

His convictions of sin now began to deepen, and in order to obtain divine knowledge he gave special attention to the reading of the Holy Scriptures. The sinfulness of his heart and life greatly troubled him. In deep patience before God he resorted to fasting, self-denial, and incessant prayer. Associating much with members of the Roman Catholic Church, who seemed to manifest more zeal in religion than other people, he was led to think that he must punish the body for the good of the soul. At midnight he would go to the kitchen, and when the household were asleep would sprinkle a corner of the floor with the coarsest sand he could obtain, and there, on his knees in pain, spend hours pleading with God for the forgiveness of sins. To mortify the body he would walk, after his day's work, ten miles to his father's house, and return the same night without any refreshment.

But deliverance was at hand. He had prepared himself, as well as he knew how, to partake of the Lord's Supper; and while receiving the sacred elements from a pious clergyman, he obtained a clear sense of God's forgiving love. All his mental sufferings at once forsook him. He was now a happy believer. He seemed alone in the world, for none of his friends or associates understood the secret of experimental religion. Gratitude to God filled his heart, while the language of praise was on his lips. About this time a friend lent him the works of the Rev. J. Wesley, but he returned them without a perusal, assigning as a reason that he feared such erroneous doctrine as he understood the Methodists taught would corrupt his mind and destroy his religion. Providentially led to form an acquaintance with a member of the Methodist Society at Preston, he was soon invited to hear their preachers. Overcoming his scruples, he at length did so. He was greatly pleased and profited, exclaiming, with joy beaming in his eyes, "This is the kind of preaching I have long wanted to hear. These are the people with whom I am resolved to live and die." His soul was again set at liberty, and he was enabled to rejoice in the God of his salvation.

Soon he was found labouring with great success as a local preacher. His mind was much exercised in reference to his call to the ministry. Oftimes he seemed in an agony respecting the