

GOD'S WAY

OF

HOLINESS

A CLEAN HEART—WHAT IS IT?

BY

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God's Unchanging Grace

THE first essential to Holiness, which means sound spiritual health, is to have the heart firmly established in the unchanging grace of God. Where uncertainty and fear prevail, true Holiness is impossible. We "have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Peter 2. 3); but will He continue to be gracious toward us? We believe He regards us to-day as His children; but will He always so regard us? Right affections, with the behaviour that results, cannot be until all such questions are absolutely settled in the soul.

Paul's first letter to the Corinthians will help us here. They were not believers of good behaviour. Indeed, they caused him bitter tears. Every kind of inconsistency seemed rampant amongst them. This was not due to ignorance. The Apostle's repeated "Know ye not?" puts this beyond dispute. They had been richly taught during his eighteen months' sojourn amongst them, but they were not living up to their knowledge. Yet he addresses them with the utmost assurance! Despite their bad behaviour, the grace of God had not changed towards them. What they were in God's sight when Paul was with them, they were still. In order to make them ashamed of

themselves, and bring them to self-judgment, he emphasizes as strongly as possible what God in His grace had made them, and which was as true as ever. His method of approach was entirely successful, for he was able to commend them later for the zeal and indignation with which they had purged away their deplorable evils (2 Cor. 7. 11).

Note how he describes them. Individually they were washed, sanctified, and justified (1 Cor. 6. 11); saints, too, by divine call (ch. 1. 2), with their very bodies indwelt by the Holy Spirit (ch. 6. 19). Collectively, they were God's assembly (ch. 1. 2), Christ's body (ch. 12. 27), and the temple of God (ch. 3. 16). Wonderful, is it not? And all that was true of Christians then is equally true of Christians now. True of you, dear fellow-believer, and true of me!

All this wealth of grace and blessing is worthy of a deep response from us. "*Washed*" ones should "cleanse themselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7. 1). God's "washed" ones may perchance become "spotted," through lack of vigilance in their daily walk (James 1. 27), but they will never "wallow in the mire" (2 Peter 2. 22). "*Sanctified*" ones, separated to God once and for ever, should do their utmost to stand apart from all that He loveth not. "*Justified*" men and women, clear thus before God in the risen Christ, should make it their aim to be justified by good works before the eyes of men (James 2). The mighty fact that our bodies are the temple

of the Holy Spirit will surely constrain us to yield our "members servants to righteousness unto holiness" (Rom. 6. 19). Yea, we long that "the life of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor. 4. 11).

But nothing of all this can possibly be where uncertainty prevails. No man is responsible to cultivate princely manners, but one who is of princely birth. We are of more than princely birth. We have been born of God (1 John 3. 9), we are His children, His sons, His heirs. Of all this the Holy Spirit assures us (Rom. 8. 15-21). This is no small part of His gracious work, as sent from Heaven, after the Son entered in. Dwell upon all this, dear fellow-believer; let its sweetness penetrate into the deepest recesses of your soul, and you will become aflame with holy desire to be absolutely and only for God. You will long to know His will down to the uttermost detail, and that in order that you may do it. "If I call in question my *acceptance*, I am simply dishonouring Him; but the more I am concerned about my *acceptability*, the more I honour Him."

"Of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" (1 Cor. 1. 30-31).

II

Victory or Deliverance ; which ?

MANY sincere Christians will agree that God's grace is unchanging; "but," say they, "what about *ourselves*? We are conscious that there is that within us that is fiercely opposed to the will of God, and although we earnestly seek victory over it, we find ourselves defeated again and again." Perhaps these excellent souls are working on an altogether wrong principle. We may learn a lesson from Israel as to this. When the people stood trembling upon the shores of the Red Sea, beholding Pharaoh's mighty hosts coming after them, determined to reduce them again to slavery, it was scarcely victory that they needed, but deliverance. We know how deliverance came. Jehovah led His redeemed safely through the sea, and overwhelmed in the waters all their foes (Ex. 14). The Red Sea speaks to us of the work of the Lord Jesus as surely as the slain lamb. The latter sheltered them from the judgment of God, and the former delivered them from Egypt and its cruel bondage once and for ever.

Romans 7 will help us in the application of this to the Christian to-day. We entreat our readers to

examine carefully the whole chapter before proceeding with this pamphlet. Verses 1-6 describe the proper and normal experience of the believer in Jesus. He is free from all bondage, attached to the risen Christ, fruitful to God, and serving Him in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. This last statement means that his service is a service of love. The chapter then gives us the painful lessons which must needs be learned ere this happy experience is reached. Self must be known, bottomed, and judged. In Romans 7 the Apostle presents vividly the hopeless struggles of one whose heart is right towards God, truly born of His Spirit, and "delighting in the law of God after the inward man," and who is seeking to subdue his inbred evil. Spite of the fact that he applies to it the severest rules known to him, his life is one of constant defeat. But note the abundant use of the personal pronouns "I," "me," and "my." It is never satisfactory to hear persons saying much about themselves. The Christian walking in the Spirit has Christ for his constant theme. But the sufferer of Romans 7 is shocked and horrified at the evil of the flesh within himself. In verse 18 he says, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me: but how to perform that which is good I find not."

Now listen to the counsel of one who writes a "treatise concerning the doctrine, profession, and practice of Christian Holiness": "the struggle may be severe, but victory will be yours, if you only

persevere. When you have once become *fully decided* that you will never cease *consecrating, praying, and believing* until you have obtained the blessing, you will have surmounted your greatest difficulty, and it will not be long before the streams of pure love will flow through the depths of your soul." Now this is precisely what Romans 7 was written to deliver us from. The man described in that chapter is surely persevering enough, but the only result is an ever deepening sense of evil and helplessness, which well-nigh drives him to despair.

Let our readers find comfort in the fact that God knows the evil of flesh better than we know it. Its appalling corruption has been before Him ever since the Fall. But He took account of it all at the Cross of Calvary, and judged it completely in the death of His Son. Flesh, and the sin that is inherent in it, was there and then condemned and crucified (Rom. 8. 3.)

The agonized soul of Romans 7 at last cries out, "O wretched man that I am!" Not a satisfactory Christian state, assuredly. It contrasts completely with the holy atmosphere of joy which pervades Paul's letter to the Philippians. But, having thus reached the lowest depths, light breaks in upon the sufferer, and he appeals thus, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" He is looking out of himself at last. It is no longer "I," "me," and "my," but "who?" His helplessness has taught him that if deliverance is ever to be his portion, it must come

from another. Accordingly, we read next, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." As with Israel at the Red Sea, so with the struggling believer, deliverance comes from God. How? "Through Jesus Christ our Lord." His great work, in all its parts, meets our every need.

To every distressed one who may read these pages, seek to learn this simple but solemn truth. In the death of Christ God dealt with the sinner as well as with his sins. All that we were, as well as all that we have done, has been divinely measured and judged. Each one is now entitled to say, "*I am crucified with Christ*" (Gal. 2. 20). Not merely "dead," but "crucified." By a judicial act, I who committed the many sins that once stood to my debit in the book of God, have gone from His sight in the death of Christ. I live before Him now in the life of another. The link with Adam has been broken by death. I am no longer "in Adam," but "in Christ." God has completely changed my position and status before Himself. He is now altogether occupied and delighted with Christ, He would have me altogether occupied and delighted with Him also. Thus is the mind completely diverted from self and its corruption. Everything admittedly depends upon what a man's mind dwells upon as to what sort of man he is. "Not I, but Christ," says the delivered soul. Liberty, joy, and holiness follow—all enjoyed by the power of the Holy Spirit of God.

N. B.—Some one may inquire of Paul is describing

his own experience in Romans 7. There can be no doubt that he had personally passed through all the bitterness of which he speaks, but he had left it behind him, and was enjoying the liberty and power so blessedly unfolded in Chap. 8. Like Israel in Exodus 15, the song of deliverance had superseded the wail of distress in his heart.

III

“A Clean Heart”

WE are urged by some to seek above all things “a clean heart.” Not to the unregenerate is this said, but to Christians—to men and women already born of God. By “a clean heart” is meant a heart “that has been delivered from all known sin,” “cleansed from all sinful purposes and desires,” a heart that “definitely parts from sin, and receives power to live without conscious or wilful sin,” etc. “Known sin” and “conscious sin” are doubtful expressions, to say the least. A Christian has only to neglect his Bible, and he may be guilty of many things contrary to the will of God, and be quite unaware of his faults. This would give a dangerous advantage to ignorance, and it somewhat reminds us of the world’s maxim, “Where ignorance is bliss, ’tis folly to be wise.” Several years ago the plea of ignorance was actually advanced by a defendant in a British Law Court, but the Judge ruled thus:

“Ignorance of law excuses no man. Every man must be taken to know the law: to hold the contrary would be to confer a premium on ignorance, which would afford a defence to every possible transgression of the law.” Surely the Judge was right! Matthew 25 is a chapter in three parts, and in each part we have persons condemned, not because of what they actually did, but because of what they neglected to do. The foolish virgins neglected to carry oil in their vessels with their lamps; the servant with the one talent failed to make use of it; and the goats did not show kindness to the King’s brethren. The goats indeed pleaded ignorance of the situation, but their plea was not admitted. “Sins of ignorance” were very real sins under Jehovah’s law for Israel (Lev. 5). Beware, therefore, of such terms as “known sin,” and “conscious sin.”

“But,” it will be said, “did not David say, ‘Create in me a clean heart, O God’?” (Psa. 51. 10). True, but he says also in the same Psalm, “Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.” Would any Christian, instructed in the New Testament, and conscious that he stands in eternal favour in the risen Christ, with the Holy Spirit dwelling within him on the ground of accomplished redemption, pray thus? David lived 1000 years before the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and, therefore, knew nothing of the wonderful position of nearness and liberty which is now the birthright portion of all who believe. This fact must indeed

always be remembered when we read the Book of Psalms, or grave errors will ensue.

The doctrine of the new birth had not been declared in David's day. No such words as "Ye must be born again" will be found anywhere in the Old Testament, albeit new birth has been a moral necessity for men ever since the Fall. During the Old Testament ages flesh was under probation. The coming into the world of the Son of God, and His rejection by man, put the evil of flesh beyond all controversy (although known to God from the beginning); and then the time came to sound forth the solemn sentence, "Except a man be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3. 3).

Now listen to Peter as he addresses his Jewish brethren in Acts 15. 7-9: "Ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the Gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, even as He did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith"—mark the words "purifying *their hearts*" (comp. also 1 Peter 1. 22). This is not said of certain persevering and praying ones amongst the believing Gentiles, but of all, without distinction. Every Christian has thus a purified (or clean) heart. But what is meant by this? Simply that in the process of new birth, the affections of the man have been diverted from earthly things to heavenly, from self to Christ. He now abhors what

once he loved, and he loves what once he abhorred. This happy condition needs to be cultivated, most assuredly, but no person is a Christian at all of whom it is in no wise true.

David's prayer for "a clean heart" was doubtless heard, but the result did not mean that he became "cleansed from all sinful purposes and desires," for pride led him at a later date to number Israel in defiance of God, with terrible consequences for the nation (1 Chron. 21).

The Lord said to His eleven disciples in John 13. 10, "Ye are clean every whit," and yet taught them the necessity for a frequent washing of the feet. He said also in John 15. 3, "Now (or, already) ye are clean," although He knew that all would forsake Him that night, and that one would deny with oaths and curses that he had ever known Him. Clearly, therefore, "a clean heart" does not rid the believer once for all from "all sinful purposes and desires."

Referring again to David's requests in Psa. 51, let us remember that the moment a man believes in Jesus, and receives from God the forgiveness of sins, the Holy Spirit, as God's seal, takes up His abode within his mortal body. It is thus too late in the ways of God with His saints to utter either of David's prayers, "Create in me a clean heart," or, "Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me."

But flesh remains in the believer until the end. At the Lord's return the great transformation will take place, not before. Flesh can neither be improved nor

destroyed. No cultivation, either human or divine, will make it otherwise than grossly evil. It was religious and educated flesh that accorded the worst treatment to the Son of God when He came. But flesh, having been divinely exposed and judged in the Cross, the Christian is entitled to regard it as no longer an integral part of himself, but rather as a foreign element within. In faith he endorses its condemnation thus: "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts" (Gal. 5. 24). Conscious of a new power within, he walks in the Spirit, and so no longer fulfils the lusts of the flesh (Gal. 5. 16).

IV

"Perfect Love"

A WRITER on Holiness tells us, "Nothing but love can enter Heaven. Pure love is the key that will unlock the pearly gates, and give us a right to the tree of life that is in the midst of the Paradise of God." This has a dangerous sound, and savours of salvation by works. Yet we read in Titus 3. 5, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us"; also in Romans 4. 5, "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." With reference to the tree of life, Rev. 22. 14 (R. V.) says: "Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have right to the tree of life,

and may enter in by the gates into the city." This surely teaches us that the one and only title to the tree of life is the blood of Christ. Other paragraphs in the book from which we have quoted suggest that the writer would hardly dispute this. Yet there stands upon its pages the serious and positive statement that "pure love is the key"! From the context we gather that it is not the love of God to us that is meant, but our love to God. The less we say about the latter the better at all times. The Apostolic writers speak with holy enthusiasm of the love of God and of Christ to them, but they are very sparing in their mention of their love in response.

John's First Epistle was, perhaps, running in the mind of the writer whose teachings we are examining; but, if so, he has gravely misunderstood the Apostle. In chap. 2. 5 we read: "Whoso keepeth His Word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him." Keeping "His word" means much more than keeping "His commandments." It involves such a diligent searching of the whole revelation of God from beginning to end that the mind and heart become saturated with the understanding of the will of God, gathered from types, histories, prophecies, and every other character of divine teaching. No room here for a neglected Bible, which might lead to unconscious sin! Such keeping of His word dispels every cloud from the life, and the love of God is enjoyed without let or hindrance. But it is God's love to us that is in view, not our love to God.

Chapter 4. 17 contains a most unfortunate error in our excellent Authorized Version, which may have misled unobservant readers. The margin is more correct than the text, which should read, not "Herein is *our* love made perfect," but "Herein is *love with us* made perfect." Here again it is the love of God, known and enjoyed. In this remarkable passage, love is, as it were, personified, and is presented to us as a friend standing by in view of the day of judgment, so that fear becomes impossible. Blessed thought! He who will be the Judge of men at the last *loves me*, and I, through grace, *love Him*; how can I dread One between Whom and myself such a bond of love exists? I remember also His own precious words, uttered when on earth: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life" (John 5. 24).

Do we sometimes feel that coldness and indifference have crept over our souls? Let us draw near to the fire of infinite and changeless love, manifested towards us so wonderfully at Calvary's Cross, and abiding evermore. Thus will our affections be stirred afresh, and our hearts will respond adoringly to Him who has done so much for us. But the occupation of our minds, and the theme of our tongues, will not be our love to God and to Christ, but the love of these divine Persons to us.

Divine Discipline

THE changeless grace of God towards us is a delightful reality; His government and discipline of the objects of His favour and love is a reality also. In every family children must be taught the responsibilities which flow from the relationships and position in which they find themselves, and correction is necessary when their behaviour is not becoming. It is not otherwise in the family of God. Thus we read, "If ye call on Him as Father, who without respect of persons, judgeth according to each man's work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear" (1 Peter 1. 17, R.V.). Our few years of life in this world as believers in the Lord Jesus constitute a school-time. The Father whose children we are through grace, instructs us by His Word, and corrects us by His rod. Nothing of this would be needed if by some act of faith on our part the soul has been cleansed from all sinful purposes and desires.

When the rod becomes necessary, God sometimes lets the wicked loose upon His own. The Assyrian was His rod for unfaithful Israel in the long past (Isa. 10.5). Some of the Christians in Paul's day were smarting under the inflictions of the ungodly, but in Hebrews 12 the Apostle encourages them to regard their sufferings from another point of view—as part of

the Father's discipline of their souls. He quotes from Proverbs 3. The wholesome instruction of the Book of Proverbs is for "sons," and all Christians are "sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3. 26).

It has been truly said:

"A Father's hand will never cause
His child a needless tear."

Everything is under Divine control. Job's case illustrates this most blessedly. No more pain or loss is ever permitted to reach the child of God than God can use for our instruction and blessing. We dare not "despise the chastening of the Lord," for, indeed, it is no light matter; we are warned not to "faint" when "rebuked of Him," for that would suggest a lack of confidence in His wisdom and love; our proper course is to be "exercised thereby." The circumstances which have caused us distress and loss (whatever they may be) will then yield "the peaceable fruit of righteousness." It is blessed to be able to say with the Psalmist: "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept Thy word" (Psa. 119. 67).

Divine discipline has a moral object in view. It is for our profit that we might be "partakers of His holiness" (Heb. 12. 10). It has been said that every bottle that comes out of God's dispensary has this label on it, "To do thee good at thy latter end." "Suffering seasons are sifting seasons in which the Christian loses his chaff, and the hypocrite his corn." In the words of a familiar hymn, "His only design, is the dross to consume, and the gold to refine." The

“meekness and gentleness of Christ,” and every other known Divine grace, are wrought within us in the school of suffering by the wise hand of our God. “You will learn more of Jesus in one sanctified trial than in wading through a library of volumes.”

It has been happily remarked that the discipline of God has a fourfold character. It is preventive (2 Cor. 12. 7); corrective (1 Cor. 11. 30); productive (John 15. 2); and formative (Heb. 12. 10).

“Shall we not be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live?” (Heb. 12. 9).

VI

“We have an Advocate with the Father”

JOHN'S first Epistle—the Epistle of life and communion—speaks of the terrible possibility of the Christian committing sin. In chap. 2. 1 we read, “My dear children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin . . .” Note the words “*any* man.” There are three grades in the spiritual family, babes, young men, and fathers but none of all these are free from danger. With any of us, it may even be sin of so serious a character that it may be Divinely judged as “sin unto death” (1 John 5. 16). This means, as in the case of some of the erring Corinthians (1 Cor. 11 .30), removal from

the world, as unworthy to bear the Lord's name amongst men any longer. Solemn thought!

The sins of the children of God are immeasurably more grave than of those outside. They are offences against light and love, against precious relationships professedly known and enjoyed. "The very fact that we are cleansed persons before God is a loud call to us not to endure a blot upon ourselves before men." But the unfaithful one need not despair. "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins." The ascended Lord graciously fills two important offices on behalf of His own. As High Priest He sympathises with us, and makes intercession for us, with reference to our infirmities (Heb. 4. 15; 7. 25); as Advocate He concerns Himself with our sins. He does not wait for repentance on our part before He acts. In the greatness of His love He acts promptly, as soon as His watchful eye perceives the need. He speaks to the Father on the basis of His great propitiatory sacrifice, and His Advocacy must needs prevail. Then the Holy Spirit on earth, who is also spoken of as Advocate in John 14. 16, 26; 15. 26, R.V., deals with our consciences and hearts, showing us wherein we have sinned, and filling us with grief and shame, so that, like Peter, after his denial of his Lord, we feel disposed to weep bitterly. This leads to confession, and parental forgiveness. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"

(1 John 1. 9). But even in our saddest moments of failure, we think not of God as Judge, but as Father. He has taken us into His very heart, and neither the malice of the enemy, nor unfaithfulness on our part, will ever dispose Him to give us up.

John's first Epistle speaks of two kinds of Divine forgiveness. In chap. 2. 12: "I write unto you, dear children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake." We have here that which lies at the very foundation of our standing before God, and of all our relationships with Him, and it may be described as "*eternal forgiveness.*" In chap. 1. 9 (already quoted) we have that which refers to our state day by day, and we may call it "*parental forgiveness.*"

In view of the wonderful favour in which we stand, let us seek grace to "mortify our members which are upon the earth" (Col. 3. 5), and walk humbly in the footsteps of the One who has trodden the path before us. He glorified the Father upon earth; may we, by the power of the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, seek to glorify the Father also. "As children of obedience (R. V.), not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance, but as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation (or behaviour), because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy" (1 Pet. 1. 14-16).

VII

At Last !

CHRISTIANS have been "called according to *purpose*." The purpose was settled in the mind and heart of God before the foundation of the world, and it is now distinctly revealed in Holy Scripture. "Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8. 29). It is the Divine will to fill the heavens with happy myriads who will be "many sons" to the Father, and "many brethren" to Christ. In all these will be displayed eternally all the moral perfections and Divine excellencies which shone out in the Man Christ Jesus, and which gave the Father's heart such infinite pleasure when He walked here below.

"Conformed to the image of His Son." What a thought! When Saul of Tarsus came to understand that for which he had been apprehended (laid hold of) by Christ Jesus, his whole soul was thrilled by the anticipation from that moment onward. The light that shone into his soul from the glorified Christ made even the brightness of the midday sun seem dim. The wonderful purpose of the Father's love made a racer of him forthwith. "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things

which are before," says he in Phil. 3, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the calling of God on high in Christ Jesus." Another has said, "I see in Christ crucified the end of all that I am as a man in the flesh, and I see in Christ glorified the model of all that I am going to be."

The realization of this detaches the heart from everything here. One's affections become transferred even now from earth to heaven, and the return of the Lord is ardently desired that He may finish in and for us His work of grace. In His prayer before His departure, He not only asked the Father to sanctify through the truth the men He had given Him, but He spoke of Himself as soon to be in glory their model and object. "For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth" (John 17. 19). We have many *patterns* (quite a number in Heb. 12), but only one *object*. "If we are to see moral qualities expressed in their perfection, there is but One in Whom they are fully seen, and that One is Christ."

It was in view of the new positions and relationships into which His own would soon be introduced as the fruit of His death and resurrection, that the Lord Jesus washed their feet on that memorable night in the guest-chamber (John 13). Peter at first objected to his Lord stooping so low, but when the Lord said, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me," the impulsive Apostle cried out, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." This brought out a statement of the utmost importance for the

purpose of this pamphlet. "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit." There was thus a washing which the eleven had experienced which could never be repeated, and there was also a partial washing that must be repeated again and again. There is for the Christian a cleansing by blood, and there is also a cleansing by water (1 John 5. 6). The blood has to do with *what we have done* (only by it could sins be purged away); the water has to do with *what we are*.

There is no mention whatever of blood in John 13. The total cleansing referred to by the Lord has reference to the New Birth, viewed not as a quickening, but as a moral purification. With this the rite of Baptism has nothing to do; it is wrought by the cleansing power of the Word of God, applied by the Holy Spirit. This is once for all. Every Christian is "clean every whit" in virtue of it. But we get defiled as we pass through the world. So many things that constitute our daily life must needs be handled; but they tend to draw our hearts away from communion with Christ where He is, and if it were not for His gracious service of foot-washing, they might easily involve us in sin. His foot-washing is His loving application of His Word to heart and conscience, whereby our affections become centred where He is, and our lives are kept pure.

The end draws ever nearer. What a moment it will be when He presents us "faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24).