

Out of Darkness Into Light

by Asa Mahan

Asa Mahan's sermon emphasizes the transformative journey of believers from darkness into the light of God's grace through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Scripture: Acts 8:30, Hebrews 7:25, 1 Peter 2:2

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Sanctification"

Description

Asa Mahan preaches about the importance of feeding and nurturing young converts in the faith, emphasizing the need for proper spiritual care and guidance for new believers. He shares personal experiences of his own spiritual journey, highlighting the profound impact of understanding the grace of God and the transformative power of Christ in sanctification. Mahan stresses the significance of teaching young converts the foundational truths of the Christian faith, guiding them towards a deeper relationship with God and a life of holiness.

Transcript

PREFACE.

BELIEVERS in Jesus, as we read in the Scriptures, are "all children of the light, and Children of the day," and are privileged to "walk in the light, as God is the light," God Himself being "their everlasting light, and their God their glory." Thus "walking in the light," they "have fellowship one with another;" and more than this, "with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." Abiding in this light and in this fellowship, their "joy is full," "out of weakness they are made strong," in all Conditions of existence they find perfect content, and are "more than conquerors through Him that hath loved us," and "having all sufficiency for all things, are abundantly furnished for every good work." If all this is not true of any believer, it is because he is living below his revealed privileges, and is thus living because he does not "know the things which are freely given us of God." It contradicts every true idea of Christian character, to suppose that a true believer in Christ will "walk in darkness," knowing that he may "walk in the light;" will remain weak, knowing that he may be girded with "everlasting strength;" and will continue "carnal, sold under sin," knowing that he may enjoy "the glorious liberty of the sons of God." The specific and exclusive object of the following treatise is to make known to all who would know and understand their privileges as "the sons of God" and "believers in Jesus," the forms of divine knowledge above referred to. To the prayerful examination of all who are "walking in the light," or are inquiring after the light, the work is commended, with the fervent desire and prayer of the author, that "their joy may be full."

OUT OF DARKNESS INTO LIGHT.

INTRODUCTION.

I AM this day seventy-five years of age. Fifty-eight of these years have been professedly spent in the service of Christ. During this period, I have had varied forms of inward experience, and have observed important facts pertaining to the religious life -- experiences and facts, a presentation of some of which may be a matter of interest and profit to all believers, to those especially who are now inquiring after, or are walking in, "the glorious liberty of the sons of God."

Especially will this be the case when such experiences and facts shall be placed in the clear light of those teachings of inspiration which bear upon such subjects. The period has arrived in the history of the Church, when, in a sense not common in preceding ages, God, by His Spirit, is "revealing His Son in believers," and causing Him to "be formed within them," and to be "in them the hope of glory." Christ, through the Spirit, is "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, and expounding unto us in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" and is "opening our understanding, that we may understand the Scriptures."

This He is doing not merely in reference "to what is written in Moses, and the Prophets, and the Psalms, Concerning Himself" but more especially amid the higher revelations of the New Testament concerning "the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in us, the hope of glory." Everywhere the question is being raised, namely, what are our revealed privileges and immunities as believers in Jesus, and as inheritors, through Him, of "the promise of the Spirit?"

When these inquiries shall have been fully answered, "the light of the Church will have come, and the glory of the Lord will have risen upon her," and "the Gentiles will come to her light, and kings to the brightness of her rising." Having sojourned for about eighteen years in the dim twilight of that semi-faith which pertains to Christ almost exclusively in the sphere of our justification; and having, during all these years, "inquired and searched diligently," but vainly, for the revealed and promised "liberty of the SONS of God;" and having, during about forty years, dwelt and walked in the cloudless sunlight of "assurance of faith" in the same "Jesus, who is of God made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption," and who "baptizes with the Holy Ghost," I have thought that a short account of some of the struggles and defeats experienced in the former state, and of "the spoils won in battle" in the latter, might be profitably "dedicated to maintain the house of God."

The fixed habit of my life having been naturally a self-reflective one, has, in a special manner, I judge, qualified me in a good measure for the work before me. As a teacher of mental science, I have constantly habituated myself to a careful analysis of my own mental states, for the purpose of a clear understanding of the faculties, susceptibilities, and laws of my own intellectual, sensitive, moral, and spiritual nature, and that for the purpose of knowing universal mind as it is.

I have also been in the equally fixed habit of contemplating my own religious states, emotions, sentiments, purposes, and acts, all my inward and outward experiences, in the clear light of the corresponding truths of the Word of God, and this for the purpose of knowing myself as God knows me. I hear much said in condemnation of the habit of scrutinizing our feelings and religious states -- utterances which I by no means approve. If we look within, and nowhere else, we shall, of course, gain very little self or divine knowledge.

When we look without to Christ, however, the distinctness of our vision of His grace and glory is by no means obscured, but rather brightened, by a distinct consciousness of the results of the vision in our internal experiences. We trust in Christ for the fulfillment of some specific promise in our inner life. The conscious experience of the fulfillment of that promise in that inner life becomes to us a new revelation of His trustworthiness, tends to confirm our faith and love, and qualifies us to testify of His faithfulness before the Church and the world.

In the absence of this consciousness the chief benefits of our faith would be lost to us. When, on the other hand, we suppose ourselves to be in the exercise of faith, and the promised result does not arise, we should conclude that a re-adjustment of our relations to Christ should occur. "We believe, and therefore speak." We must be conscious of the believing, on the one hand, and of the speaking, on the other; that is, of the fact of faith and its corresponding results, or we can give no such testimony as this.

The same holds true in all departments of the Christian life. Self-reflective circumspection is one of the immutable conditions of a genuine Christian life and experience. We must "ponder the paths of our feet," or "our ways will not be established," and "commit our ways unto the Lord," or "He will not direct our steps." How absolute is the command of the Sacred Word that we shall "examine ourselves whether we be in the faith," "prove our own selves," "prove every man his own work," and "be ready always," "with meekness and fear," "to give an answer to every man that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us."

In knowing Christ as He is, and ourselves as in Him, and in knowing Him and ourselves as He is and we are, we are in the only proper conditions for being and becoming all that is required of us. The plan of Christ is that we shall not only "know that we have eternal life," and that "that life is in the Son," but that we shall be as distinctly conscious of the nature and source of that life. In short, that we shall "know whom we have believed," what we have believed, and what is the consequence of our faith. Without further preliminaries, I now proceed to the accomplishment of the work proposed. LONDON, Nov. 9, 1874.

PART I.

OUT OF THE PRIMAL LIGHT INTO DARKNESS.

CHAPTER I.

THE OFFICE AND WORK OF THE SPIRIT IN CONVICTION OF SIN.

THERE are few subjects about which Christians need to be more fully informed, and about which, as it appears to us, they are less instructed, than about the office and work of the Holy Spirit. There are two distinct revealed relations which He sustains to our race -- one to the world, "convincing men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment," and thereby leading them to Christ; and a promised indwelling personal presence in believers "after they have believed," and, as such, a presence "leading them into all truth," "pertaining to life and godliness." According to the express teachings of inspiration, we know, and can know, divine truth in none of its forms but through a divine insight imparted to us through the Spirit. "The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him;" and the revealed mission of the Spirit is to "take of the things of Christ and show them unto us," and to "show us plainly of the Father." So distinctly and fully did the apostles recognize their absolute dependence upon the Spirit for right and full apprehensions of divine truth in all its forms, that they teach us that "no man," with any proper apprehensions of the divine import of the words he employs, "can even say that Jesus is

the Christ, but by the Holy Ghost."

Individuals are in danger of so preaching Christ, that the hearer, in seeking the knowledge of Him, and a union with Him, is in peril of forgetting his dependence upon the Spirit for the knowledge and union sought after, and of so preaching the Spirit as to induce a forgetfulness of the fact, that the mission of the Spirit is, not to "speak of Himself;" but to "reveal Christ in us," and to "lead us into all truth," and that we are to seek "the baptism of the Holy Ghost," and His continued presence and illumination, as a means to an end, namely, that we may "behold with open face the glory of the Lord," "comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fullness of God," "be led into all truth," and "abide in the Son and in the Father." If we seek to know Christ, without recognizing our dependence upon the Spirit for that knowledge, or for the abiding presence of the Spirit in our hearts, without seeking such presence as a means of knowing Christ, we shall, in either case alike, fail of our object. If, on the other hand, we seek to "know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent," and seek this as a means of attaining to "the eternal life" which results from that knowledge, and seek "the Promise of the Spirit" as a means of obtaining this knowledge and "the life eternal" thence resulting, we shall not fail of the divine end which we seek. The Church of Christ is the school of God; the things to be learned there are "the things of God;" and the only Being or Teacher in that school who knows these things, and can impart to us a real knowledge of them, "is the Spirit of God." When we seek a knowledge of these things in filial dependence on our great Teacher, "the Spirit of God," we "shall know the things which are freely given us of God," and "which He hath purposed for them that love Him."

The characteristics of the knowledge which we receive of the truth, through the teachings of the Spirit, require a passing notice in this connection. Our apprehensions of divine truth assume two forms -- that of belief, characterized by greater or lesser degrees of conscious certainty; and that of absolute knowledge, which, like our demonstrative convictions, utterly exclude all doubt. The latter is the form of knowledge always obtained through the illuminations of the Spirit. Under His illuminations we not only believe in, but "know God and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent;" we "know that we have eternal life;" we "know the things which are freely given us of God;" and "behold with open face the glory of the Lord." In His convicting illuminations, the truth of God becomes "a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart;" that is, the sinner has a direct, intuitive, and absolute knowledge of his own heart, his own moral self and moral life, as God sees it. In such convictive process two distinct revelations of truth are simultaneously made to the mind -- God in His moral purity and excellence, and in His sovereign claims upon our supreme obedience and regard, on the one hand, and the heart and moral life as related to God's purity, excellency, and absolute authority, on the other. As God and the heart are thus set over against each other before the mind, it is made to know, and that absolutely, the utter godlessness, sinfulness, and infinite criminality of its unregenerate life. The sinner absolutely and intuitively recognizes himself as having been, as an offspring of God, in God's world, and as having been under infinite obligations to have sought the knowledge of Him, and to have rendered supreme obedience to His will, and yet to have been literally and utterly "Without God in the world," and to have entertained no respect for His will or character. It is under such convictions that men are brought to the exercise of "repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ."

CHAPTER II.

CHARACTER OF THE CONVICTING ILLUMINATIONS OF

THE SPIRIT, AS ILLUSTRATED IN MY OWN EXPERIENCE.

The Wanderer Lost through Misdirection. I WILL now elucidate the above statements by a reference to facts of my own experience. When, at the age of seventeen years, and while engaged in teaching school, I was led, during the progress of a revival of religion which occurred in the place where I then was, to think with deep seriousness upon "the things which concerned my peace," I was made distinctly conscious that the final question of my soul's eternity was then and there to be determined.

Hence the intensity of interest with which I contemplated the result of that divine visitation. Having from childhood been educated amid "the straightest sect" of the Calvinistic faith, regeneration, the beginning and source of the religious life, was regarded by me, and rightly so, if I had been correctly taught, as a change of the moral and spiritual nature of the soul -- a change in which the creature is wholly passive, and which is the exclusive result of a sovereign act of God; and the question whether that change was to be wrought in me, depended not at all upon what I should or could do, but upon a decree immutably fixed in the Divine mind from eternity.

My whole being was consequently centered upon the inquiry, not what I should, but what God would do in the matter of the change referred to? I begin to pray, and did so, not knowing whether I was acting for my good or ill, but under the distinct impression, having ever been so taught, that with God "even my prayers were an abomination." No one urged upon me "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ;" but all held before me the sovereign election of God, and His exclusive agency in regeneration.

In one of the meetings, we were absolutely assured, in so many words, that if we had not been from eternity elected to eternal life, our salvation was impossible. This, as the speaker afterwards informed me, he said especially on my account. I conversed much with Christians and ministers, and that not to learn what "I should do to be saved," having been absolutely taught that I could do nothing whatever effective in the matter, but to know from their experience whether God was, or was not, likely to produce in me the regenerating change under consideration; and whether, if I was to be saved, the period of that change was near or remote.

Thus inquiring, and thus waiting, the agony of suspense which I endured deepened at length into the ray less midnight of blank despair. During the many days and nights in which I wandered on in this "blackness of darkness," I came to understand fully the meaning of those words of inspiration, "In the evening thou shalt say, would God it were morning; and in the morning, would God it were evening." Each hour, between the setting and the rising of the sun, seemed an eternity; and I would say to myself, "I would give the universe, did I possess it, if I could see the sun once more."

As soon as I saw his face, I would exclaim, "I would give the universe if I could see him set in darkness again." The fountain of life was dried up within me, and I often said to myself, "Were all the world mine, I would freely part with it for the privilege of shedding a single tear." At length all my sensibilities seemed to fail, and I descended into a state of almost emotionless despondency. While in this state, I went home and spent an evening with my mother. I told her that I had but one desire, and that was to be a Christian.

I was absolutely assured, however, that I was not one of the elect; that God, consequently, would never regenerate me; and that she must expect to see her only son thereafter, not as he had been, but as a reckless reprobate in the world. To me no other destiny seemed possible. She insisted that the change had already occurred in my inner life. But so I viewed my own condition and prospects.

The Great Revelation, and consequent Passage from Death unto Life I had continued in this state but a short time, when a new revelation -- I know not what else to call it -- was made to my mind -- an open vision of the character, glory, and love of God on the one hand, and of my own entire moral or spiritual life on the other. In this manifestation I apprehended, with absolute distinctness, God as having ever loved me with a more than parental love, and as having ever been ready to receive me, pardon me, love me, and care for me, as a child, had I confessed my sin to Him, implored His pardoning mercy, and sought His favor.

In the light of the face of God as turned towards me, I saw with equal distinctness that my whole heart and entire moral life had been in total alienation and estrangement from Him. I had never sought to know Him, or asked for His favor and care; had never recognized His parental love and kindness; had never entertained the least respect for His will, sought to please Him in anything, or done the right or avoided the wrong, because He required it. In other words, my entire moral life had been an utterly godless one.

Every moral act of my entire existence, whether such act had been, without reference to the motive or intent which prompted it, in the form and direction of the right or the wrong, "evil, and only evil continually." Not an act of my life had been performed from that sacred respect for the will of God and the law of duty -- the respect which renders, or can render, any act morally virtuous. In other words still, I saw with perfect distinctness that the moral depravity of my entire moral life had been total and absolute.

At the same time I perceived, with equal distinctness and absoluteness, the infinite criminality and ill-desert of such a life, and its utter forfeiture of the Divine favor to eternity; that, in consequence of a life of such utter voluntary alienation and estrangement from such a Being -- a Being of such ineffable love, glory, purity, and perfection, and Him, too, my Creator, my Redeemer, my Preserver, and infinite and boundless Benefactor-- that for such alienation and estrangement from such a Being, I had utterly forfeited all claims to His mercy and favor, both now and for an eternity to come.

On this subject I had no more doubt than I had of my own existence. Under these convictions my mind turned with shame from the face of God, and, with utter reprobation upon my own moral self and life. "I abhorred myself and repented as in dust and ashes." At that time, not knowing what my God would do with me, I said distinctly and definitely, that if God should "cast me off for ever," I would stand before the universe and affirm the sentence to be just. The thought of continuing in such alienation and estrangement from such a Being became also more to be reprobated and fearful in my regard than perdition itself.

In this state of mind, when alone with God, "I bowed the knee" before Him, and confessed that I had no right to ask or expect any favor at His hands, and that my whole eternity hung upon His mere grace and mercy. One favor I would venture to ask, that I might be kept from ever returning to that state of alienation from Him in which my life had been spent, and that I might have grace to appreciate His love, excellence, and glory; to love and venerate Him, and have a sacred respect for His will.

If He would grant me this, I would accept of anything in time and eternity that He might appoint me. This was the exact substance and form of that prayer. I had no sooner pronounced these words, than I was consciously encircled in "the everlasting arms." I was so overshadowed with a sense of the manifested love of a forgiving God and Savior, that my whole mental being seemed to be dissolved, and pervaded with an ineffable quietude and assurance. I arose from my knees without a doubt that I was an adopted member of the family of God.

With "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding," pervading every department of my mental nature, I could look upward, and, without a cloud between my soul and the face of God, could and did say, "My Father and my God." Such was my entrance into the inner life. Let us now consider

Certain important Lessons taught by the Facts above Presented.

The Nature of Sin. -- If we would understand sin as God regards it, we should contemplate it just as the Spirit presents it to the mind when He induces conviction of sin. Sin, as the Spirit of God convicts us of it, is always apprehended as exclusively a personal matter, a state of the inner man, a form of voluntary moral activity, on account of which the soul has justly forfeited the eternal favor, and as justly incurred the endless displeasure of God. As revealed to the mind by the Spirit, and the conscience enlightened by the Spirit, sin and infinite ill-desert, a hopeless forfeiture of the favor of God, are inseparably united.

God is apprehended as having, on account of His relations to us as our Maker, Redeemer, Preserver, and infinite Benefactor, and, also on account of His infinite natural and moral perfections, infinite claims upon our love, veneration, and obedience. The soul is also revealed to itself as having been, in all its moral activities, in voluntary alienation and estrangement from all the claims of God and of His moral law upon it. The soul is revealed to itself as having come into this state, and continued in it, not from necessity, but choice.

In my own case, for example, I was convicted of no sin of my ancestry, near or remote, and of no form or degree of demerit for anything which did attach to me personally, and to no one else but myself. Nor was I convicted of ill-desert for anything in or about myself but alienation and estrangement from God, His character, His will, and the law of duty -- alienation and estrangement in which I was consciously voluntary. The same holds in all other cases. Under the convicting power of the Spirit, every man is convicted of personal criminality, and nothing else; of "knowing God and not glorifying Him as God;" of knowing Him as our Maker, Preserver, Redeemer, and infinite Benefactor, and yet withholding gratitude from Him, of knowing His will, and refusing obedience to it.

Every individual, also, when convicted by the Spirit of sin, or of voluntary estrangement from God, from His will, and the law of duty, apprehends, with absolute distinctness, that that estrangement has been total, and has been equally so in respect to all forms of moral activity, whether externally right or wrong. When the Spirit renders the truth "a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart," every man, whatever the visibilities of his life may have been, and however amiable certain of his natural temperaments may have been, perceives with perfect absoluteness that no moral act of his unregenerate life was prompted by that motive and intent which render such act morally virtuous, or such that the conscience or God can regard, or ought to regard, as an act of obedience to the Divine will and the law of duty.

Regeneration is not an advance from a low state of moral goodness to one that is higher, but an entrance into a state entirely new. The words of inspiration, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things have passed away, and behold, all things have become new," are just as true of any one man as of any other; and this passage from the old state to the new is just as immutably necessary to eternal life in the case of any one unregenerate man as it is in that of any other. Any other view of sin, or of the natural state of man, is in open contradiction to all that Christ, Moses, the prophets, apostles, and the Eternal Spirit, teach us of "what is in man."

Reasons of the Objections of Individuals to the Evangelical Faith.

We now perceive the reason of the objections which individuals entertain to the principle and doctrines of the evangelical faith. All such objections take their origin and form from a want of a true apprehension of sin, and of the actual condition of man as sinner. When any individual, whatever his previous views may have been, apprehends sin as it is, sin as God and the conscience divinely enlightened view it, when any man perceives his own moral life as it stands related to the will of God and the law of duty, all his objections to the doctrines of the Trinity, atonement, salvation on the condition of "repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ," and eternal judgment," disappear at once. When man knows himself as he is, he becomes absolutely conscious that that faith, with all its revelations, must be true, or he is hopelessly lost. A very highly-educated and intelligent unbeliever, for example, once listened to a discourse which we delivered on the subject of regeneration. In that discourse, the actual character of the natural man was set forth, and the necessity of the change, represented by the term regeneration was verified. The truth, as presented, he afterwards stated, "commended itself to his conscience." On his way from the house of God, these thoughts passed through his mind: "What a fool I have been! If I had this religion, what injury could it do me? It might, on the other hand, be to me an eternal benefit." With these thoughts pressing upon his mind, he on the next Sabbath listened to a discourse from the text, "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." In that discourse the nature of the moral law, and man's relations as a sinner to that law, were as clearly elucidated as we were able to do it. As the man listened to these expositions, he said to himself, This, as I absolutely know, is the moral law, and these are my conscious relations to that law. If, now, there is no redemption for me in Christ, I am without hope for eternity." Thus, through "the knowledge of sin," he was led directly to Christ, and few men ever evinced a purer faith in Christ than did this man in his subsequent life. Hence it is that the Spirit first convinces of sin, as the means of inducing faith in Christ as a savior from sin. Such, also, is the fixed tendency and aim of all true preaching of "the everlasting gospel." A ministry whose fundamental aim, and the fixed tendency of whose ministrations are not to convince men of their sin, and hopeless ruin in sin, and thus to lead them to Christ, is "a plant which our heavenly Father has not planted."

The Witness of the Spirit.

We may now understand also, in one of its essential forms, "the witness of the Spirit" to our sonship with God. Much is said upon this and kindred subjects in the New Testament. When, as shown above, I, for example, was brought into a certain state of utter self-abandonment and dependence upon the mercy and grace of God in Christ, I was made absolutely conscious that God had pardoned and accepted me. I was as absolutely -- I could not tell how -- assured of this, as I was that I existed at all. This, as I understand it, is one of the forms in which "the Spirit bears witness with our spirits that we are the sons of God." The Spirit, and He only, knows when we are accepted, and He only can make us absolutely conscious of the fact. When, in connection with implicit faith and consecration on our part, He manifests God to us as our Father and portion, then "the Spirit bears witness with our spirit," our conscious trust and consecration "that we are the sons of God." When He imparts to us "full assurance of faith," "full assurance of hope," and "full assurance of understanding," we have the witness of the Spirit that we are being "taught of God," and are, consequently, "His sons and daughters."

CHAPTER III.

A GREAT TEMPTATION, A FINAL VICTORY, AND ANOINTING.

FOR some months after I had found peace and assurance of acceptance, my spiritual state was rather of a negative than positive character. I had become dead to the desire of wealth, and all my plans of ambition

-- plans which I had, with the intense interest, cherished from childhood up -- were wholly relinquished. Even the idea of acquiring a liberal education -- the cherished thought of my young life ever since the subject had been suggested to my mind -- was wholly dropped out of my regard.

One thought only possessed my whole being -- that of "walking with God," and this in the retired circle of private life. Had I been educated in the Catholic faith, my controlling religious tendencies, had nothing occurred to give them a higher directions, would have unquestionably drawn me in the direction of monastic retirement. I had not continued long in this state before the aspirations of my old nature began to revive, and to draw me with greater and greater strength in the backward direction towards the worldly life.

This influence reached its highest power in the early spring; and on the day of the town and state elections, when all my young associates were assembled, under my eye, and in the immediate presence of my father's dwelling -- assembled for those amusements in which I had formerly so intensely delighted, it seemed that the concentrated powers of "the world, the flesh, and the devil," and that in their accumulated strength, were brought to bear upon my young and susceptible mind, to induce me to join that company, and, in doing so, to make a final choice of the worldly, instead of the religious life.

As soon as I had completed the task assigned me, I turned for the forest, and, in the heart of the same, spent the day with God. There, in deep "fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ," I became "crucified to the world, and the world to me." From that good hour I have never felt the least temptation to return to the worldly life. In that "house of God and gate of heaven," also, my Christian life passed over from the negative to a positive state. I became distinctly conscious that I was called of God to be in the world as Christ was in the world, to do all I could to bring the world back to God.

I then and there felt myself girded for the purposes of that calling with a strength not my own. I left that forest with the distinct consciousness that I was a dedicated servant of Christ, and was endued with a divine power for that service -- a power of which I had never heard before, and knew not by what name to call. That dedication has remained. Becoming early conscious that I was called to the ministry, I set about the needful intellectual preparation. During the progress of my liberal education, I was often told by individuals who best understood my natural adaptations, that I ought to enter the army, or become a statesman.

Having received the full persuasion that I could better serve Christ as a preacher of the everlasting gospel than in any other sphere, I never felt the least drawings in any other direction. Whatever others might prefer, with me the idea of "saving a soul from death," and putting that soul in possession of the treasures of eternity, has rendered as "dross" and "loss" the wealth and the honors of this world.

Nor was my action for doing service for Christ delayed. I immediately set about persuading my associates. One of them was soon converted, and afterwards became, and continued till his death, a central light in the leading church in the city of Buffalo. Many of the others were so influenced, that, not long afterwards, they became members of the Church of God. The next winter, in my eighteenth year, I was called to teach school in a very ungodly neighborhood, where there was not within more than three miles of my schoolhouse a single individual who could take part with me, singing excepted, in any religious meeting. I soon organized two meetings for each week, none speaking or praying in those meetings but myself, until I was joined by young converts. As the result of those meetings, a church, consisting of from thirty to fifty members, a large majority of whom were from these converts, was immediately after organized in that place -- a church which remains until this day. Such has been "my manner of life from my youth." All other

forms of wisdom have even appeared "foolishness" to me, as compared with that higher wisdom which "winneth souls." Some profitable lessons may be learned from the facts now before us. Among these I notice the following: ---

Common Defect in Christian Character.

We notice, in the first place, what may be regarded as the most common defect in Christian character in those cases where we must suppose that there has been a real entrance into the religious life. In most cases, perhaps, the spiritual life process never advances beyond the passive state above described. There has been, in the experience of such individuals, real conviction of sin, genuine "repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ," and conscious assurance of pardon and peace with God. Here, however, the process of renewal stops. There is, on the other hand, no dedication for positive and active service as servants of Christ, and no "anointing," or "endowment of power from on high" for such service. Religion, in all such cases, is passive rather than active, negative rather than positive, and purely receptive rather than aggressive. Individuals present themselves to Christ to be saved, and not, in addition to this, as "living sacrifices, holy" (dedicated for active service), and, for this reason, especially "acceptable unto God." They, judging from their lives, regard themselves as "called with an holy calling," for the mere attainment of personal salvation, and not to "hold out the word of life," to "shine as lights in the world," and to do efficient service in the great work of "perfecting the saints," and "saving souls from death." "The Spirit of the Lord God" is not upon them as He was upon Christ, and God has not anointed them as He did Christ, to "preach the gospel to the poor," to "heal the broken-hearted," to "preach deliverance to the captives. the recovery of sight to the blind," to "set at liberty them that are bruised," to "preach the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God." Yet every believer is as really called to a positive and supremely dedicated mission in the work of "seeking and saving that which was lost," as was Christ. How can we otherwise be among those who are "the light of the world," and "the salt of the earth?"

In this passive, negative state, if we remain therein, we are, according to the express teachings of the Bible, in one of the most perilous conditions to the Christian life possible, a condition from which there is a perpetual peril of our "falling away" into a state from which "it is impossible that we should be renewed again unto repentance." As the only condition of escaping such peril, the apostle exhorts believers to "leave the first principles of the doctrine of Christ," -- the immature and passive state in which the mind is occupied almost exclusively with the matter of our personal salvation, the state in which we are perpetually, in consequence of relapses into sin, "laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God," -- and to "go on unto perfection," that mature, supremely dedicated, sanctified, and divinely-anointed state, in which Christ is "glorified in us," because we "abound unto every good work." Had I, for example, continued in the passive and unanointed state to which I have referred, there would, with perfect certainty, have been a resurrection of the power of worldly propensities, and of prior worldly loves and aspirations, which would have insured open apostasy, or a gradual dying out of the religious life, until, with perhaps a name to live, I should have been "dead while I lived." Two young men of most eminent talents once, as members of the same class, entered one of our American colleges, each having the ministry in view. One of them, during the progress of his education, in a state of supreme dedication to Christ, sought a divine anointing for his work. As a consequence, he became one of the most eminent and useful ministers of the gospel known in the United States, "died in the Lord," and in heaven his name is as "ointment poured forth." The other, when he made a public profession of his faith, presented to the Church a written statement of his early experience. All wondered at the account given,

and not a doubt rested upon any mind of the genuineness of his conversion. He continued, however, in the passivity of his first faith. As a consequence, there was a resurrection of his early ambitions, and, under the temptation, he turned aside, and entered the legal profession. He became a world-renowned statesman, but died a confirmed drunkard. Reader, are you in Christ as "a branch that beareth not fruit?" If you continue so, as Christ is true, you will be "cut off," and reserved for "the burning."

What we should always do when under Temptation.

We notice, in the next place, what we should always do when, under temptation, we fall into sin, or when we find ourselves under temptation to sin. In the first case, most Christians simply confess the wrong, and seek pardon for the same. This they should do, but by no means stop here. They should reflect upon the cause of their fall, and seek to have that cause removed. Their recovery in such cases will always be permanent. The celebrated preacher and theologian of America, Dr Hopkins, for example, was afflicted with a very ungovernable temper. He had a brother-in-law, a member of the legal profession, who was an infidel. This man was accustomed to say to his family, "Dr Hopkins is, at heart, no better man than I am, and I will prove it to you one day." One evening, Dr Hopkins called upon his brother-in-law to adjust some business matters in which they were mutually concerned. The infidel, knowing well the weak point in the Doctor's character, set up most unrighteous claims, and that for the specific purpose of exciting his anger. The attempt was a success. Dr Hopkins left the house in a rage, closing the door behind him with much violence. "There!" said the infidel to his family; "you see now the truth of what I told you, that Dr. Hopkins is, at heart, no better man than I am; and now I have got my foot upon his neck, and I will keep it there." That, reader, is the infidel heart the world over. Dr. Hopkins, however, went immediately to his closet, and spent the entire night there in prayer to God. As the morning dawned, an ineffable peace, quietness, and assurance, pervaded his whole being. Hastening to his brother-in-law's residence, he confessed, with tears, to him and his family, the sin which he had committed in their presence, not saying one word about the graceless provocation which had occasioned the sin. As the man of God retired, the infidel said within himself, "There is a spirit which I do not possess, and that spirit is undeniably divine." Thus convicted, he became a Christian, and a preacher of the gospel which he had once despised. Thirty years subsequent to this occurrence, Dr Hopkins stated, that since that memorable night, no temptation or provocation that he had received had ever once stirred a motion of that evil temper within him. Let all believers imitate this sacred example, and carry, not only their sins, but their propensities which tempt them to sin, to "a throne of grace," and "the very God of peace will sanctify them wholly," -- so subdue and sanctify those propensities, that they will not only cease to tempt us to sin, but will prompt to the opposite virtues. An evil propensity sanctified, as it will be, when presented for that purpose, at "a throne of grace," -- becomes, ever after, a permanent incentive to all that is well-pleasing in the sight of God. How important that all believers should understand this great fact !

Other Christians equally err when subject to temptation to sin. Under the pressure of the temptation, they suffer a thoughtless curiosity to draw them towards the scene which awakens desire, where they look upon the face of sin, instead of promptly turning away from the temptation, and getting as near to God as possible. In the circumstances in which I was at the time of the great temptation above referred to, many would have determined to visit the scene where the temptation lay, with the purpose of going there and looking on as a mere spectator. Under the influence to which they would thus subject themselves, they would be induced to "deny the faith," or their faith would be so weakened as to render a fall almost certain under future temptations. By taking the steps I did, I gained a permanent victory over the propensities through which I was thus strongly tempted. This should always be the case when tempted: we should

always turn from the temptation towards the face of God. We shall then not only be kept for the moment, but shall always become endued with a new power from on high for a certain triumph under future "trials of faith."

Light upon the Doctrine of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost.

The facts above presented also throw some light upon that central doctrine of the Bible -- the baptism of the Holy Ghost. When I went out of that forest, for example, I went out not only in the consciousness that I was "not of the world," that I was emancipated from its entanglements, and that I was, for life and an eternity to come, a consecrated servant of Christ, but that, for my mission and work, I was endued with a power not my own. Of the nature of that power, as I have said, I was utterly ignorant; of its presence I was absolutely conscious. From that hour I began literally to "read my Bible with new eyes." The leisure moments of the following summer were spent in the study of that "dearest of books, that excels every other," in communion with God, and in labors to bring my young associates to Christ. In the meetings where I taught school the next winter, I always prayed three times. We commenced the meetings with singing. Then followed a prayer, and the reading of a chapter from the Bible, followed by a very few remarks from me. We would then sing again, and I would pray a second time. The reading, the remarks, and singing followed as before, and the exercises would be closed with another prayer, followed by singing. As soon as I began to pray, I became conscious of an enlargement, and freedom, and power of utterance at which I wondered with unutterable wonder. The same was true of the audience. Strong men and women were awestruck, and yielded to the convicting influence which pervaded the assemblies. The giant fighter of all that region -- a region where men were accustomed to knock each other down with terrible violence -- attended those meetings. Even he was overpowered, and became a babe in Christ. Afterwards, I received similar enlargement in speaking for Christ. In the last place where I taught school, a revival of religion commenced in that school, a revival which spread all over the whole society around. During this period I held three meetings each week, the schoolhouse being always filled to its utmost capacity. In these meetings, I uniformly spoke for a period of at least from one-half to three-quarters of an hour. Myself and all the people felt that the power of utterance of which I was possessed was not my own, but a God-imparted gift. I overheard, for example, a company of young men speaking upon the subject. The oldest and most intelligent among them remarked that "of one thing he was certain, that the power under which that teacher speaks is not his own, but is divine." Of the same fact I was myself equally assured.

We have here, as I understand the subject, the beginnings of those divine baptisms, and endowments of power from on high, promised to all believers in the Bible. With singleness of purpose and object to be "not of the world, as Christ was not of the world," to be "sent into the world as He was sent into the world," and to be sanctified for our life, mission, and work, as He "sanctified Himself" for His, we seek unto God, in the name of Christ, for mercy and grace to be and to do all that He wills, and to finish the work which Christ has appointed us, as He finished the work which "the Father gave Him to do." While in this state of total separateness from the "world, with its affections and lusts," and of supreme consecration to Christ, a divine influence and power comes over us, by which we become consciously "crucified unto the world, and the world to us," and we begin to live as "Christ lives in us," an influence and power by which "the eyes of our understanding are enlightened," so that "we, beholding with open face the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory unto glory," and consciously "having all-sufficiency for all things, we abound unto every good work." Here we receive "the promise of the Spirit," "the baptism of the Holy Ghost," the promised "endowment of power from on high." Without this "anointing" the entire body of

believers are a "feeble folk;" with it, none are "sickly or feeble" in all that flock. "He," on the other hand, "that is feeble among us is as David," "more than a conqueror through Him that hath loved us," while "the house of David" (the leaders of the flock) "are as God, as the angel of the Lord before Him." Here, also, we have a vision of the approaching future of the "Zion of our God." The time is near when all Zion's "children will be taught of the Lord, and great will be the peace of her children," all God's "servants and handmaidens will prophecy," because they shall all be "baptized with the Holy Ghost," and "a little one shall become a thousand, and a feeble one a strong city."

CHAPTER IV.

ASSURANCE OF HOPE.

THE view which the Holy Spirit gave me, at the first, of the godless worldly life which I had led, has remained to this day, but was, from time to time, during subsequent years, renewed with most impressive distinctness. About one year after my conversion, for example, while sitting in a family circle where I was boarding at the time, a vision of that godless life was most impressively presented to my mind. To the circle around me I remarked that I was horrified and affrighted in view of the life which I had led. Yet I had not been an immoral youth. On account of my well-known attainments and moral reputation, I had, the year before, been selected to teach the school in one of the most Christian, moral, and intelligent districts in all the region round. It was that total alienation and estrangement from God, and that total want of respect for His will and the law of duty, which made that life appear so fearful to me. Such revelations of my former moral self and life induced me to make it a subject of most earnest prayer, that I might never return to that godless state, on the one hand, and, on the other, might have grace to "keep myself in the love of God," during my future sojourn on earth.

At length, I attained to a full assurance that I was, not only then an accepted servant of Christ, but should have grace to continue such even unto the end. In this assurance, I have done service for Christ up to the present. Not a shadow of doubt rests upon my mind that I am His for eternity, and in such utterance, as it seems to me, all believers should "walk with God." We should recognize ourselves, and receive, through the Spirit, an inward assurance that our union and fellowship with Christ is, not only for the future of life, but for an eternity to come; that we are united to him by "a covenant of salt," an "everlasting covenant." This, as I judge, is what the Scriptures call "assurance of hope." Two common errors here present themselves -- errors which require special consideration.

Wrong Advice to those Seeking the Higher Life.

In listening to advice often given to those who are seeking the rest of faith, I hear things said which I cannot approve. Such persons are told to seek for grace to be holy at the present moment, to learn to "love moment by moment," with no concern about their future obedience. Now the Scriptures, as I read them, teach us expressly and most abundantly to entertain deep concern, not only about present but future sanctification, and teach us to exercise present faith for the latter as well as for the former. Paul, for example, entrusted his immortal interests to Christ for future as well as for present keeping. "I know whom I have believed, that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."

The promises have a specific reference, not merely to present, but to future keeping, and pledge to our present faith preserving as well as instant grace. We are expressly authorized to trust "the very God of peace," not only for the present, to "sanctify us wholly," but to "preserve us blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." We are exhorted to "take unto ourselves the whole amour of God," not only for

safety against present perils, but that we may be "able to stand in the evil day" which may come. It should be our constant aim, not only to be "made perfect in love" for the passing moment, but to be "rooted and grounded in love."

All our separations from sin, and dedications and consecrations to Christ, should be for the eternal future as well as for the present, and our faith in divine keeping should have an equal reference to both. He only attains to the full "rest of faith" who has the assurance, as all may have, that he is in Christ, not only for the passing moment, but will have "grace to" abide in Him. As a means of such an abiding, I, for one, seek to have "the body of sin destroyed," on the one hand, and on the other to be so sanctified in "my body, and soul, and spirit," that I shall have "a divine nature" which shall always effectively draw me into "fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." "Let us, as many as would be perfect, be thus minded."

Influence of such Assurance.

I often hear it said, also, that if we had an assurance of future keeping and final salvation, we should become careless about present obedience. When I hear such suggestions, two thoughts commonly present themselves to my mind -- that the individuals who present such suggestions are in a very selfish state, on the one hand, and have utterly false apprehensions of the nature of "assurance of hope" on the other. The object of Christian faith and hope, with them, seems to be mere security of final salvation. The object real Christians desire and hope is present and future "walking with God," -- and "fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ."

The central element of Christian hope in respect to heaven is that we shall then be "like Christ," -- because "we shall see Him as He is. "Every man that hath this hope in Him (Christ) purifies himself, even as He is pure." -- Nothing else but a supreme desire and aim for present purity can result from such a hope. The individual whose assurance of final salvation induces present carelessness in respect to fellowship with Christ, and present indifference in respect to moral purity, ought to know that at the last his "hope will be as the giving up of the ghost." Supreme selfishness, and not the love of God and holiness, is at the basis of all his religious aspirations and hopes. Such persons also are in equal error in regard to the nature of this "assurance of hope."

There are no such elements as these in it -- that we can "live after the flesh and not die;" -- that we "shall be made partakers of Christ," -- but upon the condition that we "hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast even unto the end;" that we shall be "kept from falling" without faith, watchfulness, and prayer on our part; and that, in dependence upon divine aid and grace, we are to "keep the faith," "finish our course," -- and "work out our own salvation." How can an individual, impressed with the necessity of fulfilling all these conditions or failing of eternal life, have "assurance of hope" -- in regard to that life?

The individual who possesses this assurance, I reply, looks to Christ, and seeks by faith and prayer not only to be "rooted and grounded in love," and to be "confirmed, settled, and strengthened" in His obedience, but to be equally confirmed in the spirit of watchfulness against all occasions of falling, and all the evil incitements in his own nature and the world around him. Because he is consciously confirmed and endowed with power in all these respects, and has full faith in future grace "for every time of need," he cannot but "serve God without fear," and in "full assurance of hope."

The absolute assurance with which I, for example -- and my case is but the common one in all such instances -- have served Christ these many years has never induced me to entertain for a moment the presumption that I could take a step in the direction of disobedience without peril to my immortal interests,

or that I could fail to "keep my body under and bring it into subjection," -- without "being myself a cast-away." In the early years of my Christian life, I "fled youthful lusts" as I would flee from the approaching wave of devouring lava. On account of the known influences which pervade such scenes, I have never, since "I named the name of Christ," attended a theatre, a circus, or racecourse and have never allowed an idle curiosity to induce me to draw near and look upon the face of sin, any more than I would to gaze upon the face of the Second Death. Within the circle of conscious safety I have found all the amusements and social gratifications which my very strong and buoyant social nature has demanded. Yet I "serve God without fear," and in "full assurance of hope."

When, a few years since, in full possession of my faculties, I lay for about two weeks so near eternity that it was apprehended that each breath might be my last, I had no disposition then to "cast away my confidence," and had no more doubt of my salvation than I should have were I in heaven. I have no more disposition to forsake Christ now, or to doubt of His eternal love and favor, than I had then. Yet I know well that I must "fight the good fight," "finish my course," and "keep the faith," or not receive "the crown of righteousness." The same is true of all who have Christian "assurance of hope."

CHAPTER V.

THE GIFT OF GRACE.

"Unto me," says the apostle Paul, "who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." The view which the Spirit of God gave me at the first of my actual condition and deserts as a sinner, on the one hand, and of what the grace of God had done for and conferred upon me as "a believer in Jesus," on the other, has ever held my mind in continuously growing sympathy with the above sentiment of the apostle, and has constantly, in my apprehensions, rendered more and more wide and deep, and seemingly impassable, the gulf between the state in which I deserve to be and what, by the infinitude of divine grace, I am permitted to be and to become. The language in which I was, during the early years of my Christian life, accustomed to express my ideas upon the subject was the following: -- "What a privilege it is to be a Christian! to be the follower, and bear the name, of such a Being as Jesus Christ!"

What gave me most power with Christians and sinners was the manner in which I was accustomed to utter such words. The distance between personal desert and the privileges of grace conferred has ever appeared infinite, and is constantly becoming more and more impressive. When we think of Christ as having "loved us and given Himself for us," when Gethsemane and Calvary are present in thought, we cease to wonder that "by the cross" Paul was "crucified unto the world, and the world to him," and that suffering for Christ's sake was regarded by him as a gift of "infinite grace to vileness given." With what ineffable sweetness do the words come to the heart, "Unto you it is given, in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake!" With what unutterable wonder do we contemplate the fact, that God not only invites us to such service, but that what we "do in the name of Christ" is, in His regard, "of great price," and that He holds in reserve infinite rewards for the same!

That wonder reaches its consummation, when we contemplate the fact that we are "called with an holy calling" to do service, not as mere servants or friends, but as "the sons and daughters of the Lord, the Almighty." "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that WE should be called the sons of God." I could not regard myself as a Christian at all did I regard in any other light my place as a member of the sanctified family, and as a laborer in the sphere to which Christ has assigned me, and if I

did not "bear the cross" with this sentiment, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world." Many who bear the name of Christ seem to regard Christian service, not as an ineffable privilege, a gift of grace, but as a heavy yoke and wearisome burden, which are to be endured as little and as infrequently as possible. Such individuals may well question the genuineness of their faith. Are they not "enemies of the cross of Christ?" The true believer finds rest under the burden and yoke of Christ, and "quietness and assurance for ever" under the pressure of the cross.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TRUE AND PROPER FOOD FOR THE LAMBS OF THE FLOCK.

No prophet, apostle, or teacher of truth ever received a more important commission than that committed by our Savior to Peter, in the words, "Feed my lambs." All believers, whether young or old, at the time of their conversion, enter the fold of Christ as lambs of the flock, and all need, as the immutable condition of their privileged future growth and development as "believer in Jesus," the same, in all essential particulars, kind of care, nourishment, instruction, and admonition. All at this primal, critical, and determining period of their new life, must, as "new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word,"-- and must be furnished with, and taught to feed upon, the same, that "they may grow thereby," -- or they will, with perfect certainty, without a reconversion to their primal childhood state, become feeble and sickly weaklings during their future Christian life, if they do not become "dead while they live."

No teacher of truth, whether in the ministry or out of it, -- and all in the school of Christ, and that before they have been long in that school, "ought to be teachers," -- no teacher of truth, we say, ever put to himself a question of higher importance than this, namely, What is the food proper for these lambs of the flock? or, What is this "sincere milk of the Word," which these "new-born babes" should "desire" and be taught to feed upon? In other words still, What are those primal truths and principles of "our most holy faith," into which the young convert must be fully instructed, and with which he must be deeply impressed, as the revealed condition of his "growing into Christ in all things," and thereby attaining to a perfected manhood in Him, "unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ?"

Let us see if we cannot find an answer to these momentous questions. As a means to this end, let us first consider the actual condition of the young convert, when, as a lamb of the flock a "new-born babe," -- he is committed to the care of the ministry and membership of the churches, his heaven-appointed teachers; we shall then best know his needs, and the kind of instruction and influence demanded in his new condition.

Actual State of the Young Convert

As an illustration and example of the actual spiritual state of all genuine converts, at the beginning of their new life, permit me to refer to my own case, at the time when I became conscious that God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven my sins. Two characteristics, as we have seen, peculiarised that state, and separated it from all forms and developments of the worldly life, to wit -- a deep abhorrence and reprobation of my former moral self and life, together with a supreme desire and choice to be free from sin in all its forms, and a corresponding appreciation of moral purity, with a supreme desire and choice to be, in all respects, conformed to the will of God and the law of duty.

Aside from these two positive elements -- the desire to be free from sin, on the one hand, and the intense "hungering and thirsting after righteousness," on the other -- my state was almost exclusively, as I have

stated, a negative one. I had almost no conception whatever of the nature and character of "the new life," or of the means and conditions of "the holy living" to which I had been called. The foundation for the new life, as is the case with all true converts, was well laid; but of the means and conditions of perpetuating and perfecting that life, and of the new direction which my activities were to take, I was indeed "a babe in Christ," -- and had "need of milk, and not of meat," had need to be taught "the first principles of the oracles of God."

When I went out of that forest a consciously dedicated and anointed servant of Christ, I was in equal ignorance of the nature of the service to which I was called, and of the conditions on which I could be furnished and girded with strength for that service. I knew Christ well in the sphere of justification, or the pardon of sin, but knew nothing of Him in that of our sanctification, and had never heard of Him, or thought of Him, as "the Son of God who baptizes with the Holy Ghost." Of the idea of "the life of faith," and of the life revealed in the words, "I in them, and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one," I was as ignorant as an unborn babe.

Had any one come to me in my prayerful study of the Bible, and put the question, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" my proper answer would have been, "How can I, except some man shall guide me?" Such, at their best estate, is the condition of all young converts, when first entrusted by our Savior to the ministry and the churches, and that with the solemn admonition to those who "should be teachers," "Feed my lambs."

The Peculiar Forms of Instruction and Influence to which the Young Convert should be subject.

A ready answer may now be given to the question, By what forms of instruction and influence may these primal and supreme necessities of the convert be met? One great demand of his being, the pardon of his sins, has been fully met. When he becomes conscious of sin, he knows well just what to do, and where to go. "The throne of grace" is before him, and there stands his "Advocate with the Father." He draws near, and receives conscious freedom from "all condemnation." What he now needs to be taught most fully is, his relations to Christ in the whole matter of sanctification, as well as of justification; that we are just as "complete in Him" in the one relation as in the other; that His power to "save unto the uttermost them that come unto God by Him" is equally absolute in all relations, and circumstances, and particulars in which salvation is needed by us, and that we are just as absolutely authorized to trust Him to "sanctify us wholly," as to justify us fully, and to "keep us in perfect peace," and possess us with "fullness of joy," as to free us

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/asa-mahan/out-of-darkness-into-light/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net