

Christ, and Him Crucified

by Elder Gregg Thompson

"For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified;" #1Co 2:2.

To be a minister of the gospel is to fill one of the most solemn and responsible positions to which any man can be called, and no man has the right to assume it but he that is called of God, as was Aaron; #Heb 5:4. Paul was one of the called of God, not by man, or the will of man, but by the will of God; #Ga 1:1 Eph 1:1. And he understood and felt the great responsibility, and he calls the elders of the church at Ephesus to bear witness to his faithfulness, and the manner of his life among them; #Ac 20:17-21. To faithfully discharge his duty to God who had called him, and to the church of Christ whose servant he was, he felt to be more sacred to him than his own life; #Ac 20:22-24. In this respect Paul was a model preacher, and has set an example worthy to be imitated by ministers of all ages, and it would be well for the church if all her pulpits were, today, filled with such honest, God-fearing men as was Paul. He felt that he was a debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise and the unwise; #Ro 1:14; for God had committed to him a treasure for the comfort and happiness of others, and that he would be dishonest to his God, to himself, and to those for whom this treasure was given him, if he withheld it. His ministry was not given to Paul for his own personal benefit, or to be a means of procuring wealth or worldly honors, for the Lord said of him when he called him to this work, "For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake;" #Ac 9:16. And Paul says, "The Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me," #Ac 20:23. None of these things moved him, neither did he count his life dear unto himself, or stop to inquire how much money the people were going to give him, or what salary the church would pledge themselves to pay him for discharging

his duty to God and paying them the debt he owed them. Nay, verily, the apostle counted not his life dear unto himself, so that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God; #Ac 20:24. Paul in giving his solemn charge to the elders of Ephesus says, "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers,"-to fleece the church of God? No, no! To know what salary they will bind themselves to give you per annum? Oh, no! -"to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood;" #Ac 20:28. And the other apostles have joined with Paul in the same charge, that the elder should not take the oversight of the church of God for filthy lucre, or for worldly gain, but to feed the flock of God. Neither are they to lord it over God's heritage, but to be examples to the flock; #1Pe 5:1-3. The old, primitive ministers and elders esteemed themselves the servants of the church, and that their great duty was to feed the lambs and sheep of Christ's fold with the sincere milk of the word, and by their life of humble obedience to Christ to give an example that should be imitated by them; #1Co 4:16. In the 12th century we find the church still steadfast in the apostle's doctrine on this point, and in the 5th article of their Confession of Faith, as given by Jones, they say, "We hold that the ministers of the church ought to be unblamable, both in life and doctrine; and if found otherwise, that they ought to be deposed from their office, and others substituted in their stead; and that no person ought to presume to take that honor unto himself but he who is called of God as was Aaron; that the duties of such are to feed the flock of God, not for filthy lucre's sake, or as having dominion over God's heritage, but as being examples to the flock, in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, and in chastity." * Jones' History of the Christian Church.-Page 828.

Notice the language in which Paul introduces my text: #1Co 2:1 "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of

speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God." He made no effort toward a display of human learning, or the wisdom obtained from the schools, but in meekness, and in the earnestness of his soul declared unto them the gospel of the Son of God. And he assigns his reason for this in these words: "My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power. That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." The gospel is a mystery, and foolishness to the unregenerated, natural man. He cannot know it, and words and arguments can never reveal it to him, and beget faith in his heart in its truths; verses 7 and 8. #1Co 2:7,8 This knowledge, and faith in Christ, only comes by direct revelation from God as he reveals them to us by his Spirit; verses 9 to 12. #1Co 2:9,12 Words and arguments may today produce the same kind of faith in our minds that the miracles and mighty works of Christ begat in the minds of the Jews, for they believed that he was an extraordinary man, perhaps one of the prophets raised from the dead, for no man could do the works he did except God was with him. But when Christ would say, "I am the Son of God," they would call him a blasphemer, and pick up stones to stone him. This faith was rational, for the prophets had wrought miracles, and it was rational for them to conclude that he was a man, like them endowed with super-human powers to work miracles among them, but that he was the Son of God, they could not believe, and did not know, for had they known this, they would not have crucified him; verse 8. #1Co 2:8 This knowledge could not be imparted by words and arguments, or by miracles wrought in their presence, but only by direct revelation, for Jesus so taught his disciples in these unmistakable words: "All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him;" #Lu 10:22. Human science may guide the mind of the philosopher, the astronomer, and the geologist into the

hidden mysteries of nature, and clearly reveal to his mind that there is an Almighty Power, endowed with infinite wisdom, that has brought all these things into being, and fixed their order and harmony; for Paul tells us that the things that are seen declare his eternal power and Godhead; #Ro 1:20; but the scheme of redemption, and the way of man's deliverance from the bondage of sin and death human science or wisdom can never reveal, neither can it be taught, only by direct revelation to man by the Spirit of God; #1Co 2:10 Eph 3:5.

Paul says that he had not received the gospel, or his knowledge of Christ, by the ministry of men, or any other instrumentality, but by direct revelation from God; #Ga 1:12. Hence the apostle opens our text with a negative expression: "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." Others may preach to you philosophy, and tickle your ears with their worldly wisdom, but I will warn you to beware of them, lest they spoil you; #Col 2:8 for their wisdom can never impart to you a true knowledge of God; #1Co 1:21. The success of the gospel does not depend upon the eloquence and subtlety of those who preach it, but alone upon the power of God, who quickens the dead, and opens the heart to receive and obey the things spoken by his servants, #Ac 16:14. We, as the servants of God, have this treasure, as earthen vessels, but the power is alone in God to give life to the dead, and to open the eyes to see, the ears to hear, and the heart to understand the glorious gospel we preach; #2Co 4:7. If faith came by words and arguments falling from the lips of man, it would stand in the power of man, and not in the power of God; #1Co 2:4,5. Neither could it be the faith of the operation of God. Neither could it be the fruit of the Spirit of God, for it would be the fruit of the man who produces it, and would stand in his wisdom. This faith would be the work of man, and not the work of God, the fruit of the Spirit, or an evidence that the man had been born of God. Paul knew and taught that the preaching of Christ was to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks, foolishness, and that the

natural man cannot know it; #1Co 1:23 2:14. It is hid to them that are lost, but to the "saved," the "called," the "believer," it comes in all its strengthening, comforting power, and saves them from the delusions and vain speculations of the philosopher, and wise according to the flesh, but ignorant, dead, and blind to the things of the Spirit. The true minister of the gospel wants to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified; the humble, penitent believer wants to hear nothing else, for there is Salvation in none other. He is the only name given under heaven among men whereby he must be saved; #Ac 4:12. This name is the sweetest ever sounded in the ears of the sinner who truly knows and feels his need of a Savior. It is his hiding place, his covert from the tempest; #Isa 32:2; his hope on earth and joy in heaven. Paul knew and felt how precious that name is when he said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief;" #1Ti 1:15.

I was once talking with a New School Baptist preacher about difficult passages of Scripture to preach from, and he remarked to me, "The most difficult text that I ever tried to preach from is where Paul says, 'For I am determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.' The subject exhausts itself, and I can not get enough out of it to make a sermon." My reply was, "You do not look upon that subject as Paul did, or see the riches, or fullness in it he did, or, like him, you would say, 'It is unsearchable;'" #Eph 3:8. This Jesus is a mysterious personage; one that human science can never comprehend or reveal. "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not;" #Joh 1:10. His conception and birth was contrary to the laws of science or nature, and was a subject of prophecy over seven hundred years before it took place, for it was then said, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel;" #Isa 7:14.

Ahaz was a bad man, but he was a child of Abraham and of David, and the covenant made with them, and God was called his Lord, and his God, "And the Lord spake unto Ahaz, saying, Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God." But Ahaz refused, saying, "I will not ask neither will I tempt the Lord." The prophet of the Lord then said, "Hear ye now, O house of David! Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign," a double sign, of his good will to the house of David, for of you Messiah is to be born, and you cannot be destroyed with that blessing in you. The oath and promise made to David shall be fulfilled in a glorious and wonderful manner. He shall be an extraordinary person, not born by ordinary generation, not stained with common pollutions of human nature, born of a virgin in all her virgin purity, without sin, and incontestably fitted and qualified to have the throne of his father David. The mysteries of his character, and his glorious errand on earth, are wrapped up in his glorious and wonderful name, Immanuel - God with us; God in our nature; God at peace with us; in covenant with us. This was fulfilled in their calling him Jesus, a Savior; #Mt 1:21,23; and in the words of the angel Gabriel to Mary: "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David;" #Lu 1:31,32. This to Ahaz, and the house of Judah, was a sign that God had not forgotten David, or the promise, or covenant, he had made with him, and that the promise should be fulfilled in this Son, born of a virgin, and called "Immanuel, God with us." This child, though not born like other children, but born of a virgin, a thing impossible according to the law of nature, yet he shall be really and truly man, and shall be nursed and brought up like other children. Though he be conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, and is as truly God as he is man, yet he shall not therefore be fed on angels' food, but, as it becomes him, shall be in all things made like unto his

brethren; #Heb 2:17. Being born by extraordinary generation, and being truly, Immanuel, God with us, yet he does not appear in the full stature of a man, but a newborn babe, an infant, a child, a man-child, and is nursed, and shall gradually grow to manhood, and in wisdom, so as to know how to refuse the evil and choose the good; #Lu 2:40,52. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace;" #Isa 9:6. This child, this son, Son of God, God manifest in the flesh, Immanuel, God with us, is man, the son of man, the Word made flesh, and dwelt among us. Thus being God made flesh, and invested with our nature, (sin excepted,) he is fitted and fully qualified to do us great good, and save his people from their sins. His dignity and name are above every name. He shall be called Wonderful, because he is both God and man, and was born of a virgin, mysteries that human reason or wisdom can not comprehend; but his redeemed and regenerated people shall know him, for he shall give them eternal life, and they shall worship him as the wonderful author and finisher of their faith. As Counselor, he is justly called Wonderful, for he is both God and man. As God, he can speak and it stands fast; can declare the end from the beginning; and works all things after the counsel of his own will. As man, he is our kinsman and Redeemer. His love is wonderful. It is eternal and unchangeable, and the objects of his love are his chosen people, who were predestinated unto the adoption of children, and ordained unto eternal life. As Counselor, he is the wisdom of God, and by and through him, God gives us counsel; #Ps 16:7 Re 3:18. He is The mighty God, or The mighty One. All power in heaven or in earth is in him, and having wisdom to declare the end from the beginning, he has power to do all his will, and can save to the uttermost. Such is the work of the Mediator, that no less power than that of the mighty God could accomplish it. He must be God in all his divine, omnipotent power, and man, without the stain of

sin, to accomplish the great work for which he came into the world. Christ says, "I and my Father are one." "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father;" #Joh 10:30; and #Joh 14:9,10. Hence, whatever work he came into the world to do, he is qualified in every sense of the word to do it. When the man, the son that was born of the virgin, was baptized, a voice from heaven testified, saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased;" #Mt 3:17, Paul, when preaching this Jesus, calls him holy; #Heb 7:26; and #Heb 4:15 2Co 5:21; and without sin. He is The everlasting Father, The Father of eternity, the author and giver of eternal life. He can speak, and the dead live. His fatherly care and tenderness towards his people is eternal, and so he is the Father of a blessed eternity to them. He is the Father of the great and blessed work of redemption, and, as Counselor, arranged it, and perfected it in the virgin-son, the Immanuel, God with us. It was the product of his wisdom as Counselor, and his love as the everlasting Father, and that love will be manifest in his blessed reign over his subjects, for he is the Prince of Peace. He creates, preserves, and commands peace. He is our peace, and his peace keeps the hearts of his people. As a king, he reigns in righteousness, and His reign is one of peace. He is the author and giver of all good. All the peace that is the present, or will be the future bliss or happiness of his chosen people comes from him, for the government is upon his shoulder, and his only. The subjects of his kingdom are to obey him, and to have no head, lawgiver, or king but him. His reign shall be forever and forever, throughout all the generations of time. No power shall be able to destroy his kingdom, or one of his subjects, for, "He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet;" #1Co 15:25. As the son of David, he can rightfully reign on the throne of David, and over his kingdom, for God shall give him the throne of his father David; #Lu 1:32,33. When Christ rode upon the ass, the multitude cried, saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in

the highest." And when he went into the temple, and the blind and the lame were healed, the little children cried in the temple, saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David;". #Mt 21:9,15 This word, hosanna, seems to be a form of wishing one well, and this must have been the meaning of the multitude who, as Christ entered Jerusalem, cried, saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" Lord preserve this Son of David, and rightful King! Keep him forever, and let thy blessings rest upon him, for he is the King, the Lord's anointed, to reign upon his holy hill in Zion; #Ps 2:6. He is filled with wisdom, and anointed to administer with prudence and equity the affairs of his kingdom, for he shall order it and settle it with justice and judgment. Every thing shall be arranged for the good and comfort of his subjects, so that no one shall have any cause to complain, or to alter or change any of the laws or ordinances of his kingdom. This is the Prince of Peace, which the angel of the Lord announced to the shepherds, saying, "Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men;" #Lu 2:9-14. This is the Jesus that Paul preached, and determined to know nothing else. For there is salvation in none other, and he is able to save, and shall save his people from their sins. For the Spirit of the Lord is upon him, and has anointed him to preach good tidings to the meek, and hath sent him to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; #Isa 61:1,2,3. The first Baptist preacher that this world ever had, said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world;" #Joh 1:29. The law was given by Moses, and can never give life, or righteousness, to the justly condemned sinner; but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, and

through him God gives eternal life to the sinner dead in sins, and by him they are freely justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses; #Ac 13:39.

Paul would preach Jesus Christ, and him crucified. He would tell the story of the cross, and how Jesus put away our sin by the sacrifice of himself. Christ and the resurrection should be in every sermon, indeed there cannot be a gospel sermon without it, for it is the foundation upon which Christianity rests, and in which the hope of every Christian is anchored. Paul's method of preaching was, first of all to deliver unto them that which he had received; how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures; #1Co 15:3,4.

The death of Christ, the manner of his death, and the object of it, were the subjects of prophecy, and according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. He was the seed of the woman, that was to bruise the serpent's head, and by death destroy him that had the power of death, and deliver those, who through fear of death, were subject to bondage, and were the slaves of sin and death. It was not a mere voluntary offering, for there was a needs be for it, for without it there was no redemption. "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." #Heb 9:15. The first testament was not dedicated without blood. "For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you." And under this testament without the shedding of blood is no re-remission, for almost every thing under the law was purged by blood. All the offerings and sacrifices under the law

were typical, or a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of things, and these sacrifices and offerings, which were made continually every year, can not put away sin, or make the comers thereto perfect. Where sin is put away, there is no further remembrance of sin, or no further offering for sin, but in the repetition of these offerings there is a remembrance of sin again every year. "The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing." Under the law the priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never put away sin. Christ, by his one offering, has made an end of sin, has perfected forever them that were sanctified, and hath obtained for us eternal redemption. His blood is the blood of the New Testament, or covenant; by it sin is put away, and freely forgiven. "Now, where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin." The atonement is made, the redemption price is paid, the debt of his redeemed is paid, and they are purchased by his blood; #Ac 20:28. This glorious work of the Savior is described by Isaiah more like a historian than a prophet. The fifty-third chapter of his prophecy, is a gospel sermon, a full description of Christ in his humiliation, his sufferings, and death; how he was rejected by men, as a root out of dry ground, as having no form or comeliness, no beauty or loveliness in him, that they should love him, or desire him. The time was fulfilled, when the King and Deliverer should come. All Israel were in expectation, but they were looking for him to come in pomp and worldly splendor, of high and noble parentage, worthy to be looked upon, and to fill the world with wonder and admiration. But this man is a carpenter's son, and belongs to the poorest and most illiterate part of the community. They could see nothing in him to love or admire, but would look upon him with contempt and hatred, and reject him as an impostor. Thus it is with all the unregenerated world. They can see no beauties in Christ: nothing to draw their hearts to him, and cause them to love and worship him.

To know him is to have eternal life, and this life is the gift of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Isaiah knew this, and said, "Who hath believed our report! And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" This knowledge can only be had by direct revelation from God, hence the preaching of Christ is to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness. To the unbelieving Jew Christ looked mean, contemptible, and despicable. They could see nothing in him that looked like a king, or a great deliverer. Christ was the "I AM," the JEHOVAH, the "brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person" yet the world knew him not, for they had no spiritual life, or understanding, or sight, by which they could know him, or see his beauties. Christ had the beauty of holiness, and goodness enough to make him the desire of all nations, but the far greater part of those among whom he lived, saw none of these beauties, for they were spiritually discerned, and they as natural men, could not know them. The men who seemed to hate him worst, and persecuted him with the greatest severity, were those who were educated in the religion of the Jews, had read and professed to believe the prophets, and were looking for Messiah, the Son of David, who was to sit upon David's throne. But in the meek and unassuming Jesus, they could see nothing to love, or to make them desire him. They judged of men by the sight of the eye, and their natural appearance, and they could see nothing in him that they should desire him; therefore they despised and rejected him.

He was a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief. He was despised and rejected of men. The shepherds found the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. His reputed father was a poor carpenter, and his mother a poor virgin, both of the house of David, but that royal and illustrious family was reduced and sunk, so that Christ being born of such poor parents, he might be esteemed a root out of the dry ground, and of Galilee, a country of small repute, where nothing good, nothing great, could be expected to come out of it. The

Jews were expecting that when Messiah should come, he would make a public entry, and come in pomp, and with observation; but instead of that, he grew up as a tender plant, before God. He was a tender plant that one would have thought might easily have been crushed: and so thought Herod, when in his exceeding wrath he slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under; #Mt 2:16. But God preserved him, and he grew in stature and in wisdom, so that at twelve years of age he confounded their learned men with his questions and answers; #Lu 2:47. He had no form nor comeliness, nothing which one might expect to see in the Immanuel, God with us. They that saw him could see nothing in him more than in another man. Moses, when he was born, was exceeding fair; #Ac 7:20 Heb 11:23. David, when he was anointed, was of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look on. But our Lord, in his person, or manner of appearing in the world, had nothing of sensible glory, or that was calculated to meet the expectation of the Jews. His gospel was not preached with the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in all plainness and simplicity, and his doctrine was objectionable to them, for it exposed their depravity, and robbed them of all their self-righteousness. It was expected that he should live a pleasant life, and have a full enjoyment of all the delights of men, which would fill the expectations of men, and gather crowds of admirers around him. But on the contrary he was a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief. His life was a life of misery, poverty, and distress, so that he could say, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head;" #Lu 9:58. Seeing his poverty, sorrow, deep distress, and humiliation, the prophet says, "Surely, he hath borne our grief's, and carried our sorrows." Sin had brought the curse on us, that we should eat in sorrow all the days of our lives; #Ge 3:17; and our sins were laid on him, and his was a life of sorrow. He was unsettled, had no home, no resting-place, no downy pillows for his head; a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, through his whole

life. He was hated, persecuted, and rejected by men, and treated as one not worthy to live. He was of a tender spirit, and sympathized with the sufferings of humanity, and was among them doing good, healing their sick, giving sight to their blind, and raising their dead, and in return he received their hatred, their mockings, and persecutions, so that it was said he was never known to smile, but that his countenance always showed sorrow and grief. Who can read the life of our Lord and Savior, and witness the conduct of men toward him, and doubt the total depravity of human nature, and that the unpurged heart is wicked above all things? All these sorrows Jesus bore without uttering a word of complaint. O, what a lesson is here before us for Christians to study! To learn to be patient in tribulation, and not to murmur or complain if the world hates us, and persecute us, for righteousness sake, but like Moses, esteem the reproaches of Christ greater honors than the world can give us. And why should we complain to suffer for him who has suffered so much for us? Let the world "deride and pity;" let them hate and persecute me; I will bear it all, and not complain, but rejoice that I am counted worthy to suffer for his sake. Jesus our Savior was a man of sorrow and grief. He had to meet and resist the temptations of the devil, and to bear the persecutions of the world. He knows what sore trials and temptations mean, and he knows how to deliver them that are tempted. His sympathetic and loving heart will be touched with the feelings of our infirmities, and his almighty power will deliver us from every temptation and trial. "O, what a friend we have in Jesus!" He is a present help in time of trouble, and will never leave or forsake us. Let us not then complain if we have to follow him through scenes of sorrow, affliction, and distress, "if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together;" #Ro 8:17.

"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things he suffered;" #Heb 5:8. In the life of Christ we have an example of obedience that should be studied and imitated by us. The hatred of the world, persecution, the sword, or the stake, should never deter us, or

keep us from a faithful discharge of duty to him who hath called us to his service, and by his grace separated us from the world. As lively stones, or transparent, reflecting stones, we should give evidence by our life of obedience that Christ lives in us, and that we are led by the same Spirit that was in him. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God." What must have been the feelings of Christ when, as an obedient son, he could look up to his Father, and say, "I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." There is a sweet reward felt in the soul of the obedient child of God that is worth more than all the joys of earth. This was felt by the dying Stephen, and by Paul and Silas in the prison at Philippi, and will be felt and enjoyed by all in the way of obedience. Christ kneeled down and prayed, and taught his disciples to pray, that ye enter not into temptation; #Lu 22:40. Christ has set us the example to pray, and O, what a privilege it is! When the soul is overwhelmed with sorrow and distress, we can carry it all to God in prayer. When Christ prayed there appeared unto him an angel, strengthening him, and O, what strength and comfort has often been felt by the poor, distressed, and afflicted child of God, at the throne of grace! To that throne let us often go. Christ, both by example and precept, has taught us to forgive them that trespass against us, and to pray for our enemies, to be good, kind, and affectionate to all, and especially to the poor and needy, and to comfort those who are in trouble.

"When Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father," he taught the disciples a great lesson by laying aside his garments, and taking a towel and girding himself with it, and pouring water into a basin, and washing the disciples feet, and wiping them with the towel wherewith he was girded. And after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments and was set down again, he taught them, saying, "Ye call

me Master, and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you;" #Joh 13. In this we are taught a lesson of humility, for if our Lord and Master has humbled himself to wash his disciples feet, so ought we, not only in heart and feelings, but practically, observe the example our Lord and Master has set.

On the night in which our Lord was betrayed and delivered into the hands of his enemies, he ate the supper of the passover with his disciples, and when the supper was ended, "He took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, this cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you;" #Lu 22:19,20. This, like baptism, is a commemorative ordinance. In this we commemorate the broken body and shed blood, and in baptism his burial and resurrection, which is to be done but once and that in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. But the supper is to be repeated often, for as often as we do it we show forth his death until he come again. The apostle has taught us that this should be done under a strict examination of ourselves, for it is not designed to satisfy our natural appetites, or to feed our bodies, but in remembrance of Christ our Pascal Lamb, who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and whose blood cleanseth us from all sin. O, how often, when we have set at the table of the Lord, and taken these emblems in memory of him, have our spiritual strength and comfort been renewed! Here we commemorate the broken body and shed blood of the Testator, and that the will or testament is now in force, and the estate is made sure to all the heirs. After they had taken the bread and wine, they sang a hymn and went out into the Mount of Olives, and he taught them concerning his death and resurrection. And then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, "And saith unto his disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and

pray yonder. And he took with him Peter, and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful, and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. Tarry ye here and watch with me. And he went a little further, and fell on his face and prayed, saying, O, my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." Here was sorrow such as the world never witnessed before, for while at prayer, he sweated as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground. In his soul he was suffering the pains of death, and there is no suffering to be compared with soul suffering. It was in Gethsemane that Jesus said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." The prophet was evidently looking to the sorrows in Gethsemane, when he said, "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed," etc. It was here he prayed unto his Father, "O, my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." #Mt 26:39 It was in suffering he learned obedience, and here, in the exceeding suffering of his soul, he said, "Not my will but thine be done." "The bitter cup shall be taken-I have come to do thy will." The spirit of obedience was in the prayer, and an angel from heaven appeared unto him, strengthening him. In obedience he submitted to the frowns of Heaven, and to be bruised of the Lord, and as Shepherd of the flock the sword of the Lord was awakened against him; #Zech 13:7. His persecutors, who witnessed his sorrows, supposed that he was suffering for some great sin of his own, but it was for our sins the Lord bruised him, for, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." He was the Shepherd and owner of the flock, and he must bear the penalty due to their sins. They were laid upon him, and by him must be put away; and in obedience to that will, "He was made of a woman, made under the law to redeem them, that were under the law." To do this the law must be honored, its penalties borne, and full

satisfaction made. Could we this day stand by him when he prayed, and see the sweat fall as drops of blood to the ground, and hear him cry, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," we might learn the heinous nature of sin, and the awful penalty under which we, as sinners, lay.

The sufferings of Gethsemane now end, and the scene changes, and he says unto his disciples, "Rise, and let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me." And Judas approached him and kissed him, and the band that were with him laid hands on Jesus, and took him, and they led him away to Caiphias the high priest, where the scribes and elders were assembled. "Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death." They sought for false witnesses against him, but found none. "At last came two false witnesses and said, this fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days. And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? What is it which these witness against thee? And Jesus held his peace." Here the words of Isaiah were literally fulfilled; "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her Shearer's is he dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." "When the morning was come, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death. And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor:" "And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest. And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing." He silently and quietly bore their insults and cruelties without a word. "When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us,

and our children. Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified." This scourging was the cruel scourging of the Roman law inflicted upon a criminal justly condemned to die, and it is thought by some that Pilate made it very severe, hoping thereby to touch their sympathies, and obtain the release of Jesus, but they cried the more vehemently, "Crucify him, crucify him." And the soldiers took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered the whole band of soldiers, and they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe, and platted a crown of thorns and put on his head, and a reed in his right hand, and in derision bowed before him, mocking him, and said unto him, "Hail, King of the Jews." And they spit upon him, and took the reed and smote him on the head. And when they came near to a place called Golgotha they gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall, and over his head was written, "THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS." And with him were two thieves crucified, one on the right hand and one on the left, and Jesus between them, to mark him out as the vilest and most worthy of death. From the sixth hour to the ninth darkness was upon the earth; and about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? That is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And Jesus cried again, and ` said, "I thirst," and there being a vessel full of vinegar they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon a hyssop, and put it to his mouth. When Jesus, therefore, had received the vinegar, he said, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost. The bitter cup has been taken, the pains of death in its severest form have been suffered; the penalty of the law has been met and satisfied. The redemption price is paid, and the sins of his people are put away. The offerings and sacrifices of the Old Testament are ended; the veil of the temple is rent. No longer need they bring their heifer, or lamb, as an offering for sin. No longer need their priests enter the holy of holies and sprinkle the blood of their victim before the worldly sanctuary or mercy seat. It was finished when Jesus died upon the cross; the

atonement was made. All the types and shadows ended in the substance. The law is satisfied, its curse is borne, its power to condemn the redeemed is gone. The door of mercy now stands ajar, and the meek soul who lies prostrate in the dust, filled with grief and despair, may now look up and hear the blessed words: "I will be merciful to your unrighteousness, and your sins and iniquities I will remember no more." The blood of the new covenant is now shed, the covenant confirmed, and the inheritance made sure to all the heirs, so that not one shall be lost or fail to obtain his eternal inheritance. He bore the sins of many, of all that the Father had given him, who, if they had borne them themselves, would have been sunk to the lowest hell. O, how this should abide in our minds, and how often we should meditate upon it! For whenever we think of the sufferings of Christ, we must see him bearing our sins. This view should melt our hearts, and fill us with love, unutterable love to him that loved us, and gave himself for us. He was numbered among transgressors in all of his life, for he was called and counted a Sabbath-breaker, a drunkard, and a friend of publicans and sinners; and in his death he was numbered with thieves, and died on the cross between them. And in the extremity of his sufferings he made intercession for transgressors. He prayed, "Father, forgive them" showing thereby, not only that he forgave poor, perishing, transgressing sinners, but that he was now doing that upon which their forgiveness was founded. That prayer was the language of his blood, crying, not for vengeance, but for mercy: even for poor, rebellious sinners. Can we today by faith,

**Look back and see
The sorrows he did bear,
while hanging on the shameful tree,
and hope our guilt was there?**

Let this question rise in every heart to day: Am I one embraced in that prayer? If so it will be answered, for the Father always hears

him, for he prays not for the world, but for them that the Father hath given him; and all that the Father hath given him he will raise up at the last day. He shall have the glory of an everlasting Father, for under that title he came into the world, and he will not fail to answer to it when he goes out of the world; and in the great day he will say, "Here am I, and the children which God hath given me."-Not one of them lost. The Redeemer shall have a seed to serve him, and bear up his name; #Ps 22:30. He died to purchase and purify them unto himself; #Tit 2:14. Through him eternal life is given unto them, and they are born of God. His Spirit by its quickening, life-giving power is the Author of their regeneration, and impresses his image upon them, and by it they are sealed heirs of promise. He died, but he rose again from the dead. He did not leave his children fatherless orphans, but took effectual care to secure to them the blessing and the inheritance of sons. Christ is their everlasting Father. His love is unchanging and eternal, and he loves them to the end, and will not leave them to the care of another, but will be their Father at all times, and they shall be kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation. His church is his bride, his beloved. He gave himself for her, that he might redeem her from all iniquity, and make her a glorious church, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. The gates of hell shall never prevail against this church. As long as the world stands it shall remain in its spotless purity. It shall not be married to the world or any of its institutions, and shall have no husband, head, or lawgiver but Christ, who is of God, made unto her wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Christ is her Creator, her Maker, her Father, her Husband, and her Redeemer. She is the price of his own blood, and he will never forsake her. Christ is the justifying righteousness of his seed. "He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification," and, "By him they are freely justified from all things." "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power."

O how unsearchable are the riches of our Jesus! The treasures of his grace are inexhaustible. He clothes the naked with robes of righteousness and garments of salvation. He feeds the hungry with the bread of life, and leads the thirsty to fountains of living water. He opens the prison door to the prisoner, and sets the captive free. He binds up the wounded and broken heart, and comforts all them that mourn. He calls the weary, heavy-laden souls to him, and gives them rest. O, sweet rest from all their sins and guilt! None that come unto him are sent away empty. He leads his flock as a shepherd, and carries the little ones in his bosom. He makes them to lie down in green pastures, and when they pass through the valley of the shadow of death, when all is darkness and gloom, and they can see no way of escape, he is with them. He safely leads them through, and spreads a table for them in the presence of their enemies. He makes their cup to run over with joy. When they are called to pass through the fire he is with them, and the fire shall not burn them, neither shall the flames kindle upon them. If they pass through deep waters, and are tossed upon angry waves, he is with them. The waters shall not drown them neither shall the billows overflow them. In every trial and temptation he will make a way of escape. He is a present help in time of trouble, and will never leave nor forsake his children.

Dear child of God, what a friend you have in Jesus! Do you wonder that Paul determined not to know any tiling but Jesus Christ, and him crucified? Does not the name of JESUS fill your heart with love, inspire your drooping soul with confidence, and drive darkness and doubt from your mind?

**Dear name, the rock on which I build,
My shield and hiding place,
My never-failing treasury, filled
With stores of boundless grace.**

O, do you not this moment feel that if you had ten thousand hearts they should all be his?

**Do not I love thee, O my Lord?
Behold my heart and see;
And turn each cursed idol out,
That dares to rival thee.**

Dying sinner, is there nothing in Jesus that charms thy heart? Is he a root out of dry ground to thee? Can you see nothing in him to love or desire? Is your heart too hard to be moved when you hear of the cross, and what he suffered on it for poor, condemned, and helpless sinners? I know your sad condition. I have been where you are today, and I know nothing but power Divine can melt and soften the hard and stony heart; but from my heart to hearts I can humbly cry, God be merciful to sinners! O, May the Spirit move and melt the heart of stone! This is all I can do.