

after Him in such ways as nothing but His presence could satisfy. I know souls in this state; and yet it is not knowledge that gives it to them, but personal acquaintance with the blessed Saviour, through the Holy Ghost.

“I alighted, as by chance, the other day, on some fervent thoughts of an old writer, in connection with this dear and precious subject. In substance they were as follows, and almost so in terms, only I have somewhat condensed them:—“It is strange that we, who have such continual use of God, and His bounties and mercies, and are so perpetually beholden to Him, should after all be so little acquainted with Him. And from hence it comes that we are so loathe to think of our dissolution, and of our going to God. For, naturally, where we are not acquainted, we like not to hazard our welcome. We would rather spend our money at an inn, than turn in for a free lodging to an unknown host; whereas to an entire friend, whom we elsewhere have familiarly conversed with, we go boldly and willingly as to our home, knowing that no hour can be unseasonable to such an one. I will not live upon God and His daily bounties, without His acquaintance. By His grace I will not let one day pass without renewing my acquaintance with Him.

“Beautiful utterance this is. It expresses a character of mind which, in this day of busy inquiry *after knowledge*, we all need—personal longings after Christ. May the blessed Spirit in us give that direction to our hearts! It is a hard lesson for some of us to learn, to reach enjoyments which lie beyond and above the provisions of nature. We are still prone to know Christ Himself ‘after the flesh,’ and to desire to find Him in the midst of the relations and circumstances of human life, and there only.

“But this is not our calling—this is not the risen, heavenly life. It is hard to get beyond this, I know, but our calling calls us beyond it. We like the home, and the respect, and the security, and all the delights of our human relations and circumstances, and would have Christ in the midst of them, but to know Him, and to have Him in such a way as tells us that He is a stranger on earth, and that we are to be strangers with Him, ‘this is a hard saying’ to our poor fond hearts.”

