasures here on earth.

It is this decision that has filled the church with a love of this world ; that has polluted the sanctuary of her holiness by kneeling therein to the god of riches.

It is this decision of the church that makes her members " do their works to be seen of men ; " " love greetings in the markets ; " and " to be called Rabbi ; " " love uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogue."

It is this decision that has cursed the land, and holds it now in slavery to sin, and has spread spiritual darkness over all the world.

Would Christ, think you, give us an example that we could not perfectly imitate ? Or would he give us a command that we could not obey — perfectly obey ? For where, in all his teachings, does he intimate that we have not the ability to imitate the example of his life, and keep his sayings ? And where, in all his teachings, does he not demand our strictest obedience to his commands, and our most perfect imitation of his example ? Let us read his words : —

" Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled." " Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven ; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." " Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." " No man can serve two masters ; for either he will hate the one and love

the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven." "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me. I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." "I am the true vine." "Ye are the branches." "Abide in me, and I in you."

Are these not meaning words? Are they not easy to be understood? And shall we receive them as precious truths, or shall we treat them as the idle wind?

Christ ends his sermon on the mount with the following plain, strong, and significant affirmations:—

"Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man that built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew upon that house; and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man who built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it."

And again Christ says, "Whoever committeth sin is the servant of sin;" and whoever is the servant of sin cannot be the servant of God, for we "cannot serve two masters." "If a man love me he will keep my

words." "He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings."

What do these words of our Lord signify? Are they true sayings? Do we believe them? or do we need more evidence to prove their truth? Do we believe in Christ? If we do, then we take his sayings in their whole meaning, in their whole strength, in their naked simplicity, without exceptions; for nowhere does he make any exceptions to his sayings. Had there been exceptions to the demands of the gospel, would he have not told us so?

He further says: "*My record is true.*" "*If I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?*"

Do we need stronger evidence than Christ's own words to show to us that if we break one of his sayings we are sinners?—and if sinners, that we are not Christians?

Christ and Antichrist are incompatible with each other; sin and holiness can never blend together; fire and water can never harmonize, for when they meet a contest is sure; one must have the victory, and one shall be destroyed: so of sin and holiness, they cannot live together.

My dear Christian friends, we profess Christianity. What are we doing? And where, by the virtue of our own tenets, where are we going? Our Christianity is not the Christianity that Christ has taught us; for not one command of God have we fully kept; not one example of Christ have we fully imitated.

What is the Christian religion? What are her privileges? What are her rewards?

The Christian religion! Who can measure its towering greatness? Who can see its magnitude? Who can comprehend its depths of reality? Who can grasp its fathomless riches?

Christianity, when it shall be seen in the beaming effulgence of its true glory, shall dwarf and dwindle to nothingness every consideration of the material world—every thing that bears the impress of earth.

O, the beauties, the transcendent beauties, the glories, the untold glories, the yet unseen, the yet unknown realities that are imbosomed in the promises of Jesus Christ to his faithful followers, the world knows not of, the Christian church has not faith to believe in!

What are Christ's promises? Let us read, and pray that we may understand; and if more faith be necessary for us to believe them true, let us pray to God again for faith, and pray until we shall receive it.

“If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.”  
 “As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.” “This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you; greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” “Ye are my

friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do." "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it."

These promises are plain; they have no double or doubtful meaning. They are *true*, or they are *untrue*. Christ is our Master, and shall we not have confidence in him by having faith to believe that his promises shall be fulfilled to us when we shall comply with the requirements of his gospel?

When we shall ask in faith, believing, in the name of Christ, can we not realize that what we will shall be granted us? If we do not believe this, then we do not believe the promises of our Lord and Master. True Christianity *demand*s that we believe this; that we must admit the undying truth and holy reality of all Christ's promises.

When there shall be a true follower of Jesus Christ, who has purity of soul and holiness of purpose, whose faith in the unseen realities of life is more real than the rocks and the eternal hills; who reposes in child-like confidence in the teachings of Christ; who worships God in the freedom of unbounded love, in

the beauty of holiness, — at his bidding, in the name of Christ, sinners shall turn, leaving their evil ways, to come to God. Every desire of his heart in the name of Christ shall be granted. At his desire, the “blind shall be made to see, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, the lame shall walk, the dead shall be raised, and the gospel shall be preached unto the poor,” to souls who have never tasted the bread of life. When true Christianity begins to dawn on the earth, these things shall be. And by the earnest prayer of godly and faithful souls in the name of Christ, the sick shall be made well, the weak shall be made strong, all pain shall be turned to pleasure, all suffering shall be turned to rejoicing, all mourners shall be comforted. The waste places of the earth shall be made fruitful fields; the naked shall be clothed, the hungry fed; poverty shall be no more; sin shall fade away, and joy and gladness shall fill the whole earth.

Yes, it is in the name of Jesus Christ, with faith believing, that the burdens of our lives shall be no more; and the earth, for all, shall bloom in the beauty of paradise.

Then it shall be that we shall learn of “Him who was meek and lowly in heart,” and then shall we “find rest unto our souls.”

These feeble thoughts can convey to our perception but a faint idea of the glory hidden in Christ's promises, that is in store for his faithful followers; for who can measure or conceive of the capacities of

man's desires when his soul shall have grown and expanded in the light of eternal truth? To what a magnitude may he swell the pure desires of his heart! and still the blessed promise is his: "If ye ask any thing in my name, I will do it."

Why are the promises of Christ not practical realities? Were they not given for each and every one of God's children that will come to him?

Yes, dear friends, it is our privilege, it is the privilege of every child created of God, to receive the fulfilment of these promises in the full fruition of Christian faith, and do the works that Christ has done, and greater, or else they are unmeaning words, and the promises of Christ are nothing worth.

"God is a spirit, and they who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

"Except a man be born of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life."

It is the inflowing of God's holy Spirit into our being that makes us spiritual. Spirituality is the vivifying, life-giving reality of the Christian. It is the soul and the embodiment of Christianity. And where is the spiritualism, that our souls have a capacity to comprehend, that Jesus Christ has not, two thousand years ago, given to the world? Then why shall we, profess-

ing Christians, oppose spiritualism? Why storm the fortresses of Christianity? Why destroy the safeguards of our holy sanctuaries? Why lessen our Christian hold on eternal life?

“The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell from whence it cometh or whither it goeth.” There are things we see not, but they are real: the gentle breeze that fans the brow — the soft whisperings of love; these rest in the bosom of truth; they cannot be seen, but they are there, deep, lasting, and true. We cannot look upon the holy devotion that swells the heart of piety, yet it is there; that which the natural eye sees not is true. The soul of man we cannot see, yet it is far more enduring than the objects we cherish and love, that were formed only for our gaze as we pass them in our earthly pilgrimage.

When the perception of the inner being is opened by faith, how readily, how joyously it catches the reality of its immortality! How it grasps the living beauties that shine forth from God, and how fittingly do they adorn the immortal brow of the soul of man!

This perception of our being, that discovers and appreciates the truth of the unseen realities, the immortal soul, is only a less perfect unfolding of the same faculty that recognizes the existence of guardian angels and spirits around us.

In modesty, but with great joy, and with deep grati-

tude to Almighty God, do I proclaim my belief in the watchful care of guardian angels, and in their manifestations of intelligence to mortals here.

Spiritualism, with all its multiplied errors and absurdities, exhibits beneath its surface beauties that only the finer and holier perceptions of our being are capable of appreciating.

Spiritualism, if sought for in true godliness, in the spirit of truth, in purity of heart, will unfold to its seekers the teachings of Jesus Christ anew.

Spiritualism shall make a new edition of the great volume of Christianity, with additional notes and explanations that shall make the soul's immortality a tangible reality for earth's children to grasp.

Spiritualism shall be the morning star of glory, that shall usher in the dawning day of Christianity, when the sun of righteousness shall rise and shine in all its effulgent glory over the whole earth.

But let us recognize no material classification of Christian greatness. Let us claim no names, no sects, no isms; but seek Christian humility and Christian love; let us become like little children, and begin and learn the first great lesson in the alphabet of Christianity. What are names, and sects, and denominations, when it is the church, the universal church of the living and true God, we seek to join? It is the condition of the soul that makes the church we seek. It has no place; it has no location; for in it the soul goes out direct to God; no matter where, no matter

when ; the world-wide universe of love is its domain ; and the souls of true Christians shall meet and mingle in the boundless fields of universal nature. The warm desires of our hearts shall flow to God together ; our tears shall flow in sympathy together, and our meeting shall be in the spirit's finer being, and in freedom our souls shall worship God, untrammelled by any organization instituted by the hands of men who love the treasures of this world more, far more, than the treasures they should have laid up in heaven.

Come, my dear Christian friends, and let us begin the work of heavenly love. Let us first receive the holy truths of the gospel, *as truths*. Then every desire of the heart must be an aspiration for a purer life ; every thought must be a wish to make the soul more holy ; every deed of life must be an effort in goodness.

Then shall we plant flowers of fragrance around every one that dwells near us ; we shall invite our brothers and our sisters who are in sin and in error, in darkness and sorrow, to come and drink with us at the everlasting fountain of truth ; to come and learn of God in the holy gospel of Jesus Christ, that they may feel the joy that fills our souls. And we shall feel that this is our work. This is the labor of love ; this is love for our neighbor ; for we shall send incense of love to God when we carry the bread of life that Christ has given and break it to hungry souls.

It is the little deeds of life, it is the minor duties of the day well done, that shall make the soul unfold

in true Christianity, and stud our firmament with holy angels. What to us may seem a trivial thing, the smallest gift, oft times may be the mightiest almsgiving of the soul. A smile for sadness, a tear of sympathy for suffering, for the unfortunate, the downcast, and the oppressed, will gather pearls of celestial wisdom, that shall be drawn to us by the magnetism of love.

Yes, the great work of the Christian life must begin within our own souls; within our own loved households; within our own immediate sphere of life. All our words and all our deeds, if we are true Christians, with no exceptions, *must* be the offspring of pure love and affection. There can be no chidings, no contentions; there can be no unkind words or thoughts; with watchful care, we shall guard every uttered thought, that every word we speak may add some joy and pleasantness to life. "Blessed are the peace makers, for they shall be called the children of God."

It is the minor duties that tower the ranges of heavenly work; it is the single blade that helps to fill the full meadow; it is atoms that make the mountain; it is drops, but little drops, that swell the mighty deep; it is the smiles of the moment that make our paradisaal skies; and it is the little duties well done that make the joys of life.

In one sympathy, in one hope, in one trust, in one love, may our souls be united. And I would that true

love for one another might enable us to realize the great Christian truth, that all earthly possessions are ours only to distribute. O, grant us, Almighty God, a willingness to give as we receive. May we deny no child of earth; may we deny no child of God any blessing; but give, and freely give, to the last farthing, if needs be; for such are the teachings, the holy teachings, of our Lord and Master.

And thus, and thus shall we garner into the eternal storehouse the ripened fruit of immortality. Yes, hand in hand, let us begin to work and labor for one another, and thus begin to culture the little *infant love* for our neighbors' souls. Let us, with the combined energies and the latent powers of our being aroused, toil and work for souls in sin and darkness. This was the mission of our Saviour; and his life must be, his life shall be, our example. No matter where our brothers and our sisters in humanity dwell; in the dark hovels of degradation and misery, or in the lighted halls, glittering in all the show of material gayety and fashion; — for each and every darkened soul is a spark of Divinity, is a child of God, wherever and in whatever condition they may be found.

The universe of duty shall be our wide spread creed. We will know no narrow limits where our souls can give the arms of love. We live in God's great universal kingdom, and ever ready, we will stand to bless and cheer a soul that rises forth from any point.

These shall be our articles of faith, to which in Christian love we will sign our names.

O, what a mighty work there is for Christian hands to do! Spirits and mortals, myriads on myriads—how many, O, how many in the great family of humanity have their souls yet *all* untuned to the melody of creation!

Can we be *true* followers of Christ, and not spread the golden wings of invitation? Can we—would we keep the mercies of our Father from flowing out to the souls of men? Shall we girdle the universe around, and say, No more shall the rays of love fall on the hearts of sadness? Shall we gather to ourselves dew-drops of bliss, and never send them forth to sparkle on the flowers of night? Or, in true Christian love and sympathy, shall we not weave for sorrow a bright shining garment, to protect the souls of night from the damp chill of ignorance and sin? If beauties, like running brooks, come flowing in our souls, we would not keep the waters fastened within the borders of our spirits, but we would send them flowing through the veins of love, down to the vales of misery, wailing, and agony. “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for their’s is the kingdom of heaven.” “I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.”

Can there be any happiness for the true child of God when ONE SOUL is suffering eternal, unending misery? The eternal sufferings of one soul, according

to the teaching of Christ, would murder all the bliss of Christian souls in heaven. "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." "This is my commandment, that ye love one another." Can we love a brother in misery damned, without a sympathizing agony?

True Christianity, my dear Christian friends, shall yet enrich the borders of the great and darkened ocean of life with the mossy banks of love,—love to God, and love for one another,—to which sinful souls from the angry waves of troubled waters shall float and rest. True Christianity shall open the right channels of the heart, and the pathway of kindness shall be strewed with opening buds, kept fresh by the dews of heaven. The fragrant leaves and shining drops shall invite to still higher joys, until the celestial firmament shall glitter with unnumbered stars of beauty.

"I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me." "He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." "Verily, verily I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life." "I am the door: by me if any man enter in he shall be saved." "Verily, verily I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep."

Our home is the land of truth. The gateway to our home is Jesus Christ. A garland of twining buds and blossoms overarch the entrance. This garland is the "Holy Ghost, the Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth,

whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him." Each blossom in this garland is a holy angel of God.

This is the way: shall we go in, or shall we seek to climb up some other way to heaven? "Verily, verily I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." Through this gateway no shade of sin shall ever come; only spotless purity and pure holiness can give the soul a passport. If by faith in Christ we seek to enter here, with a longing desire to go to the land of truth, holy angels will come and bring us a foretaste of the joys that await us; they will come and guard our lives, and they will abide with us forever and ever.

O, may our almighty Father grant us stronger faith, that we may recognize beauties we have not yet seen or known, that shall be made manifest to us in the guardian care of angels whom our Saviour, Christ, has prayed his Father to send us! "And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever." "Verily, verily I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." When we shall "worship the Lord our God," and when it is the Lord our God and "him only" that we shall serve, then the devil shall leave us, and holy angels shall come and minister unto us, as they did to our great and holy Example. Their smiles

of love shall draw us by the ties of affection, and their tears shed for our sins shall draw us by the cords of sympathy; their notes of joy shall thrill us; their purity shall burn away the shades of grossness that surround us; and the holy truths they bring shall light us in our pathway home to heaven.

They see around our spirits the broken anchor of hope; they see us wearing faded flowers on our brows; they see our vision and our gaze turned far away from God's eternal beams of love. But if we *will*, they *will* bring us gentle teachings; they will be true and faithful to our souls; they will bring us gentle chidings as well as consolation. They will not come with words to tell us what we lack, but they will read the want, and pour the balm of healing in.

It is the voice of holy angels that whispers, Come; a thousand voices from nature, all animate, whisper, Come; blooming flowers whisper, Come; the feathered songsters warble forth an invitation; and in all her myriad avenues, nature invites our souls to come to God.

By one eternal acknowledgment of the divine influx of the God-life flowing into our souls, and leaving the impress of divinity, O, let us enter that realm of joy! Let us gaze on God as the supreme, eternal Ruler of all things. Let philosophy go hand in hand with fancy; let us reason and admire, love and counsel, until we find this bright and ever-life-divine melting our spirits into an undivided sympathy and love for one another.

O, let our souls all trustingly rest within the arms of the great Father of the universe! With childlike love and confidence, let us rest in his bosom, and his soft breezes of progression shall bear us on the everlasting stream of life and love, where purity of heart and finer thoughts and emotions shall paint his image brighter and brighter within us. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." We stand created — made by an unchanging Deity; from him we come and to him we must ever rise. Eternity is ours to brighten and gem the spirit; revolving years will bear us on in their orbits; each circle will brighten as we near the star-lit soul of God; every wider emanation shall tint our spirits anew; and in myriad on myriads of years our souls will be treading some finer point, traversing some mightier distance to glory, far, far remote from our spirits now.

Not a soul, not an atom, not a particle is lost to God's all-seeing eye; as dear to him is the world beneath, where souls are chained in slavery to sin, as the world of higher progress, where souls are folded in his arms of righteousness and love, for his circling protection goes through and round his universe.

As we grasp God's stars of wisdom, let us bow our souls in humbleness, for her garments are becoming.





