

Pilgrim Way Devotional Companion for January

January 1

Morning Readings- Genesis 1, Matthew 1

Evening Readings- Ezra 1; Acts 1

A pharisee is hard on others and easy on himself, but a spiritual man is easy on others and hard on himself.- A. W. Tozer

This Day in Christian History

1865- Birth of hymnwriter James Rowe in Devonshire, England. He wrote hymns that include "Love Lifted Me" and "I Would Be Like Jesus".

1919- Death of hymnwriter Lewis Hartsough, who wrote hymns including "I Am Coming, Lord."

1937- Death of J. Gresham Machen, a Presbyterian Fundamentalist scholar.

Psalm 1. L. M. The difference between the righteous and the wicked, by Isaac Watts.

1 Happy the man whose cautious feet
Shun the broad way that sinners go,
Who hates the place where atheists meet,
And fears to talk as scoffers do.

2 He loves t' employ his morning light
Amongst the statutes of the Lord:
And spends the wakeful hours at night,
With pleasure pondering o'er the word.

3 He like a plant by gentle streams,
Shall flourish in immortal green;
And heaven will shine with kindest beams
On every work his hands begin.

4 But sinners find their counsels crost;
As chaff before the tempest flies,
So shall their hopes be blown and lost,
When the last trumpet shakes the skies.

5 In vain the rebel seeks to stand
In judgment with the pious race;
The dreadful Judge with stern command
Divides him to a different place.

6 "Straight is the way my saints have trod,
"I blest the path and drew it plain;
"But you would choose the crooked road,
"And down it leads to endless pain.

"They did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:12

Israel's weary wanderings were all over, and the promised rest was attained. No more moving tents, fiery serpents, fierce Amalekites, and howling wildernesses: they came to the land which flowed with milk and honey, and they ate the old corn of the land. Perhaps this year, beloved Christian reader, this may be thy case or mine. Joyful is the prospect, and if faith be in active exercise, it will yield unalloyed delight. To be with Jesus in the rest which remaineth for the people of God, is a cheering hope indeed, and to expect this glory so soon is a double bliss. Unbelief shudders at the Jordan which still rolls between us and the goodly land, but let us rest assured that we have already experienced more ills than death at its worst can cause us. Let us banish every fearful thought, and rejoice with exceeding great joy, in the prospect that this year we shall begin to be "forever with the Lord."

A part of the host will this year tarry on earth, to do service for their Lord. If this should fall to our lot, there is no reason why the New Year's text should not still be true. "We who have believed do enter into rest." The Holy Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance; he gives us "glory begun below." In heaven they are secure, and so are we preserved in Christ Jesus; there they triumph over their enemies, and we have victories too. Celestial spirits enjoy communion with their Lord, and this is not denied to us; they rest in his love, and we have perfect peace in him: they hymn his praise, and it is our privilege to bless him too. We will this year gather celestial fruits on earthly ground, where faith and hope have made the desert like the garden of the Lord. Man did eat angels' food of old, and why not now? O for grace to feed on Jesus, and so to eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan this year! (Charles Spurgeon)."

January 2

Morning Readings- Genesis 2, Matthew 2

Evening Readings- Ezra 2; Acts 2

Time spent in prayer will yield more than that given to work. Prayer alone gives work its worth and its success. Prayer opens the way for God Himself to do His work in us and through us. Let our chief work as God's messengers be intercession; in it we secure the presence and power of God to go with us.- Andrew Murray

This Day in Christian History

1792- Death of Edward Perronet, who was a hymnwriter and a close friend of the Wesleys. His best known hymn was "All Hail The Power of Jesus' Name".

1828- Birth of hymnwriter Jeremiah Rankin Thornton, New Hampshire, who wrote "Tell It To Jesus" and "God Be With You Until We Meet Again".

1921- The first religious program to be aired over radio was broadcast on this day over KDKA in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. It was sponsored by Calvary Episcopal Church.

1924- Death of hymnwriter Sabine Baring-Gould, who wrote "Onward Christian Soldiers".

O For A Closer Walk With God, William Cowper, C.M., Genesis 5:24

1 OH! for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame;
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb!

2 Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I saw the Lord?
Where is the soul-refreshing view
Of Jesus and his word?

3 What peaceful hours I once enjoy'd!
How sweet their memory still!
But they have left an aching void,
The world can never fill.

4 Return, O holy Dove, return!
Sweet messenger of rest:
I hate the sins that made thee mourn,
And drove thee from my breast.

5 The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from thy throne,
And worship only thee.

6 So shall my walk be close with God,
Calm and serene my frame:
So purer light shall mark the road
That leads me to the Lamb.

Samuel Rutherford on the death of a child

I was indeed sorrowful at my departure from you, especially since ye were in such heaviness after your daughter's death. Yet I do persuade myself, ye know that the weightiest end of the cross of Christ that is laid upon you lieth upon your strong Saviour; for Isaiah saith, "In all your afflictions He is afflicted" (Isa. lxiii. 9). O blessed Second who suffereth with you! and glad may your soul be even to walk in the

fiery furnace with one like unto the Son of Man, who is also the Son of God. Courage! up your heart! When ye do tire, He will bear both you and your burden (Ps. lv. 22). Yet a little while and ye shall see the salvation of God. Remember of what age your daughter was, and that just so long was your lease of her. If she was eighteen, nineteen, or twenty years old, I know not; but sure I am, seeing her term was come, and your lease run out, ye can no more justly quarrel your great Superior for taking His own at His just term day, than a poor farmer can complain that his master taketh a portion of his own land to himself when his lease is expired. Good mistress, if ye would not be content that Christ would hold from you the heavenly inheritance which is made yours by His death, shall not that same Christ think hardly of you if ye refuse to give Him your daughter willingly, who is a part of His inheritance and conquest? I pray the Lord to give you all your own, and to grace you with patience to give God His also. He is an ill debtor who payeth that which he hath borrowed with a grudge. Indeed, that long loan of such a good daughter, an heir of grace, a member of Christ (as I believe), deserveth more thanks at your Creditor's hands, than that ye should gloom and murmur when He craveth but His own...But what? Do you think her lost, when she is but sleeping in the bosom of the Almighty? Think her not absent who is in such a friend's house. Is she lost to you who is found to Christ? If she were with a dear friend, although you should never see her again, your care for her would be but small. Oh, now, is she not with a dear Friend? and gone higher, upon a certain hope that ye shall, in the Resurrection, see her again, when (be ye sure) she shall neither be hectic nor consumed in body? You would be sorry either to be, or to be esteemed, an atheist; and yet, not I, but the Apostle, thinketh those to be hopeless atheists who mourn excessively for the dead (Thess. iv. 13) (Samuel Rutherford, Letter 2).

January 3

Morning Readings- Genesis 3, Matthew 3

Evening Readings- Ezra 3; Acts 3

There is not a better evangelist in the world than the Holy Spirit.- D.L. Moody

This Day in Christian History

1521- Martin Luther was excommunicated from the Roman Catholic church on this day.

1984- Death of Jacob Gartenhaus, founder of the International Board of Jewish Missions.

Ere God had built the mountains, William Cowper, 7676D

1 ERE God had built the mountains,
Or raised the fruitful hills,
Before He filled the fountains
That feed the running rills,
In Thee from everlasting,
The wonderful I AM

Found pleasures never wasting,
And Wisdom is Thy name.

2 When like a tent to dwell in,
He spread the skies abroad,
And swathed about the swelling
Of ocean's mighty flood,
He wrought by weight and measure;
And Thou wast with Him then,
Thyself the Father's pleasure,
And Thine, the sons of men.

3 And couldst Thou be delighted
With creatures such as we,
Who, when we saw Thee, slighted,
And nailed Thee to the tree?
Unfathomable wonder,
And mystery divine!
The voice that speaks in thunder,
Says, "Sinner I am thine".

4 And art Thou, Lord, delighted
To call us now Thine own ---
The love no longer slighted
Which Thou to us hast shown?
Oh, way of purposed blessing
In death told out to man!
The fruit we're now possessing,
Of Wisdom's wondrous plan.

I have heard your Ladyship complain of deadness, and want of the bestirring power of the life of God. But courage! He who walked in the garden, and made a noise that made Adam hear His voice, will also at some times walk in your soul, and make you hear a more sweet word. Yet, ye will not always hear the noise and the din of His feet, when He walketh. Ye are, at such a time, like Jacob mourning at the supposed death of Joseph, when Joseph was living. The new creature, the image of the second Adam, is living in you; and yet ye are mourning at the supposed death of the life of Christ in you. Ephraim is bemoaning and mourning (Jer. xxxi. 18), when he thinketh God is far off and heareth not; and yet God is like the bridegroom (Song 2:9), standing only behind a thin wall and laying to His ear; for He saith Himself, "I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself." I have good confidence, Madam, that Christ Jesus, whom your soul through forests and mountains is seeking, is within you. And yet I speak not this to lay a pillow under your head, or to dissuade you from a holy fear of the loss of your Christ, or of provoking and "stirring up the Beloved before He please," by sin. I know, in spiritual confidence,

the devil will come in, as in all other good works, and cry “Half mine;” and so endeavour to bring you under a fearful sleep, till He whom your soul loveth be departed from the door, and have left off knocking. And, therefore, here the Spirit of God must hold your soul’s feet in the golden mid-line, betwixt confident resting in the arms of Christ, and presumptuous and drowsy sleeping in the bed of fleshly security. Therefore, worthy lady, so count little of yourself, because of your own wretchedness and sinful drowsiness, that ye count not also little of God, in the course of His unchangeable mercy. For there be many Christians most like unto young sailors, who think the shore and the whole land doth move, when the ship and they themselves are moved; just so, not a few do imagine that God moveth and saileth¹ and changeth places, because their giddy souls are under sail, and subject to alteration, to ebbing and flowing. But “the foundation of the Lord abideth sure.” God knoweth that ye are His own. Wrestle, fight, go forward, watch, fear, believe, pray; and then ye have all the infallible symptoms of one of the elect of Christ within you (Samuel Rutherford, Letter 3).

January 4

Morning Readings- Genesis 4, Matthew 4

Evening Readings- Ezra 4; Acts 4

We have to pray with our eyes on God, not on the difficulties.- Oswald Chambers

This Day in Christian History

1581- Birth of James Ussher, Anglican prelate. Ussher published a biblical chronology that dates the Creation to 4004 BC.

Grace is the sweetest sound, Thomas Kelly, S.M.

1 GRACE is the sweetest sound
That ever reached our ears;
When conscience charged and justice frowned,
'Twas grace removed our fears.

2 'Tis freedom to the slave,
'Tis light and liberty;
It takes its terror from the grave,
From death its victory.

3 Grace is a mine of wealth
Laid open to the poor;
Grace is the sovereign spring of health;
'Tis life for evermore.

4 Of grace then let us sing,
A joyful, wondrous theme,

Who grace has brought, shall glory bring,
And we shall reign with Him.

5 Then shall we see His face
With all the saints above,
And sing for ever of His grace,
For ever of His love.

I was sorry, at my departure, leaving your Ladyship in grief, and would still be grieved at it, if I were not assured that ye have One with you in the furnace, whose visage is like unto the Son of God. I am glad that ye have been acquainted from your youth with the wrestlings of God, and that ye get scarce liberty to swallow down your spittle, being casten from furnace to furnace, knowing if ye were not dear to God, and if your health did not require so much of Him, He would not spend so much physick upon you. All the brethren and sisters of Christ must be conform to His image and copy in suffering (Rom. 8:29). And some do more vividly resemble the copy than others.

Think, Madam, that it is a part of your glory to be enrolled among those whom one of the elders pointed out to John, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the lamb." Behold your Forerunner going out of the world all in a lake of blood, and it is not ill to die as He did. Fulfill with joy the remnant of the grounds and "remainders of the afflictions of Christ" in your body (Col. 1:24). Ye have lost a child: nay she is not lost to you who is found to Christ. She is not sent away, but only sent before, like unto a star, which going out of our sight doth not die and vanish, but shineth in another hemisphere. Ye see her not, yet she doth shine in another country. If her glass was but a short hour, what she wanteth of time that she hath gotten of eternity; and ye have to rejoice that ye have now some plenishing up in heaven. Build your nest upon no tree here; for ye see God hath sold the forest to death; and every tree whereupon we would rest is ready to be cut down, to the end we may fly¹ and mount up, and build upon the Rock, and dwell in the holes of the Rock. What ye love besides Jesus, your husband, is an adulterous lover. Now it is God's special blessing to Judah, that He will not let her find her paths in following her strange lovers. "Therefore, behold I will hedge up her way with thorns, and make a wall that she shall not find her paths. And she shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them" (Hos. 2:6,7). O thrice happy Judah, when God buildeth a double stone wall betwixt her and the fire of hell! The world, and the things of the world, Madam, is the lover ye naturally affect beside your own husband Christ. The hedge of thorns and the wall which God buildeth in your way, to hinder you from this lover, is the thorny hedge of daily grief, loss of children, weakness of body, iniquity of the time, uncertainty of estate, lack of worldly comfort, fear of God's anger for old unrepented-of sins.

Do not weary, neither think that death walketh towards you with a slow pace. Ye must be riper ere ye be shaken. Your days are no longer than Job's, that were "swifter than a post, and passed away as the ships of desire, and as the eagle that hasteth for the prey" (9:25, 26, margin). There is less sand in your glass now than there was yesternight. This span-length of ever-posting time will soon be ended. But the greater is the mercy of God, the more years ye get to advise, upon what terms, and upon what

conditions, ye cast your soul in the huge gulf of never-ending eternity. The Lord hath told you what ye should be doing till He come. "Wait and hasten," saith Peter, "for the Coming of our Lord." All is night that is here, in respect of ignorance and daily ensuing troubles, one always making way to another, as the ninth wave of the sea to the tenth; therefore sigh and long for the dawning of that morning, and the breaking of that day of the Coming of the Son of Man, when the shadows shall flee away. Persuade yourself the King is coming; read His letter sent before Him, "Behold, I come quickly" (Rev. 3:11). Wait with the wearied night-watch for the breaking of the eastern sky, and think that ye have not a morrow. ..Show yourself a Christian, by suffering without murmuring, for which sin fourteen thousand and seven hundred were slain (Numb. xvi. 49). In patience possess your soul. They lose nothing who gain Christ (Samuel Rutherford, Letter 4).

January 5

Morning Readings- Genesis 5, Matthew 5
Evening Readings- Ezra 5; Acts 5

Is the world crucified to you tonight? Or does it fascinate you?- Leonard Ravenhill

This Day in Christian History

1527- Martyrdom of Felix Manz, age twenty-nine, Swiss Anabaptist leader. Manz was drowned as punishment for preaching adult baptism.

Sing, Without Ceasing, Sing, by John Nelson Darby, S.M.

1 SING, without ceasing sing
The Saviour's present grace,
How all things shine in light divine
For those who've seen His face.

2 He's gone within the veil,
For us that place has won;
In Him we stand, a heavenly band,
Where He Himself is gone.

3 There all's unsullied light,
Our hearts let in its rays;
And heavenly light makes all things bright,
Seen in that blissful gaze.

4 Such here on earth we are,
Though we in weakness roam;
Our place on high, God's self so nigh,
His presence is our home.

5 And stayed by joy divine,
As hireling fills his day,
Through scenes of strife and desert life
We tread in peace our way.

6 That way is upward still,
Where life and glory are;
Our rest's above, in perfect love
The glory we shall share.

7 For ever with the Lord,
For ever like Him then,
We'll see His face in that blest place,
Our Father's house in heaven.

"On the first day of the first month shalt thou set up the tabernacle." Exodus. 40:2.

Let us begin the year with solemn reflection and say, with Job, "When a few years ere come I shall go the way whence I shall not return." Let me not only believe this; but think of it, and feel the importance of the sentiment. Yes in a little time I shall be no more seen. How where shall I be disposed of? The seasons will return as before: but the places that now know me will know me no more forever. Will this be a curse or a blessing? If I die in my sins I shall return no more to my possessions and enjoyments; to the calls of mercy; to the throne of grace; to the house of prayer! If I die in the Lord I shall return no more to these thorns and briars; to this vain and wicked world; to this aching head; to this throbbing heart; to these temptations and troubles, and sorrows.

Let us begin the year with self-inspection and say, with the chief butler, "I do remember my faults this day." We are prone to think of the failings of our fellow-creatures, and often imagine because we are free from their faults that we are faultless. But we may have other faults; we may have worse; and while a mote is in our brother's eye a beam may be in our own. Let us be open to conviction. Let us deal faithfully with our own hearts. Let us not compare ourselves with others, but with our advantages; with our knowledge; with our professions; with the law of God.

Let us begin the year with a determination to abandon whatever appears sinful. Should the evil course or the evil passion solicit, let it plead in vain while the Saviour-Judge says "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell."

Begin the year with pious and personal dedication. Through him who is the way yield yourselves unto God. It is your reasonable service. He has infinite claims to you. You will never be truly your own till you are his.

Begin the year with relative religion; and if the worship of God has never been established in your family, now commence it and say, with Joshua, "As for me and my

house, we will serve the Lord." A family without prayer is like a house without a roof. It is uncovered and exposed: and we know who has threatened to pour out his fury upon the families that call not upon his Name. (William Jay)

January 6

Morning Readings- Genesis 6, Matthew 6

Evening Readings- Ezra 6; Acts 6

We look upon prayer as a means of getting things for ourselves; The Bible idea of prayer is that we may get to know God Himself.- Oswald Chambers

This Day in Christian History

1740- Birth of John Fawcett, English Baptist preacher and poet. More than 160 of Fawcett's hymns are published during his lifetime, including "Blest Be the Tie That Binds" and "Lord, Dismiss Us with Thy Blessing."

1850- Conversion of Charles Spurgeon in a Wesleyan chapel at age 16. The text preached by the exhorter (the minister was not able to be present due to a snowstorm) was Isaiah 45:22.

1924- In England the first worship service broadcast over radio from a church is aired by the British Broadcasting Company. The service is conducted by H. R. L. Sheppard at St. Martin-in-the-Fields Church.

Hark! Ten Thousand Voices Crying, John Nelson Darby, 8787

1 HARK! ten thousand voices crying
"Lamb of God" with one accord;
Thousand thousand saints replying,
Wake at once the echoing chord.

2 "Praise the Lamb", the chorus waking,
All in heaven together throng;
Loud and far each tongue partaking
Rolls around the endless song.

3 Grateful incense this, ascending
Ever to the Father's throne;
Every knee to Jesus bending,
All the mind in heaven is one.

4 All the Father's counsels claiming
Equal honours to the Son;
All the Son's effulgence beaming
Makes the Father's glory known.

5 By the Spirit all-pervading,
Hosts unnumbered round the Lamb,
Crowned with light and joy unfading,
Hail Him as the great "I AM".

6 Joyful now the new creation
Rests in undisturbed repose,
Blest in Jesus' full salvation,
Sorrow now nor thralldom knows.

7 Hark! the heavenly notes resounding,
Higher swells the song of praise;
Through creation's vault responding
Loud Amens which joy doth raise.

Pity and pray for those whose eyes are not yet opened. You would be concerned in other cases of far less moment and misery. You feel even for the blind beggar that sits on the bank, or is led along by his faithful dog. How much more would you be distressed at the sight of a brother, or sister, or mother, or child, in this groping and comfortless condition! Where are your feelings when you behold sinners incapable of spiritual action and enjoyment and approaching senseless the verge of the bottomless pit.

You were once in the same state yourselves, and can therefore sympathize with those who are still in it. O tell them what you see and enjoy. Tell them light is sweet, and what a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the Sun of Righteousness. It would not indeed be kind to do this unless there was hope for them. But there is hope in Israel concerning this thing. You cannot open their eyes for them. And they cannot open their own eyes. But there is One to do it who is able, and is equally willing. Tell them what he has done for you. Tell them that he is now within call: that he is at this moment passing by: and never yet refused the prayer of the destitute. (William Jay)

January 7

Morning Readings- Genesis 7, Matthew 7
Evening Readings- Ezra 7; Acts 7

Now, as always, God discloses Himself to "babes" and hides Himself in thick darkness from the wise and the prudent. We must simplify our approach to Him. We must strip down to essentials (and they will be found to be blessedly few). We must put away all effort to impress, and come with the guileless candor of childhood. If we do this, without doubt God will quickly respond.- A. W. Tozer

This Day in Christian History

1829- Birth of hymnwriter Frederick Whitfield in Shropshire, England. He wrote "Oh How I Love Jesus".

1869- Death of hymnwriter William Bradbury, who published 59 volumes of hymns.

Let Every Mortal Ear Attend, Isaac Watts, Isaiah 55.1 CM

1 Let every mortal ear attend,
And every heart rejoice,
The trumpet of the gospel sounds
With an inviting voice.

2 Ho, all ye hungry starving souls,
That feed upon the wind,
And vainly strive with earthly toys
To fill an empty mind,

3 Eternal wisdom has prepar'd
A soul reviving feast,
And bids your longing appetites
The rich provision taste.

4 Ho, ye that pant for living streams,
And pine away and die,
Here you may quench your raging thirst
With springs that never dry.

5 Rivers of love and mercy here
In a rich ocean join;
Salvation in abundance flows,
Like floods of milk and wine.

6 Ye perishing and naked poor,
Who work with mighty pain
To weave a garment of your own
That will not hide your sin,

7 Come naked, and adorn your souls
In robes prepar'd by God,
Wrought by the labours of his Son,
And dy'd in his own blood.

8 Dear God, the treasures of thy love
Are everlasting mines,
Deep as our helpless miseries are,
And boundless as our sins.

9 The happy gates of gospel grace
Stand open night and day,
Lord, we are come to seek supplies,
And drive our wants away.

"...Behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me." Acts 20: 22, 23.

With regard to the future, Paul was both ignorant and informed; unacquainted with some things, but well apprised of others. Though Paul sometimes prophesied, he could not command the attribute of foreknowledge when he pleased. The use of it was always a miracle, and limited to a particular subject. He was therefore left uninformed of the ordinary course of life; and had to learn the will of God by events. Hence he says to the Philippians, " I hope presently to send Timothy, as soon as I see how it will go with me." It is the same with us ; and as he was now going up to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that would befall him there, so are we entering into another year, not knowing what a day may bring forth. The concealment is wise, and kind. We may judge of this by our past feelings. Had we been previously informed of the scenes through which we have passed, our hearts would have failed at the thought : yet when the dispensations came, we were able to bear them, and had been really though unconsciously prepared for them. And suppose we were now informed of some of the changes we may be called to endure in the months before us, we should be seized perhaps with an overpowering surprise and oppression, rendering us dead to all present enjoyments, and incapable of every present engagement. Let us trust in Him. He claims the full confidence of the heart, not only by his goodness but by his wisdom. Although we go out not knowing whither we go, He knoweth the way that we take. Nothing can deceive or perplex our guide. Especially let us check the workings of a vain curiosity. To this we are naturally prone. All pant to draw back the veil, and peep into futurity. But none are entrusted with its secrets. Even our Lord's own disciples were rebuked for wishing to know the times and the seasons which the Father reserved in his own power.

We may consider the year before us, as a desk containing three hundred and sixty-five letters, addressed to us, one for every day, announcing its trials, and prescribing its employments with an order to open daily no letter but the letter for the day. Now we may be strongly tempted to unseal beforehand some of the remainder; but this would only serve to embarrass us, while we should violate thereby the rule our Owner and Master has laid down for us "Take, therefore, no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." (William Jay)

January 8

Morning Readings- Genesis 8, Matthew 8
Evening Readings- Ezra 8; Acts 8

You can't develop character by reading books. You develop it from conflict.- Leonard Ravenhill

This Day in Christian History

1792- Birth of hymnwriter Lowell Mason, who published 40 volumes of music.

1956- Death of five American missionaries, Jim Elliot, Nate Saint, Roger Youderian, Ed McCully, and Pete Fleming, killed by the Auca Indians of Ecuador, whom they were attempting to evangelize.

How Honorable Is The Place, Isaac Watts, Isaiah 26:1-6, C.M.

1 How honourable is the place
Where we adoring stand,
Zion the glory of the earth,
And beauty of the land!

2 Bulwarks of mighty grace defend
The city where we dwell,
The walls of strong salvation made,
Defy th' assaults of hell.

3 Lift up the everlasting gates,
The doors wide open fling,
Enter, ye nations, that obey
The statutes of our King.

4 Here you shall taste unmingled joys,
And live in perfect peace,
You that have known Jehovah's name,
And ventur'd on his grace.

5 Trust in the Lord, for ever trust,
And banish all your fears;
Strength in the Lord Jehovah dwells,
Eternal as his years.

6 What tho' the rebels dwell on high,
His arm shall bring them low,
Low' as the caverns of the grave
Their lofty heads shall bow.

7 On Babylon our feet shall tread
In that rejoicing hour,
The ruins of her walls shall spread
A pavement for the poor.

I have neither tongue nor pen to express to you the happiness of such as are in Christ. When ye have sold all that ye have, and bought the field wherein this pearl is, ye will think it no bad market; for if ye be in Him, all His is yours, and ye are in Him; therefore, "because He liveth, ye shall live also" (John 14:19). And what is that else, but as if the Son had said, "I will not have heaven except My redeemed ones be with Me: they and I cannot live asunder. Abide in Me, and I in you." O sweet communion, when Christ and we are through other, and are no longer two! "Father, I will that those whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am, to behold My glory that Thou hast given Me" (John 17:24). Amen, dear Jesus, let it be according to that word. I wonder that ever your heart should be cast down, if ye believe this truth. I and they are not worthy of Jesus Christ, who will not suffer forty years' trouble for Him, since they have such glorious promises. But we fools believe those promises as the man that read Plato's writings concerning the immortality of the soul: so long as the book was in his hand he believed all was true, and that the soul could not die; but so soon as he laid by the book, he began to imagine that the soul is but a smoke or airy vapour, that perisheth with the expiring of the breath. So we at starts do assent to the sweet and precious promises; but, laying aside God's book, we begin to call all in question. It is faith indeed to believe without a pledge, and to hold the heart constant at this work; and when we doubt, to run to the Law and to the Testimony, and stay there. Madam, hold you here: here is your Father's testament,—read it; in it He hath left to you remission of sins and life everlasting. If all that ye have here be crosses and troubles, down-castings, frequent desertions, and departure of the Lord, who is suiting you in marriage, courage! He who is wooer and suitor should not be an household man with you till ye and He come up to His Father's house together. He purposeth to do you good at your latter end (Deut. 8:16), and to give you rest from the days of adversity (Ps. 94:13). "It is good to bear the yoke of God in your youth" (Lam. 3:27). "Turn in to your stronghold as a prisoner of hope" (Zech. 9:12). "For the vision is for an appointed time; but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry" (Hab. 2:3). Hear Himself saying, "Come, My people" (rejoice, He calleth on you!), "enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself, as it were for a little moment, till the indignation be past" (Isa. 26:20). Believe, then, believe and be saved; think not hard if ye get not your will, nor your delights in this life; God will have you to rejoice in nothing but Himself. God forbid that ye should rejoice in anything but in the cross of Christ (Gal. 6:14) (Samuel Rutherford, Letter 7).

January 9

Morning Readings- Genesis 9,10, Matthew 9

Evening Readings- Ezra 9; Acts 9

The God of the modern evangelical rarely astonishes anybody. He manages to stay pretty much with the constitution. Never break our by-laws. He's a very well-behaved God and very denominational and very much like one of us...we ask Him to help us when we're in trouble and look to Him to watch over us when we're asleep. The God of the modern evangelical isn't a God I could have much respect for.- A. W. Tozer

Psalm 4:1 2 3 5 6 7, Isaac Watts. L. M.

1 O God of grace and righteousness,
Hear and attend when I complain;
Thou hast enlarg'd me in distress,
Bow down a gracious ear again.

2 Ye sons of men, in vain ye try
To turn my glory into shame;
How long will scoffers love to lie,
And dare reproach my Saviour's name!

3 Know that the Lord divides his saints
From all the tribes of men beside;
He hears the cry of penitents
For the dear sake of Christ that dy'd.

4 When our obedient hands have done
A thousand works of righteousness,
We put our trust in God alone,
And glory in his pardoning grace.

5 Let the unthinking many say,
"Who will bestow some earthly good?"
But, Lord, thy light and love we pray,
Our souls desire this heavenly food.

6 Then shall my cheerful powers rejoice
At grace and favour so divine;
Nor will I change my happy choice
For all their corn and all their wine.

"Serve the Lord with gladness." Psalm 100:2

Delight in divine service is a token of acceptance. Those who serve God with a sad countenance, because they do what is unpleasant to them, are not serving Him at all; they bring the form of homage, but the life is absent. Our God requires no slaves to grace His throne; He is the Lord of the empire of love, and would have His servants dressed in the livery of joy. The angels of God serve him with songs, not with groans; a murmur or a sigh would be a mutiny in their ranks. That obedience which is not voluntary is disobedience, for the Lord looketh at the heart, and if He seeth that we serve Him from force, and not because we love Him, He will reject our offering. Service coupled with cheerfulness is heart-service, and therefore true. Take away joyful willingness from the Christian, and you have removed the test of his sincerity. If a man be driven to battle, he is no patriot; but he who marches into the fray with flashing eye and beaming face, singing, "It is sweet for one's country to die," proves himself to be

sincere in his patriotism. Cheerfulness is the support of our strength; in the joy of the Lord are we strong. It acts as the remover of difficulties. It is to our service what oil is to the wheels of a railway carriage. Without oil the axle soon grows hot, and accidents occur; and if there be not a holy cheerfulness to oil our wheels, our spirits will be clogged with weariness. The man who is cheerful in his service of God, proves that obedience is his element; he can sing. Reader, let us put this question--Do you serve the Lord with gladness? Let us show to the people of the world, who think our religion to be slavery, that it is to us a delight and a joy! Let our gladness proclaim that we serve a good Master (Charles Spurgeon).

January 10

Morning Readings- Genesis 11, Matthew 10

Evening Readings- Ezra 10; Acts 10

Many pastors criticize me for taking the Gospel so seriously. But do they really think that on Judgment Day, Christ will chastise me, saying, 'Leonard, you took Me too seriously'?- Leonard Ravenhill

Psalm 4:3,4,5,8. Isaac Watts, C. M. An Evening Psalm.

1 Lord, thou wilt hear me when I pray
I am for ever thine:
I fear before thee all the day,
Nor would I dare to sin.

2 And while I rest my weary head
From cares and business free,
'Tis sweet conversing on my bed
With my own heart and thee.

3 I pay this evening sacrifice;
And when my work is done,
Great God, my faith and hope relies
Upon thy grace alone.

4 Thus with my thoughts compos'd to peace
I'll give mine eyes to sleep;
Thy hand in safety keeps my days,
And will my slumbers keep.

"And they cast their crowns before the throne" Revelation 4:10.

Religion distinguishes and elevates. The possessors of it begin to rise on earth; but their dignity is perfected and displayed in heaven.

There they are crowned. Racers were crowned. Conquerors were crowned. Benefactors who had saved the life of a fellow-citizen were crowned. Bridegrooms were

crowned. Solomon's mother crowned him in the day of his espousals. Princes on their ascension were crowned. The saints on high are every one of these characters in themselves; and the crown each wears is called "a crown of righteousness;" "a crown of life;" "a crown of glory that fadeth not away ;" "a crown divinely superior to the prize of mortal ambition " Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible."

Yet if they are thus honoured, "they cast their crowns before the throne" they approach ; testifying by this action from whom they have received them, and confessing that they deem themselves unworthy to wear the honour all in conformity with the peculiar design of the Gospel, "that no flesh should glory in his presence" but according as it is written, he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord." (William Jay)

January 11

Morning Readings- Genesis 12, Matthew 11

Evening Readings- Nehemiah 1; Acts 11

It is by no haphazard chance that in every age men have risen early to pray. The first thing that marks decline in spiritual life is our relationship to the early morning.- Oswald Chambers

This Day in Christian History

1791- The First Day (or Sunday School) Society is organized in Philadelphia, making it the first interdenominational Sunday school organization in America. In 1824 the group merged with others to form the American Sunday School Union.

1817- Death of Timothy Dwight, president of Yale who was a major figure in the Second Great Awakening.

1843- Death of Francis Scott Key, Maryland-born lawyer, poet, and author of America's national anthem. Key was also among the organizers of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, founded in 1820.

Too Wise To Be Mistaken, Too Good To Be Unkind, Samuel Medley, C.M. Exodus 34:6

1 God shall alone the refuge be,
And comfort of my mind;
Too wise to be mistaken, He,
Too good to be unkind.

2 In all his holy, sovereign will,
He is, I daily find,
Too wise to be mistaken, still
Too good to be unkind.

3 When I the tempter's rage endure,
'Tis God supports my mind;
Too wise to be mistaken, sure,
Too good to be unkind.

4 When sore afflictions on me lie,
He is (though I am blind)
Too wise to be mistaken, yea,
Too good to be unkind.

5 What though I can't his goings see,
Nor all his footsteps find?
Too wise to be mistaken, He,
Too good to be unkind.

6 Hereafter he will make me know,
And I shall surely find,
He was too wise to err, and O,
Too good to be unkind.

I received your Ladyship's letter, in the which I perceive your case in this world smelleth of a fellowship and communion with the Son of God in His sufferings. Ye cannot, ye must not, have a more pleasant or more easy condition here, than He had, who "through afflictions was made perfect" (Heb. ii. 10). We may indeed think, Cannot God bring us to heaven with ease and prosperity? Who doubteth but He can? But His infinite wisdom thinketh and decreeth the contrary; and we cannot see a reason of it, yet He hath a most just reason. We never with our eyes saw our own soul; yet we have a soul. We see many rivers, but we know not their first spring and original fountain; yet they have a beginning. Madam, when ye are come to the other side of the water, and have set down your foot on the shore of glorious eternity, and look back again to the waters and to your wearisome journey, and shall see, in that clear glass of endless glory, nearer to the bottom of God's wisdom, ye shall then be forced to say, "If God had done otherwise with me than He hath done, I had never come to the enjoying of this crown of glory." It is your part now to believe, and suffer, and hope, and wait on; for I protest, in the presence of that all-discerning eye, who knoweth what I write and what I think, that I would not want the sweet experience of the consolations of God for all the bitterness of affliction. Nay, whether God come to His children with a rod or a crown, if He come Himself with it, it is well. Welcome, welcome, Jesus, what way soever Thou come, if we can get a sight of Thee! And sure I am, it is better to be sick, providing Christ come to the bedside and draw by the curtains, and say, "Courage, I am Thy salvation," than to enjoy health, being lusty and strong, and never to be visited of God (Samuel Rutherford, Letter 11).

January 12

Morning Readings- Genesis 13, Matthew 12

Evening Readings- Nehemiah 2; Acts 12

If you have ever prayed in the dawn you will ask yourself why you were so foolish as not to do it always: it is difficult to get into communion with God in the midst of the hurly-burly of the day.- Oswald Chambers

Awake My Soul, In Joyful Lays, Samuel Medley, L.M, Psalm 36:7

1 Awake, my soul, in joyful lays,
And sing thy great Redeemer's praise;
He justly claims a song from me;
His loving-kindness, O how free!

2 He saw me ruined in the fall,
Yet loved me notwithstanding all;
He saved me from my lost estate;
His loving-kindness, O how great!

3 Though numerous hosts of mighty foes,
Though earth and hell my way oppose,
He safely leads my soul along;
His loving-kindness, O how strong!

4 When trouble, like a gloomy cloud,
Has gathered thick and thundered loud,
He near my soul has always stood;
His loving-kindness, O how good!

5 Often I feel my sinful heart
Prone from my Saviour to depart;
But though I have him oft forgot,
His loving-kindness changes not!

6 Soon shall I pass the gloomy vale;
Soon all my mortal powers must fail;
O may my last expiring breath
His loving-kindness sing in death!

7 Then let me mount and soar away
To the bright world of endless day,
And sing with rapture and surprise,
His loving-kindness in the skies.

**And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not through the toay of the land of the Philistines, although that was near, for God said, lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt; but God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea" Exod.us 13:17, 18.*

There were two ways which they might have taken to their destination. One was from the north of Egypt to the south of Canaan. This was short and direct, and would have required but a few days. The other was very much farther and very indirect. Yet God took this. He therefore declined the common road which the people would have chosen, and which everyone else might have recommended, and selected the most unlikely.

God doth all things well. If he led them the longest way, it was the right way. He did not choose it arbitrarily, but for reasons founded in his wisdom and kindness. Some of these reasons are not mentioned, but they were afterward developed. It was to keep them from "seeing war" especially with the Philistines. At the present they were not fitted for serious conflict. Their spirits had been broken by oppression, and they partook of the timidity as well as mean ness of slaves. They were raw recruits, shepherds, brick-makers. It was better for them not to fight for a while, or to have only a distant brush with Amalek, rather than be plunged at once into sanguinary contest with veteran foes inured to battle. How instructive is this! He knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust. A bruised reed will he not break, and the smoking flax will he not quench. He gathers the lambs with his arm, and carries them in his bosom. He affords to young converts some peculiar encouragements to allure them on, till they have advanced too far to think of going back, whatever they may meet with. From a regard to their weakness and want of experience, for a time he hides or restrains many of their enemies, and thus secures them from encounters with which more aged Christians are familiar.

When will ministers and Christians learn to be followers of God? Under their guidance, persons who have but just left Egypt are often involved in disputes even with Philistines. They have scarcely entered the grammar-school of repentance before they are sent to the university of predestination. Babies, instead of being fed with milk, have strong meat given them, and even bones of controversy. Their hope is shaken, and then comfort destroyed, because they have not confidence and the full assurance of faith.

(William Jay)

January 13

Morning Readings- Genesis 14, Matthew 13

Evening Readings- Nehemiah 3; Acts 13

There is something essentially wrong with a man who calls himself a Christian and who can listen to a truly evangelistic sermon without coming under conviction again, without feeling something of his own unworthiness, and rejoicing when he hears the Gospel remedy being presented.- Martyn Lloyd-Jones

This Day in Christian History

1501- Christianity's first vernacular hymnal is printed in Prague. It contains eighty-nine hymns in the Czech language.

1559- Death of Menno Simons, founder of the Mennonite church.

1635- Birth of Philip Jacob Spener, who was the founder of the Pietist movement.

1836-Birth of Alexander Whyte, Scottish clergyman known as "the last of the Puritans." Whyte taught New Testament at New College, Edinburgh, and authored a number of devotional books.

My God, How Perfect Are Thy Ways, William Cowper, C.M., Jeremiah 23:6

1 MY God, how perfect are thy ways!
But mine polluted are;
Sin twines itself about my praise,
And slides into my prayer.

2 When I would speak what thou hast done,
To save me from my sin,
I cannot make thy mercies known,
But self-applause creeps in.

3 Divine desire, that holy flame
Thy grace creates in me;
Alas! impatience is its name,
When it returns to thee.

4 This heart, a fountain of vile thoughts,
How does it overflow!
While self upon the surface floats,
Still bubbling from below.

5 Let others in the gaudy dress
Of fancied merit shine;
The Lord shall be my righteousness,
The Lord for ever mine.

"He went out, not knowing where he was going", Hebrews 11:8

Have you ever "gone out" in this way? If so, there is no logical answer possible when anyone asks you what you are doing. One of the most difficult questions to answer in Christian work is, "What do you expect to do?" You don't know what you are going to do. The only thing you know is that God knows what He is doing. Continually examine your attitude toward God to see if you are willing to "go out" in every area of your life, trusting in God entirely. It is this attitude that keeps you in constant wonder,

because you don't know what God is going to do next. Each morning as you wake, there is a new opportunity to "go out," building your confidence in God. ". . . do not worry about your life . . . nor about the body . . ." (Luke 12:22). In other words, don't worry about the things that concerned you before you did "go out."

Have you been asking God what He is going to do? He will never tell you. God does not tell you what He is going to do— He reveals to you who He is. Do you believe in a miracle-working God, and will you "go out" in complete surrender to Him until you are not surprised one iota by anything He does? (Oswald Chambers)

January 14

Morning Readings- Genesis 15, Matthew 14
Evening Readings- Nehemiah 4; Acts 14

There is no need to get to a place of prayer; pray wherever you are.- Oswald Chambers

Begin My Tongue, Some Heavenly Theme, Isaac Watts C.M. Numbers 23:19; Psalm 89:1-8

1 Begin, my tongue, some heavenly theme,
And speak some boundless thing;
The mighty works, or mightier name,
Of our eternal King.

2 Tell of his wondrous faithfulness,
And sound his power abroad;
Sing the sweet promise of his grace,
And the performing God.

3 Proclaim, "Salvation from the Lord,
For wretched dying men";
His hand has writ the sacred word
With an immortal pen.

4 Engraved as in eternal brass,
The mighty promise shines;
Nor can the powers of darkness rase
Those everlasting lines.

5 His every word of grace is strong
As that which built the skies;
The voice that rolls the stars along
Speaks all the promises.

“Clouds and darkness surround Him . . .” Psalm 97:2

A person who has not been born again by the Spirit of God will tell you that the teachings of Jesus are simple. But when he is baptized by the Holy Spirit, he finds that “clouds and darkness surround Him . . .” When we come into close contact with the teachings of Jesus Christ we have our first realization of this. The only possible way to have full understanding of the teachings of Jesus is through the light of the Spirit of God shining inside us. If we have never had the experience of taking our casual, religious shoes off our casual, religious feet— getting rid of all the excessive informality with which we approach God— it is questionable whether we have ever stood in His presence. The people who are flippant and disrespectful in their approach to God are those who have never been introduced to Jesus Christ. Only after the amazing delight and liberty of realizing what Jesus Christ *does*, comes the impenetrable “darkness” of realizing who He *is*.

Jesus said, “The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63). Once, the Bible was just so many words to us — “clouds and darkness”— then, suddenly, the words become spirit and life because Jesus re-speaks them to us when our circumstances make the words new. That is the way God speaks to us; not by visions and dreams, but by words. When a man gets to God, it is by the most simple way— words. (Oswald Chambers)

January 15

Morning Readings- Genesis 16, Matthew 15

Evening Readings- Nehemiah 5; Acts 15

The highest angels take care of the lowest saints. "Are they not all ministering spirits ?"- Thomas Watson. Puritan Gems

This Day in Christian History

1896- Birth of Jacob Gartenhaus in Austria, founder of the International Board of Jewish Missions.

1915-Death of Mary Slessor, Scottish missionary to west Africa. She sailed for Nigeria in 1876 and worked among tribal peoples for 40 years.

1951- Death of Harry Ironside, Plymouth Brethren pastor, writer and Bible teacher.

There Is A Fountain Filled With Blood, William Cowper, C.M., Zechariah 13:1

1 THERE is a fountain fill'd with blood
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

2 The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;

And there have I, as vile as he,
Wash'd all my sins away.

3 Dear dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransom'd church of God
Be saved to sin no more.

4 E'er since, by faith, I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.

5 Then in a nobler, sweeter song,
I'll sing thy power to save;
When this poor lisp'ing stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave.

6 Lord, I believe thou hast prepared
(Unworthy though I be)
For me a blood-bought free reward,
A golden harp for me!

7 'Tis strung, and tuned, for endless years,
And form'd by power divine,
To sound in God the Father's ears
No other name but thine.

Unto thee, O Lord do I lift up my soul" - Psalm 25:1.

It is not easy to do this. We are naturally sluggish and grovelling. Who has not reason to acknowledge with shame and sorrow, "My soul cleaveth unto the dust?" It is easy enough, in duty, to lift up pur hands, and our eyes, and our voices; but it is another thing to come even to his seat, to enter into the secret of his tabernacle, and to hold intercourse with the God of heaven. And yet, without this, what is devotion? And how unanswerable will all our services be to the requisition of him who is a Spirit, and seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth.

And without this, a real Christian is not satisfied with God. He will not, indeed, from a principal of duty, undervalue the means of grace, and neglect private and public devotion; but he is disappointed unless he can lift up his soul unto God.

And this marks the spiritual worshipper. He is not distinguished by always enjoying liberty and fervour in his holy exercises; but he mourns the want of them while the formalist looks no further than the performance itself, and returns from the house and throne of God without ever inquiring whether he has had communion with him.

It is the spirituality of religion that be friends enjoyment. Nothing yields us pleasure but in proportion as the heart is engaged in the pursuit. But it is good to draw near

to God. Then there is a sacred charm that keeps our thoughts from wandering. Then we attend on the Lord without distraction. Then we feel no weariness of spirit. We call the Sabbath a delight. We find his words, and eat them. And our meditation of him is sweet. (William Jay)

January 16

Morning Readings- Genesis 17, Matthew 16

Evening Readings- Nehemiah 6; Acts 16

You can have all of your doctrines right - yet still not have the presence of God.-
Leonard Ravenhill

This Day in Christian History

1604- At the Hampton Court Conference in London, Puritan John Rainolds suggests to King James I “that there might be a new translation of the Bible, as consonant as can be to the original Hebrew and Greek.” James grants his approval, and the ensuing project leads to the 1611 publication of the Authorized (King James) Version of the Bible.

1786- The Virginia legislature adopted the Ordinance of Religious Freedom which guaranteed that no man would be forced to attend or support any religious organization.

May The Grace of Christ Our Savior, by John Newton 8787

1 May the grace of Christ our Saviour,
And the Father's boundless love,
With the Holy Spirit's favour,
Rest upon us from above.

2 Thus may we abide in union
With each other and the Lord,
And possess, in sweet communion,
Joys which earth can ne'er afford.

“Peter said to Him, ‘Lord, why can I not follow You now?’” John 13:37

There are times when you can't understand why you cannot do what you want to do. When God brings a time of waiting, and appears to be unresponsive, don't fill it with busyness, just wait. The time of waiting may come to teach you the meaning of sanctification— to be set apart from sin and made holy— or it may come after the process of sanctification has begun to teach you what service means. Never run before God gives you His direction. If you have the slightest doubt, then He is not guiding. Whenever there is doubt— wait.

At first you may see clearly what God's will is— the severance of a friendship, the breaking off of a business relationship, or something else you feel is distinctly God's will for you to do. But never act on the impulse of that feeling. If you do, you will cause

difficult situations to arise which will take years to untangle. Wait for God's timing and He will do it without any heartache or disappointment. When it is a question of the providential will of God, wait for God to move.

Peter did not wait for God. He predicted in his own mind where the test would come, and it came where he did not expect it. "I will lay down my life for Your sake." Peter's statement was honest but ignorant. "Jesus answered him, ' . . . the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times' " (John 13:38). This was said with a deeper knowledge of Peter than Peter had of himself. He could not follow Jesus because he did not know himself or his own capabilities well enough. Natural devotion may be enough to attract us to Jesus, to make us feel His irresistible charm, but it will never make us disciples. Natural devotion will deny Jesus, always falling short of what it means to truly follow Him. (Oswald Chambers)

January 17

Morning Readings- Genesis 18, Matthew 17

Evening Readings- Nehemiah 7; Acts 17

A man ought to live so that everybody knows he is a Christian... and most of all, his family ought to know.- D. L. Moody

This Day in Christian History

1968- Death of Bob Jones, Sr., evangelist and founder of Bob Jones University

O For An Overcoming Faith, Isaac Watts, 1 Corinthians 15:55 C.M.

1 O for an overcoming faith
To cheer my dying hours,
To triumph o'er the monster Death,
And all his frightful powers.

2 Joyful with all the strength I have
My quivering lips should sing,
"Where is thy boasted victory, Grave?
And where the monster's sting?"

3 If sin be pardon'd I'm secure,
Death hath no sting beside;
The law gives sin its damning power,
But Christ, my ransom, died.

4 Now to the God of victory
Immortal thanks be paid,
Who makes us conquerors while we die,
Thro' Christ our living head.

"I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end" Jeremiah 29:11

What can the people of God desire more? They are here assured by himself that he thinks of them that he knows his thoughts towards them that they are kind in their nature : thoughts of peace, and not of evil and that they regard an end allowing and requiring expectation : to bring them to an expected end.

The Christian is now on the sea, encountering many a wind, and feeling many a fear: but the voyage will end ; and he will be brought into the desired haven. He is now on a journey; and he is often discouraged because of the way; but it will end in a better country, and at his Father s house, where are many mansions. He is now in a warfare; and though it be a good one, it is trying and painful: but the strife will soon end; and the head exchange the helmet for " the crown of glory that fadeti not away."

But what characterizes the posture of the Believer's mind with regard to this end? Expectation. He is looking for that blessed hope. He is waiting for the Saviour from heaven. For he is now saved by hope. Every thing now leads him forward. Creatures; ordinances; his connections; his experience; everything in his painful, everything in his pleasing feelings all, all says, "Arise, and depart hence, for this is not your rest." Human expectation is seldom justified by the event. But let the Christian s expectation be as great as even the Scripture can make it, the blessedness itself will be much greater; and the fruition will induce the acknowledgment, "The half was not told me."

Keep much alive this expectation. Let nothing shake its confidence. Let nothing obscure the object, or the ground of it. It can do wonders; and will produce a thousand advantages in proportion as it is realized. (William Jay)

January 18

Morning Readings- Genesis 19, Matthew 18

Evening Readings- Nehemiah 8; Acts 18

The Christian life is very much like climbing a hill of ice. You cannot slide up. You have to cut every step with an ice axe. Only with incessant labor in cutting and chipping can you make any progress. If you want to know how to backslide, leave off going forward. Cease going upward and you will go downward of necessity. You can never stand still.-

Charles Spurgeon

This Day in Christian History

1917- Death of Andrew Murray, a South African Dutch Reformed minister best known for his books on prayer and the deeper life.

Hark, My Soul, It Is The Lord William Cowper, John 21:16 7777

1 HARK, my soul! it is the Lord:
'Tis thy Saviour, hear his word;
Jesus speaks, and speaks to thee:

“Say, poor sinner, lovest thou me?

2 “I deliver’d thee when bound,
And when bleeding, heal’d thy wound;
Sought thee wandering, set thee right,
Turn’d thy darkness into light.

3 “Can a woman’s tender care
Cease towards the child she bare?
Yes, she may forgetful be,
Yet will I remember thee.

4 “Mine is an unchanging love,
Higher than the heights above;
Deeper than the depths beneath,
Free and faithful, strong as death.

5 “Thou shalt see my glory soon,
When the work of grace is done;
Partner of my throne shalt be:—
Say, poor sinner, lovest thou me?”

6 Lord, it is my chief complaint,
That my love is weak and faint;
Yet I love thee and adore:
Oh for grace to love thee more!

(Sermon on John 10:6) "I am the door." The only way into the Church of God, either for ministers or members, is by Christ, and through faith in him. Many enter in by learning; learning is not to be despised, but yet it is not the door. There are many that have entered into the ministry, by having eminent gifts, but these are not the door. And those who enter in such a way are thieves and robbers, for they enter not in by the door. Again, many enter in by the door of worldly favour, some by the favour of the rich, some by the favour of the common people, some by the favour of the patron; but still they are thieves and robbers, for they enter not in by the door. Remember then, and never forget it, that the right way into the ministry is through Christ. None can tell of sin, but those who have felt its burden. None can tell of pardon, but those who have tasted of it. None can tell of Christ's power to sanctify but those who have holiness in their hearts. Brethren, hold such in reverence; flee from all others; they may have learning, they may have gifts, they may have the flattery of the common people, but they are thieves and robbers.

But further, there are many members who enter into the fold another way; they also are thieves and robbers. There are many who enter in by the door of knowledge? they have got acquainted with Bible knowledge, they can tell of the way of a sinner's acceptance with God; but if you have not come into the fold by being washed in the blood of Christ, you are a thief and a robber.

Some enter into the fold by a good life. As touching the law they are like Paul, blameless. You are not a thief, you are not a swearer, you are not a drunkard, and you think you have a right to enter in? a right to sit at the Lord's table; but Christ says it over and over again, you are a thief and a robber. Ah, brethren, remember if you are admitted into the fold on account of your morality? your outward decency? your good life, you are a thief and a robber. Brethren, there is a day coming when those who have entered into the sheepfold, not by the door, but some other way, will look back and see their guilt when they shall enter an undone eternity. (Robert Murray McCheyne)

January 19

Morning Readings- Genesis 20, Matthew 19
Evening Readings- Nehemiah 9; Acts 19

Today Christians spend more money on dog food than missions.- Leonard Ravenhill

This Day in Christian History

1568- Death of Miles Coverdale who finished William Tyndale's English Bible translation.

O Lord, a Few of Thine by James Deck, S.M.

1 O LORD, a few of Thine
Are gathered to Thy name;
May hearts o'erflow with joy divine
As we Thy promise claim.

2 We are, O Lord, Thine own,
The purchase of Thy blood;
By Thee we would approach the throne,
Confiding in our God.

3 In us the Spirit dwells,
The witness of God's love;
Our hearts rejoice while He reveals
Thy glorious things above.

"And Noah -walked with God." Genesis 6:9.

Three expressions are observable as to our walking with regard to God.

First, we read of "walking after the Lord." This supposes him to be our leader and example: and requires us to be followers of him as dear children.

Secondly, we read of walking before God. This supposes him to be our observer and witness we are thus always in his sight.

We also read of "walking with God." So did Noah. So did Enoch. So does every partaker of divine grace. This seems to hold aim forth as our companion and friend. This

is surprising : but so it is. There is an intercourse between us we have fellowship one with another. In order to this, reconciliation is necessary : for "how can two walk together except they be agreed?" And this reconciliation must be mutual. It is not enough that God is reconciled to us through the blood of the Cross we must be also reconciled to God, and love his presence, and choose his way.

For walking with God implies a oneness of course; and supposes that we advance together towards the same end. God's aim is his own glory: and we are enjoined, "whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, to do all to the glory of God." As far as we observe this rule, we walk with God ; as far as we neglect it, we leave God, and go in another direction.

If we are familiar and conversant with anyone, we unavoidably catch something of his spirit and his manners Hence it is said, "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise ; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed." If I walk with God, I shall resemble him; and all will take knowledge of me that I have been with Jesus. How envied would the man be that was allowed to walk with the king. But I walk with the King of Kings and the Lord of lords. (William Jay)

January 20

Morning Readings- Genesis 21, Matthew 20

Evening Readings- Nehemiah 10; Acts 20

A Christian is a perpetual miracle.- Charles Spurgeon

His be the Victor's name, S. Whitlock Gandy, S.M.

1 HIS be the Victor's name
Who fought the fight alone;
Triumphant saints no honour claim,
His conquest was their own.

2 By weakness and defeat,
He won the meed and crown;
Trode all our foes beneath His feet
By being trodden down.

3 He Satan's power laid low;
Made sin, He sin o'erthrew;
Bowed to the grave, destroyed it so,
And death by dying slew.

4 Bless, bless the Conqueror slain,
Slain in His victory;
Who lived, who died, who lives again ---
For thee, His church, for thee!

(Sermon on John 10:6) I come now to the second thing proposed, and that is, to shew you Christ's invitation. "I am the door; by me if any man enter in he shall be saved." There are many sweet invitations to sinners in the Bible; I have often felt these words to be the sweetest. There are some invitations addressed to those who are thirsty. It is said in Isaiah, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," etc. Christ said on the last day, that great day of the feast, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." And he says, near the end of Revelation, "I will give to him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." Again, there are some invitations that are addressed to those that have a burden; "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Again, there are some that are addressed to those who are prisoners; "Turn you to the stronghold ye prisoners of hope." But this appears to me the sweetest of all, for it is said, "If any man." It is not said, if any thirsty man, if any weary man, if any burdened man, but if any man enter in he shall be saved. I have seen some rich men's doors, where none could enter but the rich; and where the beggar must lie at the gate. But Christ's door is open to any man, whatever your life, whatever your character may be. Christ is not like the door of some churches, where none can enter in but the rich; Christ's door is open to the poor; "To the poor the gospel is preached." Some, perhaps, can say, "I am the most vile one in this congregation," yet Christ says, "Enter in." Some, perhaps, can say, "I have sinned more than all; I have sinned against a father, I have sinned against a mother, I have sinned against mercies, and against judgments, against the invitations of the gospel, and against light," yet Christ says, "Enter in."

Observe still farther that the invitation is not to look at the door, but to enter in. There are many that hear about the door, but that is not enough; it is to enter in at it. And there are many that like to hear about the door, but yet they do not enter in. Ah, my brethren, that's a great cheat of the devil. I am persuaded many of you will go away this day well pleased because you heard about the door, but you do not enter in. There are many that go a step farther, they look in at the door, but yet they do not enter in. I believe that many of you are often brought there; but when it comes to the point, that you must leave your idols, that you must leave your sins, you do not enter in. "By me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved." (Robert Murray McCheyne).

January 21

Morning Readings- Genesis 22, Matthew 21
Evening Readings- Nehemiah 11; Acts 21

I believe the family was established long before the church, and my duty is to my family first. I am not to neglect my family.- D. L. Moody

This Day in Christian History

1525 At a secret (and illegal) gathering of six men in Zurich, Switzerland, Conrad Grebel rebaptizes George Blaurock, a former monk. This meeting is considered the birth of the German Anabaptist movement.

Lo, What A Glorious Sight Appears, Isaac Watts, Revelation 21:1-4 C.M.

1 Lo, what a glorious sight appears
To our believing eyes!
The earth and sea are pass'd away,
And the old rolling skies.

2 From the third heaven where God resides,
That holy happy place,
The New Jerusalem comes down
Adorn'd with shining grace.

3 Attending angels shout for joy,
And the bright armies sing,
"Mortals, behold the sacred seat
"Of your descending King.

4 "The God of glory down to men
"Removes his blest abode,
"Men the dear objects of his grace,
"And he the loving God.

5 "His own soft hand shall wipe the tears
"From every weeping eye,
"And pains, and groans, and griefs, and fears,
"And death itself shall die."

6 How long, dear Saviour, O how long,
Shall this bright hour delay!
Fly swifter round, ye wheels of time,
And bring the welcome day.

(Sermon on Psalm 40:1-3) The difficulty of conversion. So difficult and superhuman is the work of turning a soul from sin and Satan unto God, that God only can do it; and, accordingly, in our text, every part of the process is attributed solely to him. God, and God alone, then, is the author of conversion. He who created man at first, alone can create him anew in Christ Jesus unto good works. And the reason of this we shall see clearly by going over the parts of the work here described. The first deliverance is imaged forth to us in the words: "He brought me up out of an horrible pit;" and the counterpart or corresponding blessing to that is, "He set my feet upon a rock." There can hardly be imagined a more hopeless situation than that of being placed, like Joseph, in a pit, and especially an horrible pit, or a pit of destruction, as the Psalmist calls it. Hemmed in on every side by damp and gloomy walls, with scarce an outlet into the open air, in vain you struggle to clamber up to the light and fresh atmosphere of the open day; you are a prisoner in the bowels of the earth, the tenant of a pit of horrors. Such is your state, if you be unconverted; you are lying in a pit of destruction; you are

dead while you live — buried alive, as it were; dead in trespasses and sins, while yet you walk in them. You cannot possibly ascend to the light of day, and the fresh atmosphere above you; for the pit in which you are, is indeed your prison-house; and except you be drawn up from it by the cords of grace, it will usher you into that yawning pit which the Bible says is bottomless. Such is your state, if you be unconverted. You are under the curse; for “cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them;” and you have never continued in any of these things, doing them from the heart, as unto the Lord, which only can be called doing them. You have never savingly believed on the Son of God; and therefore you are “condemned already”— you have never been lifted out of the pit of condemnation. “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him;” that is, it is never lifted off him. The pit of wrath and destruction, in which you are by nature, is never exchanged by you until you leave it for the pit of wrath eternal. Since this horrible pit, then, represents the state of wrath and condemnation in which we are by nature, how impossible is it that we can extricate ourselves from it! To escape from the prison-house of earthly kings is a hard and daring enterprise; but who shall break loose from the prison-house of the eternal God? Who shall clamber up from the pit of condemnation in which he confines the soul? or who can work out a pardon for past offences? Who can blot out the sin of his past life? Look back upon your lives, brethren, spent in forgetfulness of God, in desires and deeds contrary to God; and then remember he is infinitely just, he cannot lie, he cannot repent, and say if you think it an easy thing, or a possible thing, to save yourselves from the fearful pit in which you are now reserved for his wrath? But if you cannot save yourself from the pit, and set your feet upon a rock, much less can you extricate yourself from the miry clay and establish your own goings. (Robert Murray McCheyne)

January 22

Morning Readings- Genesis 23, Matthew 22

Evening Readings- Nehemiah 12; Acts 22

A true shepherd leads the way. He does not merely point the way.- Leonard Ravenhill

This Day in Christian History

1876- Death of John B. Dykes, who wrote over 300 hymn-tunes.

The Wondering World Inquires To Know, Isaac Watts, L.M. Song of Solomon 5:9-

16

1 The wondering world inquires to know
Why I should love my Jesus so;
“What are his charms,” say they, “above
The objects of a mortal love?”

2 Yes, my Beloved to my sight
Shows a sweet mixture, red and white:

All human beauties, all divine,
In my Beloved meet and shine.

3 White is his soul, from blemish free;
Red with the blood he shed for me;
The fairest of ten thousand fairs;
A sun amongst ten thousand stars.

4 His head the finest gold excels;
There wisdom in perfection dwells;
And glory, like a crown, adorns
Those temples once beset with thorns.

5 Compassions in his heart are found,
Hard by the signals of his wound;
His sacred side no more shall bear
The cruel scourge, the piercing spear.

6 His hands are fairer to behold
Than diamonds, set in rings of gold;
Those heavenly hands that on the tree
Were nailed, and torn, and bled for me.

7 Though once he bowed his feeble knees,
Loaded with sins and agonies,
Now on the throne of his command,
His legs like marble pillars stand.

8 His eyes are majesty and love,
The eagle tempered with the dove;
No more shall trickling sorrows roll
Through those dear windows of his soul.

9 His mouth, that poured out long complaints,
Now smiles, and cheers his fainting saints;
His countenance more graceful is
Than Lebanon, with all its trees.

10 All over glorious is my Lord;
Must be beloved, and yet adored;
His worth if all the nations knew,
Sure the whole world would love him too!

Is there no one reading this whose heart is longing to possess just such a master-principle? Is there no one who has arrived at that most interesting of all the stages of conversion in which you are panting after a power to make you new? You have entered

in at the straight gate of believing. You have seen that there is no peace to the unjustified; and therefore you have put on Christ for your righteousness; and already you feel something of the joy and peace of believing. You can look back on your past life, spent without God in the world, and without Christ in the world, and without the Spirit in the world; you can see yourself a condemned outcast, and you say: "Though I should wash my hands in snow-water, yet mine own clothes would abhor me". You can do all this, with shame and self-reproach, it is true, but yet without dismay, and without despair; for your eye has been lifted believingly to Him who was made sin for us, and you are persuaded that, as it please God to count all your iniquities to the Saviour, so He is willing, and has always been willing, to count all the Saviour's righteousness to you. Without despair, did I say? Nay, with joy and singing; for if, indeed, you believe with all your heart, then you are come to the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness without works; which David describes, saying: "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity."

This is the peace of the justified man. But is this peace a state of perfect blessedness? Is there nothing left to be desired? I appeal to those of you who know what it is to be just by believing. What is it that still clouds the brow, that represses the exulting of the spirit? Why might we not always join in the song of thanksgiving: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all he benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities"! If we have received double for all our sins, why should it ever be needful for us to argue as does the psalmist: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul: and why are thou disquieted within me?". My friends there is not a man among you who has really believed, who has not felt the disquieting thought of which I am now speaking. There may be some of you who have felt it so painfully, that it has obscured, as with a heavy cloud, the sweet light of gospel peace, the shining in of the reconciled countenance upon the soul. the thought is this: "I am a justified man; but, alas! I am not a sanctified man. I can look at my past life without despair; but how can I look forward to what is to come?". (Robert Murray McCheyne)

January 23

Morning Readings- Genesis 24, Matthew 23

Evening Readings- Nehemiah 13; Acts 23

The Christian is the most contented man in the world, but he is the least contented with the world. He is like a traveler in an inn, perfectly satisfied with the inn and its accommodation, considering it as an inn, but putting quite out of all consideration the idea of making it his home.- Charles Spurgeon

Psalm 12:2. Isaac Watts, C. M.

Complaint of a general corruption of manners; or, The promise and signs of Christ's coming to judgment

1 Help, Lord, for men of virtue fail,
Religion loses ground,

The sons of violence prevail,
And treacheries abound.

2 Their oaths and promises they break,
Yet act the flatterer's part;
With fair deceitful lips they speak,
And with a double heart.

3 If we reprove some hateful lie,
How is their fury stirr'd!
"Are not our lips our own" they cry,
"And who shall be our lord?"

4 Scoffers appear on every side,
Where a vile race of men
Is rais'd to seats of power and pride,
And bears the sword in vain.

5 Lord, when iniquities abound,
And blasphemy grows bold,
When faith is hardly to be found,
And love is waxing cold,

6 Is not thy chariot hastening on?
Hast thou not given this sign?
May we not trust and live upon
A promise so divine?

7 "Yes," saith the Lord, "now will I rise,
"And make oppressors flee;
"I shall appear to their surprise,
"And set my servants free."

8 Thy word, like silver seven times try'd,
Thro' ages shall endure;
The men that in thy truth confide,
Shall find thy promise sure.

Sit loose to the enjoyments of this world. It is quite right for a believer to use the things of this world, and to rejoice in them. None has such a right as the believer has to rejoice and be happy. He has a right to use the bodily comforts of the world—to eat his meat "with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God." He has a right to all the joys of home, and kindred, and friendship. It is highly proper that he should enjoy these things. He has a right to all the pure pleasures of mind, of intellect, and imagination; for God has given him all things richly to enjoy. Still, he should "rejoice as though he rejoiced not, and use this world as not abusing it;" for "the time is short." In a little while, you will

be at your Father's table above, drinking the new wine with Christ. You will meet with all your brothers and sisters in Christ—you will have pure joy in God through ceaseless ages. Do not be much taken with the joys that are here. I have noticed children, when they were going out to a feast, they would eat but sparingly, that they might have a keener appetite for the coming dainties; so, dear friends, you are going to a feast above, do not dull your appetite with earthly joys—sit loosely to them all —look upon them all as fading. As you walk through a flower garden, you never think of lying down, to make your home among its roses; so, pass through the garden of this world's best joys. Smell the flowers in passing; but do not tarry. Jesus calls you to His banqueting house—there you will feed among the lilies on the mountains of spices. Oh! it ill becomes a child of God to be fond of an earthly banquet, when you are looking to sitting down so soon with Jesus—it ill becomes you to be much taken up with dress and show, when you are so soon to see the face that was crowned with thorns. Brethren, if you are ever so much taken up with any enjoyment that it takes away your love for prayer or for your Bible, or that it would frighten you to hear the cry: "The Bridegroom cometh:" and you would say: Is He come already? then you are abusing this world. Oh! sit loose to this world's joy: "The time is short." (Robert Murray McCheyne)

January 24

Morning Readings- Genesis 25, Matthew 24

Evening Readings- Esther 1; Acts 24

John the Baptist never performed any miracles. Yet, he was greater than any of the Old Testament prophets.- Leonard Ravenhill

In vain the Wealthy Mortals Toil, Isaac Watts, Psalm 49:6,9; Ecclesiastes 8:8; Job 3:14,15. 8888

1 In vain the wealthy mortals toil,
And heap their shining dust in vain,
Look down and scorn the humble poor,
And boast their lofty hills of gain.

2 Their golden cordials cannot ease
Their pained hearts or aching heads,
Nor fright nor bribe approaching death
From glittering roofs and downy beds.

3 The lingering, the unwilling soul
The dismal summons must obey,
And bid a long a sad farewell
To the pale lump of lifeless clay.

4 Thence they are huddled to the grave,
Where kings and slaves have equal thrones;
Their bones without distinction lie
Amongst the heap of meaner bones.

"Knock, and it shall be opened unto you" Luke 11:9.

It is needless to prove, that by this action our Saviour intends prayer. But see the simplicity and familiarity of his comparisons; and wonder not that the common people heard him gladly. Volumes have been written upon the subject of prayer: but he who spake as never man spake, comprises everything in one word "knock".

Where are we to knock? The Savior says "I am the door. I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

When are we to knock? "Evening, and morning, and at noon," says David, "will I pray, and cry aloud." "Pray without ceasing," says Paul. And says our Lord, "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint."

For what are we to knock? We may in everything, by prayer and supplication, make known our requests unto God. But we are supremely to implore all spiritual blessings, because these are blessings for the soul and eternity. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

How are we to knock? Importunately we cannot knock too loud. Prayer is nothing unless it be sincere and earnest. God will not regard the address we ourselves do not feel. Jacob said, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me:" and he prevailed. How? Perseveringly. The Lord does not always immediately appear to our joy. "I waited patiently for the Lord," says David, "and" at last "he inclined his ear unto me, and heard my cry."

But though it be a good thing for a man not only to hope, but quietly wait for the salvation of God; it is often no easy thing. The delay is trying hi itself; but circumstances may render it more so. While standing at the door, the weather may be foul; or those passing by may laugh and insult for they are full, and have need of nothing: or the applicant may be weak, and ready to faint. And what, while thus exercised, can keep him knocking and waiting? Nothing but a sense of his wants. They are so pressing that he must succeed, or perish. Nothing but hope. This hope may be sometimes very weak. But a degree of it, if it only amounts to a mere possibility, is necessary to preserve him from abandoning his suit, and saying, "What should I wait for the Lord any longer?" More, however, is desirable and attainable: and here is enough to say to him, "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord."

But how shall I plead? I knock, and long for audience and yet I draw back, and seem afraid to be seen. For what can I say? What does the beggar say? He is not at a loss. He knows a fine address is not necessary it would be contemned. Yet he can express his meaning: and his wants and feelings make him eloquent. (William Jay)

January 25

Morning Readings- Genesis 26, Matthew 25

Evening Readings- Esther 2; Acts 25

You say, "But He has not answered." He has, He is so near to you that His silence is the answer. His silence is big with terrific meaning that you cannot understand yet, but presently you will.- Oswald Chambers

Psalm 13:1. Isaac Watts, L. M. Pleading with God under desertion; or, Hope, in darkness.

1 How long, O Lord, shall I complain
Like one that seeks his God in vain?
Canst thou thy face for ever hide?
And I still pray and be deny'd?

2 Shall I for ever be forgot
As one whom thou regardest not?
Still shall my soul thine absence mourn?
And still despair of thy return?

3 How long shall my poor troubled breast
Be with these anxious thoughts opprest?
And Satan, my malicious foe,
Rejoice to see me sunk so low.

4 Hear, Lord, and grant me quick relief,
Before my death conclude my grief;
If thou withhold thy heavenly light,
I sleep in everlasting night.

5 How will the powers of darkness boast,
If but one praying soul be lost!
But I have trusted in thy grace,
And shall again behold thy face.

6 Whate'er my fears or foes suggest,
Thou art my hope, my joy, my rest;
My heart shall feel thy love, and raise
My cheerful voice to songs of praise.

Robert Murray McCheyne on the Lord's Supper, Part 1

The Lord's Supper is the sweetest of all ordinances:

1. *Because of the time when it was instituted.* "The Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread." It was the darkest night that ever was in this world,

and yet the brightest — the night when His love of the sinners was put to the severest test. How amazing that He should remember our comfort at such a time!

2. *Because it is the believer's ordinance.* It is the duty of all men to pray. God hears the ravens when they cry, and so He often hears the prayers of the unconverted men (Psalm 107; Acts 8:22). It is the duty of all men to hear the preached gospel. "Unto you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of men." But the Lord's Supper is the children's bread; it is intended only for those who know and love the Lord Jesus.

3. *Because Christ is the beginning, middle, and end of it.* "This do in remembrance of Me." "Ye do show the Lord's death till He come." There are many sermons in which Christ is not from beginning to end; many books where you cannot find the fragrance of His name: but there cannot be a sacrament where Christ is not from beginning to end. Christ is the Alpha and Omega of the Lord's Supper; it is all Christ and Him crucified. These things give a peculiar sweetness to the broken bread and poured-out wine.

I fear the Lord's Supper is profaned in a dreadful manner among you. Many come who are living in positive sins, or in the neglect of positive duties. Many come who know that they were never converted; many who in their hearts ridicule the very thoughts of conversion. Unworthy communicating is a fearful sin; on account of it God is greatly provoked to withdraw His Spirit from you, to visit you with frowns of providence, and to seal you to the day of perdition. Am I become your enemy because I tell you the truth? Deal honestly with your soul, and pray over what I am now writing; and He who opened the heart of Lydia open your heart.

January 26

Morning Readings- Genesis 27, Matthew 26

Evening Readings- Esther 3; Acts 26

Why do we expect to be better treated in this world than Jesus was?- Leonard Ravenhill

Lamb of God, Our Souls Adore Thee, James Deck, 8787D

1 LAMB of God, our souls adore Thee,
While upon Thy face we gaze;
There the Father's love and glory
Shine in all their brightest rays;
Thy almighty power and wisdom
All creation's works proclaim;
Heaven and earth alike confess Thee
As the ever great I AM.

2 Son of God, Thy Father's bosom
Ever was Thy dwelling-place;
His delight, in Him rejoicing,
One with Him in power and grace:
Oh, what wondrous love and mercy!

Thou didst lay Thy glory by,
And for us didst come from heaven,
As the Lamb of God to die.

3 Lamb of God, when we behold Thee
Lowly in the manger laid;
Wandering as a homeless Stranger,
In the world Thy hands had made;
When we see Thee in the garden
In Thine agony of blood,
At Thy grace we are confounded,
Holy, spotless, Lamb of God.

4 When we see Thee, as the Victim,
Nailed to the accursed tree,
For our guilt and folly stricken,
All our judgment borne by Thee,
Lord, we own with hearts adoring,
Thou hast washed us in Thy blood:
Glory, glory everlasting,
Be to Thee, Thou Lamb of God!

Robert Murray McCheyne on the Lord's Supper, Part 2

The Actions of the Communicant

I. *He takes the bread and the wine.* — When the minister offers the bread and wine to those at the table, this represents Christ freely offered to sinners, even the chief. The receiving of the bread and wine means — I do thankfully receive the broken, bleeding Savior as my Surety. The act of taking that bread and wine is an appropriating act; it is saying before God, and angels, and men, and devils, "I do flee to the Lord Jesus Christ as my refuge." Noah entering into the ark was an appropriating act. Let others fly to the tops of their houses, to their castles and towers, to the rugged rocks, to the summits of the highest mountains, — as for me, I believe the word of God, and flee to the ark as my only refuge (Heb. 11:7). When the manslayer fled into the city of refuge, it was an appropriating act. As he entered breathless at gates of the Hebron, his friends might cry to him, Flee unto the wilderness! or Flee beyond Jordan! But no, he would say, I believe the word of God, that I shall be safe only within these walls; this is my only refuge city, here only will I hide! (Joshua 20). When the Israelite brought an offering of the herd or of the flock, when the priest had bound it with cords to the horns of the altar, the offerer laid his hands upon the head of the lamb: this was an appropriating act, as much as to say, I take this lamb as dying for me. The world might say, How will this save you? mend your life, give alms to the poor. I believe the word of God, he would say; I do not wish to bear my own sins, I lay them on the Lamb of God (Lev. 1:4). When the woman, trembling, came behind Jesus and touched the hem of His garment, this also was an appropriating act. Her friends might say to her, Come and try some more physicians, or wait till you are somewhat better. No, said she, "If I may but touch His garment, I shall be made whole" (Mark 5:28). In the 42nd Psalm, David's

enemies said to him continually, "Where is thy God?" This made tears his meat night and day. It was like a sword in his bones. But in the 43rd Psalm he gathers courage, and says, "I will go unto the altar of God," where the lamb was slain; and then he says, "Unto God, my exceeding joy." You say, I have no God: behold, I take this lamb as slain for me, and therefore God is my God. In the Song of Solomon, when the bride found Him whom her soul loved, she says, "I held Him, and would not let Him go." This was true appropriating faith. The world might say to her, "Come this way, and we will show thee other beloveds, fairer than thy beloved." Nay, saith she, "I held Him, and would not let Him go. This is my beloved, and this is my friend" (Song 3:4).

January 27

Morning Readings- Genesis 28, Matthew 27

Evening Readings- Esther 4; Acts 27

Small numbers make no difference to God. There is nothing small if God is in it.- D. L. Moody

Lamb of God, Thou Now Art Seated, James Deck, 8787D

1 LAMB of God, Thou now art seated
High upon Thy Father's throne;
All Thy gracious work completed,
All Thy mighty victory won:
Every knee in heaven is bending
To the Lamb for sinners slain;
Every voice and heart is swelling,
"Worthy is the Lamb to reign".

2 Lord, in all Thy power and glory,
Still Thy thoughts and eyes are here;
Watching o'er Thy ransomed people,
To Thy gracious heart so dear;
Thou for us art interceding;
Everlasting is Thy love;
And a blessed rest preparing
In our Father's house above.

3 Lamb of God, Thy faithful promise
Says, "Behold, I quickly come;"
And our hearts, to Thine responsive,
Cry, "Come, Lord, and take us home."
Oh, the rapture that awaits us,
When we meet Thee in the air,
And with Thee ascend in triumph,
All Thy deepest joys to share.

4 Lamb of God, when Thou in glory
Shalt to this sad earth return,
All Thy foes shall quake before Thee,
All who now despise Thee mourn;
Then shall we at Thine appearing,
With Thee in Thy kingdom reign;
Thine the praise, and Thine the glory,
Lamb of God for sinners slain.

Robert Murray McCheyne on the Lord's Supper, Part 3

He eats the bread and drinks the wine. — "Take, eat" — "Drink ye all of it." Eating and drinking in this ordinance imply feeding upon Christ. It is said of bread that it "strengtheth man's heart," and of wine, that it "maketh glad the heart of man." Bread is the staff of life, and wine is very reviving to those who, like Timothy, have often infirmities. They are the greatest nutritive blessings which man possesses. To feed on them in the Lord's Supper is as much as to say, I do feed on Jesus, as my strength; "in the Lord have I righteousness and strength." To take the bread into the hand is by saying, "He is made of God unto me righteousness." To feed upon it is saying, "He is made unto me sanctification."

When Israel fed on manna for forty years, and drank water from the rock, they were strengthened for their journey through the howling wilderness. This was a picture of believers journeying through this world. They feed every day on Christ their strength; He is their daily manna; He is the rock that follows them. When the bride sat under the shadow of the apple-tree, she says, "His fruit was sweet to my taste"; and again, "Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love." Believers, this is a picture of you. No sooner are you sheltered by the Saviour, than you are nourished and renewed by Him. He comforts your hearts, and stablishes you in every good word and work. In the 36th Psalm, when David speaks of men trusting under the wings of the Lord Jesus, he adds, "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house, and Thou shalt make them drink of the river of Thy pleasures." Little children, you know by experience what this means. When you were brought to believe on the Son of God, you were adopted into His family, fed with the children's bread, and your heart filled with the holy pleasures of God. The same thing is represented in feeding on the bread and wine. It is a solemn declaration in the sight of the whole world, that you have been put into the clefts of the smitten rock, and that you are feeding on the honey treasured there. It is declaring that you have sat down under Christ's shadow, and you are comforted and nourished by the fruit of that tree of life. It is saying, "I have come to trust under the shadow of His wings, and now I drink of the river of His pleasures." It is a sweet declaration of your own helplessness and weakness, and that Christ is all your strength — all your life.

January 28

Morning Readings- Genesis 29, Matthew 28
Evening Readings- Esther 5; Acts 28

No man is greater than his prayer life. The pastor who is not praying is playing; the people who are not praying are straying. The pulpit can be a shop window to display one's talents; the prayer closet allows no showing off.- Leonard Ravenhill

This Day in Christian History

1856- Birth of R. A. Torrey in Hoboken, New Jersey, who was a well-known evangelist.

O Blessed Saviour, Son of God, James Deck, 886886

1 O BLESSED Saviour, Son of God,
Who hast redeemed us with Thy blood
From guilt, and death, and shame,
With joy and praise Thy people see
The crown of glory worn by Thee,
And worthy Thee proclaim.

2 Exalted by the Father's love,
All thrones, and powers, and names above,
At God's right hand in heaven:
Wisdom and riches, power divine,
Blessing and honour, Lord, are Thine ---
All things to Thee are given.

3 Head of the church, Thou sittest there;
Thy members all the blessings share;
Thy blessing, Lord, is ours:
Our life Thou art; Thy grace sustains;
Thy strength in us each victory gains
O'er sin and Satan's powers.

4 And soon, the day of glory come,
Thy bride shall reach her destined home
And all Thy beauty see:
How great our joy to see Thee shine,
To hear Thee own us, Lord, as Thine,
And ever dwell with Thee!

"Perfect in Christ Jesus." Colossians 1:28

Do you not feel in your own soul that perfection is not in you? Does not every day teach you that? Every tear which trickles from your eye, weeps "imperfection;" every sigh which bursts from your heart, cries "imperfection;" every harsh word which proceeds from your lip, mutters "imperfection." You have too frequently had a view of your own heart to dream for a moment of any perfection in yourself. But amidst this sad consciousness of imperfection, here is comfort for you--you are "perfect in Christ Jesus." In God's sight, you are "complete in Him;" even now you are "accepted in the

beloved." But there is a second perfection, yet to be realized, which is sure to all the seed. Is it not delightful to look forward to the time when every stain of sin shall be removed from the believer, and he shall be presented faultless before the throne, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing? The Church of Christ then will be so pure, that not even the eye of Omniscience will see a spot or blemish in her; so holy and so glorious. Then shall we know, and taste, and feel the happiness of this vast but short sentence, "Complete in Christ." Not till then shall we fully comprehend the heights and depths of the salvation of Jesus. Doth not thy heart leap for joy at the thought of it? Black as thou art, thou shalt be white one day; filthy as thou art, thou shalt be clean. Oh, it is a marvellous salvation this! Christ takes a worm and transforms it into an angel; Christ takes a black and deformed thing and makes it clean and matchless in His glory, peerless in His beauty, and fit to be the companion of seraphs. O my soul, stand and admire this blessed truth of perfection in Christ. (Charles Spurgeon)

January 29

Morning Readings- Genesis 30, Mark 1
Evening Readings- Esther 6; Romans 1

God never made a promise that was too good to be true.- D. L. Moody

What Various Hindrances We Meet, John Newton, 8888

1 WHAT various hindrances we meet
In coming to a mercy-seat!
Yet who that knows the worth of prayer,
But wishes to be often there?

2 Prayer makes the darken'd cloud withdraw,
Prayer climbs the ladder Jacob saw,
Gives exercise to faith and love,
Brings every blessing from above.

3 Restraining prayer, we cease to fight,
Prayer makes the Christian's armour bright;
And Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees.

4 While Moses stood with arms spread wide,
Success was found on Israel's side;
But when through weariness they fail'd,
That moment Amalek prevailed

5 Have you no words? Ah! think again,
Words flow apace when you complain,
And fill your fellow-creature's ear

With the sad tale of all your care.

6 Were half the breath thus vainly spent
To Heaven in supplication sent,
Your cheerful song would oftener be,
“Hear what the Lord has done for me.”

I am confident your Ladyship is going forward in the begun journey to your Lord and Father's home and kingdom. Howbeit ye want not temptations within and without. And who among the saints hath ever taken that castle without stroke of sword? the Chief of the house, our Elder Brother, our Lord Jesus, not being excepted, who won His own house and home, due to Him by birth, with much blood and many blows. Your Ladyship hath the more need to look to yourself, because our Lord hath placed you higher than the rest, and your way to heaven lieth through a more wild and waste wilderness than the way of many of your fellow-travellers,—not only through the midst of this wood of thorns, the cumbersome world, but also through these dangerous paths, the vain-glory of it; the consideration whereof hath often moved me to pity your soul, and the soul of your worthy and noble husband. And it is more to you to win heaven, being ships of greater burden, and in the main sea, than for little vessels, that are not so much in the mercy and reverence of the storms, because they may come quietly to their port by launching alongst the coast. For the which cause ye do much, if in the midst of such a tumult of business, and crowd of temptations, ye shall give Christ Jesus His own court and His own due place in your soul. I know and am persuaded, that that lovely One, Jesus, is dearer to you than many kingdoms; and that ye esteem Him your Well-beloved, and the Standard-bearer among ten thousand (Cant. v. 10). And it becometh Him full well to take the place and the board-head in your soul before all the world. I knew and saw Him with you in the furnace of affliction; for there he wooed you to Himself, and chose you to be His; and now He craveth no other hire of you but your love, and that He get no cause to be jealous of you. And, therefore, dear and worthy lady, be like to the fresh river, that keepeth its own fresh taste in the salt sea. This world is not worthy of your soul. Give it not a good-day when Christ cometh in competition with it. Be like one of another country. Home! and stay not; for the sun is fallen low, and nigh the tops of the mountains, and the shadows are stretched out in great length. Linger not by the way. The world and sin would train you on, and make you turn aside. Leave not the way for them; and the Lord Jesus be at the voyage! (Samuel Rutherford, Letter 29).

January 30

Morning Readings- Genesis 31, Mark 2
Evening Readings- Esther 7; Romans 2

As long as a man is alive and out of hell, he cannot have any cause to complain.-
Charles Spurgeon

This Day in Christian History

1536- Parish priest Menno Simons leaves the Catholic Church over his doubts about transubstantiation. He converts to the Anabaptist faith and leads a group of followers who eventually come to be called Mennonites.

The Spirit Breathes Upon The Word, William Cowper C.M.

1 THE Spirit breathes upon the Word,
And brings the truth to sight;
Precepts and promises afford
A sanctifying light.

2 A glory gilds the sacred page,
Majestic like the sun;
It gives a light to every age,
It gives, but borrows none.

3 The hand that gave it still supplies
The gracious light and heat:
His truths upon the nations rise,
They rise, but never set.

4 Let everlasting thanks be thine,
For such a bright display,
As makes a world of darkness shine
With beams of heavenly day.

5 My soul rejoices to pursue
The steps of him I love,
Till glory breaks upon my view
In brighter worlds above.

Questions Addressed to Young Communicants, to be Answered in Secret to God While Partaking of the Lord's Table, by Robert Murray McCheyne

1. Is it to please your father or mother, or any one on earth, that you think of coming to the Lord's table?
2. Is it because it is the custom, and your friends and companions are coming?
3. Is it because you have come to a certain time of life?
4. What are your real motives for wishing to come to the Lord's table? Is it to thank God for saving your soul? — (Ps. 116:12-13); to remember Jesus? — (Luke 22:19); to get near to Christ? — (John 13:23); or is it for worldly character? to gain a name? to gain money? — (Matt. 26:15).
5. Who do you think should come to the Lord's table? who should stay away?
6. Do you think any should come but those who are truly converted? and what is it to be converted?

7. Would you come if you knew yourself to be unconverted?
8. Should those come who have had deep concern about their soul, but are not come to Christ?
9. Do you think you have been awakened by the Holy Spirit? brought to Christ? born again? What makes you think so?
10. What is the meaning of the broken bread and poured-out wine?
11. What is the meaning of taking the bread and wine into your hand? Have you as truly received the Lord Jesus Christ?
12. What is the meaning of feeding upon them? Are you as truly living upon Christ?
13. What is the meaning of giving the bread and wine to those at the same table as you? Do you as truly love the brethren?

Scriptures to be Meditated on at a Communion Season.

Ex.12; Ps. 22, 51, 69, 116; Song of Solomon; Isa. 53; Matt. 22:1-14; 26, 27; Mark 14, 15; Luke 22, 23; John 13, 14, 15, 16, 17; I Cor. 11:23-34.

January 31

Morning Readings- Genesis 32, Mark 3

Evening Readings- Esther 8; Romans 3

You say, "If I had a little more, I should be very satisfied." You make a mistake. If you are not content with what you have, you would not be satisfied if it were doubled.- Charles Spurgeon

This Day in Christian History

1892- Death of Charles Spurgeon in France.

O Happy Soul That Lives on High, Isaac Watts, Colossians 3:3 C.M.

1 O happy soul that lives on high;
While men lie grovelling here!
His hopes are fix'd above the sky,
And faith forbids his fear.

2 His conscience knows no secret stings,
While peace and joy combine
To form a life whose holy springs
Are hidden and divine.

3 He waits in secret on his God;
His God in secret sees:
Let earth be all in arms abroad,
He dwells in heavenly peace.

4 His pleasures rise from things unseen,
Beyond this world and time,
Where neither eyes nor ears have been,
Nor thoughts of sinners climb.

5 He wants no pomp nor royal throne
To raise his figure here;
Content and pleas'd to live unknown,
Till Christ his life appear.

6 He looks to heaven's eternal hill
To meet that glorious day:
But patient waits his Saviour's will
To fetch his soul away.

Sit loose to the occupations of the world. It is right for Christians to be diligent in business. I often wonder how unconverted souls can be so busy—how, when you are bustling along, filling up all your time with worldly things, it never occurs to you that there will be none of this in eternity. How can I be so busy for my body, when my poor soul is unprovided for? But those in Christ may well be diligent. (1) They have a good conscience—that oils the wheels. "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." A light heart makes easy work. (2) They love to honour their Lord. They would not have it said that a believer in Jesus was an idler or a sluggard—the love of Jesus constrains them to all that is lovely. And yet a believer should "buy as though he possessed not;" for "the time is short." Oh! believers, ye cannot be misers; for you are but stewards. All that you possess here is your Lord's; and the day is at hand when He will transfer you to take care of another property in a brighter land. You are but servants. It would not do if you were to set your hearts on the things of this lower room; for in a few days the Master is to call you to serve in His own dear presence. Dear believers, be ready to leave your room for the golden harp, at a minute's warning; be ready to leave your desk for the throne of Jesus—your pen for the palm of victory; be ready to leave the market below, for the street of the new Jerusalem, where the redeemed shall walk. If you were in a sinking ship, you would not cling hard to bags of money—you would sit loose to all, and be ready to swim. This world is like a sinking ship, and those who grasp at its possessions will sink with it. Oh! "buy as though you possessed not; for "the time is short." (Robert Murray McCheyne)