

—our Father, who has given the blessed Jesus to die for us. Him should we seek intimately to know, according to the revelation He has made of Himself in His own most-precious Word.

The way in which we study this Word is a matter of the deepest moment. The very earliest portion of the day we can command should be devoted to meditation on the Scriptures. Our soul should feed upon the Word. We should read it—not for others, but for ourselves; all the promises, the encouragements, the warnings, the exhortations, the rebukes, should be taken home to our own bosoms. Especially let us remember, not to neglect any portion of the Bible: it should be read regularly through. To read favorite portions of the Scriptures, to the exclusion of other parts, is a habit to be avoided. The whole divine volume is inspired, and by degrees should be read regularly through. But to read the Bible thus is not enough; we must seek to become intimately and experimentally acquainted with Him whom the Scriptures reveal, with the blessed Jesus, who has given Himself to die in our room and stead. Oh, what an abiding, soul-satisfying portion do we possess in Him!

But another point here needs especially to be noticed: it is that we seek habitually to carry out what we know; to act up to the light that we have received, then more will assuredly be given. But if we fail to do this, our light will be turned into darkness. It is of the deepest moment that we walk with a sincere, honest, upright heart before the Lord. If evil be practised, or harbored and connived at, the channel of communication between our souls and God (for the time being) will be cut off. It is all-important to remember this. Infirmities and weakness will cleave to us, as long as we remain in the body; but this is a different thing from willingly allowing evil. I must be able, with a true, honest, upright heart, to look my heavenly Father in the face, to say, "Here I am, blessed Lord; do with me as Thou wilt."

Then let us remember that we are his stewards. Our time, our health, our strength, our talents, our all, are his, and his alone. Let us seek to remember this, and carry it out this year, and then what happy Christians shall we all be! It is a divine principle, "To him that hath

shall more be given;" and as assuredly as we seek to make good use of that which is confided to us, more will be imparted. We shall be used of the Lord, and shall become increasingly happy in his own most blessed service. Brethren! we have only one life—one brief life; let us seek, with renewed purpose of heart, to consecrate that one life wholly to the Lord—day by day to live for God, and to serve Him with our body, soul, and spirit, which are his.

Let it be our unceasing prayer, that, as we grow *older*, we may not grow *childer* in the ways of God. As we advance in years, let us not decline in spiritual power; but let us see it that an increase of spiritual vigour and energy be found in us, that our last days may be our best days.

Our holy faith does not consist in *talk-ing*. Reality, is what we want. Let us have *heart-work*; let us be genuine. Brethren! we should live so as to be missed—missed both in the Church and in the world, when we are removed. Oh, how rapidly is time hastening on! We should live in such a manner as that, if we were called hence, our dear brethren and sisters might feel our loss, and from their inmost souls exclaim, "Oh that such a one were in our midst again!" We ought to be missed even by the world. Worldly persons should constrained to say of us, "If ever there was a Christian upon earth that man was one."

But to revert to the Scripture. In them, through the teaching of the Holy Ghost, we become acquainted with the character of God. Our eyes are divinely opened to see what a lovely Being God is! and this good, gracious, loving, heavenly Father is ours, our portion for time and for eternity; and our adorable Lord Jesus, who gave Himself for us, is that blessed One, to whose image and likeness we shall be conformed; and to serve Him should be our greatest joy and privilege as long as we remain on earth.

But then, when trial and affliction come; when God deals with us as though He were not the lovely, kind, and gracious Being presented to us in his Word, shall we murmur and despond? Ah! no. Beloved in Christ! let us trust our Heavenly Father; let