

2. *Prayer.* In order that the sacred Oracles may profit us, and that we may truly grow in grace, we need the influence of the Holy Spirit, which is to be diligently sought by fervent prayer.—*Open thou mine eyes,* says the Psalmist, *that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.* (Ps. cxix. 18.) The Saviour likewise says, *If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.* O Brethren, never, on any consideration, nor under any circumstances, neglect earnest secret prayer. Let those that have families, constantly pray with them; and let all that have opportunity to unite with others in social prayer, diligently avail themselves of that privilege.

3. *Watchfulness.* The reading of the Scriptures and prayer, though important means of cherishing devotion, will not profit without attention to the Saviour's command. *what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch.* (Mark xiii. 37.) We have continual need to watch against the temptations of Satan, the allurements of the world, and especially against the evil propensities of our own depraved nature. *Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.* It is highly important that we should carefully watch against the first risings of anger, passion, levity, love of the world, spiritual sloth, unbelief, discontent, and every affection that would lead us from the fountain of living waters.

4. *Meditation on divine subjects* is very conducive to our spiritual health and comfort. *While I was musing,* says the Psalmist, *the fire burned.* (Ps xxxix: 3) It is by serious meditation that our spiritual food is digested, and rendered truly profitable to the nourishment, consolation, and strengthening of our souls.

5. *Religious conversation* tends greatly to cherish the flame of devotion. While the two disciples, on their way to Emmaus, were talking together respecting the Saviour, *Jesus himself drew near and went with them; and they were constrained to say afterwards, did not our heart burn within us?* (Luke xxiv. 13, 32) While worldly and trifling conversation produces darkness and death, truly spiritual discourse tends to enkindle and diffuse light and life.

6. *Diligent attendance on all the public means of grace,* is requisite for our spiritual welfare. The believer who would prosper in the divine life, must never, when it can be avoided, suffer his seat to be vacant at any of the public meetings for the worship of God, or at the Lord's table. He should carefully labour to strengthen the hands of his Minister, which will redound to his own spiritual advantage.

But, Dear Brethren, you are aware that no means will avail, without the exercise of a living and active faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is only by *beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord,* that we can be changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. (2 Col. iii. 18.)