

PART VIII.

THE NARROW WAY TO LIFE

"Enter ye in at the strait gate, because strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat." – Matt. 7:13,14.

ALL life is the same. It all issues from the same fountain. God is that fountain. In him, and in him only, is life unlimited, exhaustless, ever-continuous and uncontrolled by any circumstances. The name, which describes this perfection of life, is Immortality. It signifies death-proof, consequently disease and pain-proof. Many, who have not closely noted the scriptural use of the word immortal, have used it with reference to man and to angels, but Scripture ascribes it to God, the Father, only, as we will prove shortly.

The sun is the great fountain of light to earth, illuminating all things, yet it causes many varieties of color and shades of light, according to the nature of the object upon which it shines. The same sunlight shining upon a diamond, a brick, and upon various kinds of glass, produces strikingly different effects. The light is the same, but the objects upon which it shines differ in their capacity to receive and transmit it. So, too, with life. It all flows from the one inexhaustible fountain, and is all of the same kind. The oyster has life, but its organism is such that it cannot make use of much life, just as the brick cannot reflect much of the light of the sun. So with each of the higher grades of life in beast, fish and fowl. Like the various kinds of glass under sunlight, so these various creatures show forth differently the various qualities and powers they possess, when life comes in and animates their bodily powers. And as the diamond is so perfect in its nature, and so adapted that it can receive fully and reflect, so as to look

as though it possessed within itself the light, and were itself a miniature sun, so with mankind, one of the master-pieces of God's creation, made only "a little lower than the angels." This perfect creature was made so complete in his **[R278 : page 135]** organism (before sin marred it) as to be able to receive and retain life, and never grow dim. Adam was formed grandly and perfectly, and filled with life. He was more grand than any other earthly creature, because of the grander organism, mental and physical. Yet let us remember, that, as the diamond could reflect no light, except when shone upon by the sun, so man could possess and enjoy the life given him only so long as he was supplied from the fountain – God. Man is no more a fount of life than a diamond is a fount of light, and one of the very strongest reasons for knowing that we have no exhaustless supply of life in ourselves is, that since sin entered, our race has lost life. Millions have gone and are going down into death. God **[R279 : page 135]** had arranged that man should have access to life-giving trees, and that, by continually partaking of their fruit, he should continually live, – "eat, and live forever." – Gen. 3:22.

Sin entering, our race lost its right to life, and was shut away from the trees of life (plural). And the glory and beauty of humanity is dependent on the supply of life, just as the beauty of the diamond is dependent on the supply of sunlight. When sin deprived humanity of the right to life and its supply was withheld, immediately the jewel began to lose its perfection of brilliancy and beauty, and finally it is deprived of its last vestige in the tomb. "His beauty consumes away like a moth." – Psa. 39:11. And so "In Adam all die." But God has provided Christ a ransom for sin, and soon in [by] Christ shall all be made alive – be brought back to the original perfection of the race. As the diamond loses its beauty and brilliancy when the light is withdrawn, but is lighted up again with the sunrise, so mankind loses life when God withdraws life from him. "Yea, man giveth up the ghost [life], and where is he?" – Job 14:10. "His sons come to honor, and he

knoweth it not, and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them." – Vs. 21. "For there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest." – Eccl. 9:10. But the jewel is to have its beauty restored, and is again to reflect perfectly the Creator's image, "when the sun of righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings." Because of the sin-offering and sacrifice of Christ, all shall go forth from this condition of death. "All that are in their graves shall come forth." There shall be a restitution of all things, a restoring to the condition (as at first) when man can receive back again, and richly enjoy life as it is provided for him in full measure from the fountain – God.

But we asserted that we would prove scripturally that divinity **[R279 : page 136]** is the only fountain of life, and that all other forms of life – angels, men, fish, birds, beasts, etc., – are only vessels which hold each its full, all differing in capacity and quality, according to the will of the Maker. First, then, we read that God "only hath immortality." [The fulness of life which could not cease under any circumstances.] – 1 Tim. 6:16; and 1:17. "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see." "Unto the king eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever."

Secondly, we learn that the Father, who alone possessed this quality originally, has bestowed it upon our Lord Jesus Christ – his son – "the first-born of every creature;" "the only begotten;" "the express image of his Father's person;" he who was "made so much better than the angels;" "for unto which of the angels said he [the Father]: Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee." – Heb. 1:4,5. This one, we are told, partakes of the Father's nature, and consequently of the same principle of immortal life. So we read – "As the Father hath life in himself, [God's life is in himself, and not drawn from other

sources, or dependent upon other things,] so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." – John 5:26.

Thus we see that immortality is possessed only by Father and Son. But amazing news! – God purposes to call out of the human race a few, a "little flock," who by obedience to certain conditions, shall become "sons of God," and these, instead of continuing to be of the human nature – men – shall become "new creatures;" "partakers of the divine nature." These, when born from the dead in the resurrection (as Jesus was) will have the divine form (body), being made "like unto Christ's glorious body;" (and he is "the express image of the Father," as above quoted) not a natural body, but a spiritual body, for "it is raised a spiritual body," and "that which is born of the spirit is spirit." We shall be changed, but "it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him" who is "the express image of the Father's person," and share in the "glory to be revealed." Nay, more, not only will these be in the divine form and nature, but being of that nature, they will possess the same perfection of life – Immortality. Hence we read: "And this is the record that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son" – "He that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son hath not life" (immortal). – 1 Jno. 5:11. **[R279 : page 137]**

Again it is written: "Thou hast given him (Jesus) power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou (the Father) hast given him. – Jno. 17:2. "And this is the promise which he hath promised us, even eternal life." – 1 Jno. 2:25. And though it is promised as a gift, yet it is only to a certain class that he ever agreed to give it, viz., to those believers in Jesus who by patient continuance in well-doing SEEK for glory, honor and IMMORTALITY." – Rom. 2:7. To those who flee from iniquity and "follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness" – who "fight the good fight

of faith (and thus), lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called." – 1 Tim. 6:12.

But the way is a difficult one, hard to walk in. Just how difficult the way is, may be judged from Jesus' words: "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (life). It is not only to believe on him, but to follow him, and obey his voice – "My sheep hear (obey) my voice and I know them and they follow me, ("take up their cross and follow me,") and I give unto them eternal life." Jno. 10:28. Yes, dearly beloved, if we would be of those who receive immortality, let us seek it earnestly. Let us have our "fruit unto holiness (entire consecration) and the end thereof (will be) everlasting life." – Rom. 6:22.

The new, divine nature begins with us here, when, after belief on Jesus as the ransom from sin, we covenant with God that we will "die with him that we may also live with him." From that moment we are recognized as God's children, and "he sends forth his spirit into our hearts," "whereby (we) are sealed (marked off as separate from the world) unto the day of redemption." This is our new life begun. By this new life we are to crucify the old will – our will as natural men – and while in the world "to live according to God in the spirit." The spirit in us is the germ of immortality. Thus we even now are partakers of the divine nature, but the fullness is to be reached when we enter into life. We are now begotten of the spirit by the word of truth that we should be a kind of first fruits, but we do not reach birth until we are raised (from the dead) spiritual bodies. Our new nature lives in these mortal bodies as in a house – "But we know that if our earthly house of this (building) were dissolved, we have a building of God," etc. – our spiritual, immortal condition.

But, beloved, the new life would be easily choked, and Paul assures us that when thus begotten of the spirit through the **[R279 : page 138]** truth, "if we live after the flesh we shall die (lose our life

principle), but if we through the spirit do mortify (put to death) the deeds of the body (human nature) we (as new creatures) shall live;" for the sons of God are all those led by the spirit of God. – Rom. 8:13,14. The work of crucifying must take hold upon all our actions – "For he (begotten of the spirit) that soweth to the flesh (lives in wilful sin) shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting." – Gal. 6:8. It is a rugged, steep, narrow way that leads to life, and were it not that strength is furnished us for each successive step of the journey, we never could reach the goal; but our Captain's word encourages us – "Be of good cheer, I have overcome," "my grace is sufficient for thee." The whole race was in the broad road and going down to destruction – death – until Jesus opened the narrow way, bringing life and immortality to light through the Gospel; i.e., he made it possible for us to reach it, by paying our ransom on the cross and making us free from sin, and becoming also our example and leader into the divine life.

Thus he opened up for us a new and living way through the vail, that is to say, his flesh. – Heb. 10:20. As we have seen, we were created on the perfect natural plane (represented in Adam) and no higher hope than that of being natural men was ever held out, until Jesus paid our ransom price – that is to say, his flesh, and opened up this new way (though a narrow, difficult one) by which believers could go beyond the vail – beyond the natural condition into the spiritual. ["For the things that are seen are temporal – natural – but the things that are not seen are eternal." – 2 Cor. 4:18.]

We can hardly impress too strongly the fact that all of the promises ever held out to the Jews, during previous ages, were only such as pertain to the natural man – i.e., natural life, prosperity and blessing. The first offer of anything spiritual was made by Jesus to those who believe on him during this Gospel age. These are promised, that in the resurrection they shall be spiritual bodies – "That which is

born of the spirit is spirit." But notice that though this promise of spiritual instead of human existence is to all believers, yet there is a still higher promise made to some of the believers, viz., Immortality. There is a vast difference between everlasting life and immortal life; the first signifies an ever-continued existence, which may be dependent on circumstances, as for instance, angels and men. Adam, if he had kept his first estate of sinless perfection, would [R279 : page 139] have "lived forever;" and angels, though of a higher nature than human, have life continued to them on the same conditions of obedience; and some of them, "those angels who kept not their first estate" of purity and sinlessness ("the devil and his angels") are to be destroyed – have life taken from them.

It will be seen then, that everlasting life may be enjoyed by creatures of God on either the natural or the spiritual plane, and that the condition upon which it may be enjoyed is everlasting obedience to the author and fountain of life – God. [R280 : page 139]

This everlasting life is guaranteed to all creatures who use their life in harmony with God's will. It was on this account the world needed both, a Redeemer to pay for them the price of sin – death, and a Restorer to bring them again to the condition of perfection enjoyed by Adam, in which it was possible to render perfect obedience to God's will; which ability to obey was lost through sin.

Now let us notice the difference between everlasting life and immortal life. Immortal life is everlasting, but it is more: it is a life which cannot cease under any conditions; a life power inherent in the being possessing it, not supplied by food or other conditions, as is all other life, both of angels and men. "Man did eat angel's food." – Psa. 78:25. – "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat." – Gen. 2:16.) In a word, as already scripturally expressed, it is to have "life in himself," to be a fountain of life – a means of supplying life to others.

With this, which we believe to be a scriptural definition of immortality, who for a moment would wonder that it was originally possessed only by God the Father – "the King eternal, invisible, the only wise God," "who only hath immortality?" (1 Tim. 1:17, and 6:16,) or that in due time it was bestowed upon our Lord Jesus, as we read – "As the Father hath life in himself, (immortal,) so hath he given unto the Son, that he should have life in himself." Jesus, before he "took the form (nature and life) of a servant," and "was found in fashion as a man," was, we understand the Scriptures to teach, a spiritual being – i.e., a spiritual, and not a human body. He was the chiefest of all God's creatures – "the beginning of the creation of God." – Rev. 3:14. Yet, to our understanding, he did not, at that time, possess immortality; though, like angels and all intelligent beings living in obedience to the Creator, he was guaranteed everlasting life as long as obedient.

This life, which, according to God's plan, he had a right to possess, he desired to give as a ransom for ours. But how [R280 : page 140] should he do it? If he died, a spiritual being, it would have done us human beings no good whatever. It was a human, and not a spiritual being, which was condemned to death, and God's law of "an eye for an eye" and a "life for a life," demanded a human sacrifice for human sinners. Nay; had ten thousand spiritual beings died, that could never have redeemed mankind, any more than could ten thousand "bulls and goats, which can never take away sin." – Heb. 10:4. Neither a higher nor a lower order of beings could redeem; it required a man to redeem mankind. Therefore, this spiritual being changed his condition of existence from the spiritual to the human, and on earth was known as Jesus. It was not a death of the spiritual being, but a transference of life from a higher to a lower plane of existence – the perfect plane of being, which Adam had forfeited by sin.*

*Such a transference, or change of life, from one condition to another, will occur, when "we, who are alive and remain, shall be caught up to meet the Lord," "changed in a moment" from human to spiritual conditions. In Jesus' case the life was transferred from a higher to a lower plane of being; in our case,⁸ it will be from the lower to the higher. Our life will be swallowed up of immortality, or perfection of life.

The penalty of Adam's sin was death (everlasting,) and when Jesus took his place he became subject to that penalty – eternal death. Jesus, as a man, then, in order to redeem man must give up forever his human existence. This giving up was at the time of his baptism, and his death was typified in that act. But after giving up, or consecrating his life as a ransom, he was three and a half years in actually giving it up – spending it in the service of others and finally ending it on the cross. When he consecrated himself unto death (at baptism), he received his begetting of the spirit to the new life – the divine, immortal life; and at his resurrection he was born to that new nature and life, a spiritual body, and never again took the human, which he had given as "a ransom for many." In all of this he is the pattern, or leader of all the "little flock," who consecrate and sacrifice the human, and "become partakers of the divine nature."

Thus "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures" – "A body hast thou prepared me for the suffering of death," etc., "and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross." Thus he died as a man for mankind, or as Paul expresses it: "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." – 1 Cor. 15:21. He died the just [man] for the unjust [men] that he might bring us to God. – 1 Pet. 3:18. We next notice, that the thing given for the life of the world, was the life of Jesus (the man): "For **[R280 : page 141]** the Son of Man came...to give his life a ransom for many" [lives]. – Mark 10:45. Notice again that the life Jesus gave was all the life he possessed – it was his life. In the parable of the treasure hid in the field, (Matt. 13:44) "the

Kingdom of Heaven is likened unto a treasure hid in a field [‘the field is the world’ of mankind – the bride of Christ, the hidden treasure,] which, when a man [Jesus] hath found, he goeth and selleth all that he hath and buyeth that field." Jesus gave his all and so must those who would be joint-heirs with him, walk in his footsteps and sacrifice earthly life.

Now, as an immortal being cannot die, it seems clear that Jesus did not have immortality when he died. It would be impossible for an immortal being to suffer pain or to die. But Jesus assures us that "the Father hath given unto the Son that he should have life in himself."* When was it given unto him? Paul tells us it was after he died, – at his resurrection. Hear him: "Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God [a spiritual being] thought it not robbery to be equal with God; [to speak of himself as being a member of God's family – the Son of God" – John 10:35,36] but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. "WHEREFORE, [because of this obedience – death on the cross, etc.] God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name, which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, both of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth, [‘they that are in their graves’ – the dead], and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." – Phil. 2:6-11. "That all men might honor the Son, even as they honor the Father." – Jno. 5:23.

*Jesus, after he had consecrated himself and had been begotten of the new, divine nature, spoke of the new life which was promised him, and which he received fully at the resurrection as though he had already received it; just as it is said of us – "He that believeth...hath everlasting life."

From this and other Scriptures it seems evident, that, while Jesus had held a very high position in the spirit world before taking the human nature and form, yet the position occupied by him since he ascended up on high, is a much higher one – "Him hath God highly exalted," etc., – and the word wherefore, (on this account) used by Paul, clearly shows that the high exaltation came as a reward for the self-sacrifice and obedience even unto [R280 : page 142] death. This high exaltation consisted in part of the glory of power, which will be fully displayed and exercised during the Millennial age. But who can doubt that one of the chief elements of that high exaltation was immortality, heretofore possessed only by "the King of kings and Lord of lords, the only wise God?"

This mighty one – Jehovah – received our Lord, the perfect one, whose life and death were one grand expression of love to God and to men, into oneness of life, as well as of glory and power with himself, which would imply his becoming the son of God, with power, (in a higher sense than before) and a partaker of the divine nature. How fitting, too, that he, whose work it is to restore the human race again to perfection of earthly being, should be a fountain of life!

Every action should have a motive; and when Jesus came into the world and died for our sins, it was the result of one or more motives. And so we find Paul, in exhorting the church to a life of self-sacrifice, pointing to the prize of our high calling as a motive or incentive to energy and perseverance; and he refers to Jesus as our example, saying: "Consider him that endured – ...looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." – Heb. 12:2,3.

The joy set before our Lord was threefold: first, to ransom a race of beings from sin and death, and restore them to the perfection of their

being; second, as a reward for his faith in God's promise, and obedience to his will, he would be exalted to the right hand (chief place) of power, and have inherent life ("life in himself,") the divine degree – immortality; third, he might bring some of the human race to the higher plane of being – the spiritual. To these he would be both redeemer from death and leader – to as many as believed on him, "to them gave he power to become the sons of God." – John 1:12. These could also become partakers of the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4), be associated with him as his Bride – become heirs of God, and joint-heirs with himself. – Rom. 8:17. But how should these ever be counted worthy of exaltation to such a position of glory and honor, side-by-side with him who is the express image of the Father's person? By following in his footsteps: he became the leader of a "little flock" of believers, who, after being redeemed by his sacrifice, should, by following his example – giving up the human life, will, ambition, etc., and walking after **[R280 : page 143]** the law of the spirit, be counted worthy to become his Bride. These suffer with him, that they also may be glorified together (with him.) – Rom. 8:17. Yes, this was a part of his mission, and therefore a part of his joy – to bring up some of the human family to the divine nature. So we read: "It became him (God) **[R281 : page 143]** for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation (Jesus) perfect through suffering." – Heb. 2:10. Jesus must go through the most severe trials to prove his obedience to the Father's will before being entrusted with the high honor of glory and immortality. And he came off victor – proved his perfection by obedience even unto death. He was tried and not found wanting; "tried in all points, like as we are, yet without sin;" he won the "prize of his high calling – the joy set before him."

At the resurrection of Jesus we reach a point of time where two beings possess the principle of immortality – the Father and the Son. Now we learn that this principle of immortality is promised also to the

Bride of Christ. Who then will constitute the Bride? Jesus tells us, "many are called and few are chosen." Paul estimates that many run, though few so run as to obtain the prize of the high calling; yet Jesus assures the little flock who do so run that "it is the Father's good pleasure to give [them] the kingdom." Not all believers then, nor even the majority, but a "little flock" who overcome the world, will constitute the Bride – the Lamb's wife – "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne." – Rev. 3:21.

We have already seen that the Gospel church, when fully developed, will be composed of two classes. These two classes will embrace all who have believed in Jesus as the sin-bearer, and have consecrated themselves to his service – all who, during the Gospel age, have been begotten to a newness of life by the spirit through the Word, except a very few mentioned by Jesus, John and Paul as those who sin against the Holy Ghost, which sin hath never forgiveness. Paul, in Heb. 6:4-6, describes those committing this sin as having been once enlightened and having tasted of the heavenly gift and of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, and being made partakers of the Holy Ghost, (i.e., begotten by the holy spirit); nevertheless they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh and put him to an open shame...(Heb. 10:29) counting the blood of the covenant, wherewith they were sanctified an unholy thing, and doing despite unto the spirit of grace. In a word, these are open, wilful apostates (not weak, backsliding Christians, **[R281 : page 144]** whose love is chilled for a time by contact with the cold world.) These apostates will die the second death, but all others of the church being begotten of the spirit, will in due time, at the resurrection be born of the spirit to spiritual conditions – spiritual bodies. But many, though believers, have not continued to grow up into Christ, but have remained children, consequently were too weak to overcome the world. They are bound by the world's customs, business, money-making, pleasures of this life, honor of this world, etc., and do not

follow the "Captain of their salvation" in the "narrow way," and such must have much scourging and discipline before the fleshly nature is subdued; such must go through a time of trouble – be "delivered over to Satan [evil] for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit [new nature] may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

This class constitute the majority of all the Christian church – the "great company who come up [to the spiritual condition] out of [through] great tribulation and wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb." – Rev. 7:14. The few, the "little flock" will win the prize for which all are called to run. The prize of our high calling is, to become "heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord," or as again expressed: We "seek for glory, honor, and immortality." – Rom. 2:7. If you would realize its grandeur, think for a moment that this is the same prize for which Jesus ran; the same joy that was set before him – Glory, Honor, and Immortality. He has been exalted, and now of the many called to share with him, in the honor and glory of his exalted position, the few who will be chosen, are making their calling and election sure by walking in "the narrow way" – "the way their leader trod." And we repeat, only the few win that prize for which all seek – glory, honor and immortality. "If we be dead with him [to the fleshly nature] we shall also live with him." – Rom. 6:8. As Jesus said: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne." – Rev. 3:21.

These overcomers who worship not the symbolic beast or image (Rev. 20:4) constitute the first resurrection, of which Jesus was the first-fruits: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power [because they are immortal], and they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with him a thousand years." – Rev. 20:6.

Here, then, are the conditions upon which we may attain to **[R281 : page 145]** the highest position in the gift of God. Nor should we be surprised that the way that leads to life is narrow, when we realize the grandeur of the life to which it leads. The masses of the church, as we have seen, walk not in the narrow way and consequently do not receive the prize of our high calling. Though begotten of the spirit, they try to walk upon a middle road; they try to keep both the favor of God and the favor of the world, forgetting that "the friendship of the world is enmity against God," and that the instructions to those running the race for the prize are "Love not the world," "Seek not honor one of another, but that which cometh of God only."

These, who, as we have seen, "love the present world," receive a scourging and purifying by fire of trouble, and are finally received into the heavenly – spiritual condition. They will have everlasting life as angels have it, but will lose the prize of Immortality. These shall serve God in his temple, and stand before the throne, having palms in their hands (Rev. 7:9-17); but though that will be glorious, it will not be so glorious as the position of the "little flock" who shall be kings and priests unto God, seated with Jesus in his throne as his bride and joint heir, and with him crowned with Immortal, divine life.

The balance of our race now thronging the broad road to death are to be restored because their guilt and sin are atoned for and will be remitted. As through the disobedience of one man all were placed upon the broad road and swallowed up of death, so, through the obedience of one (Christ), all will be forgiven and brought back to life. But when brought back to "their former estate" – the perfection of the original – they will not have life in the same sense that the Divine family will have it. Theirs will not be life in themselves, but supplied life. The restored race will, no doubt, live eternally. God will supply the means of continuing their life as long as they are obedient, and

that, we are told, will be forever. Doubtless their present experiences with sin will prove a blessing throughout eternity.

The words Incorruptible, Incorruption, Immortal, and Immortality are translations of the Greek words *athanasia*, *aphtharsia*, and *aphthartos*. (These words have the same significance, viz., "Incapable of corruption – decay – death." "Having unlimited existence." – Webster.) These occur in all only eighteen times, in Scripture and are always used in connection with God or the saints, and are never associated in any way with angels, mankind, or lower orders of creation.

With a glimpse of this "crown of life which fadeth not away" **[R281 : page 146]** and the honor and glory associated with it, who will say that our all-wise Father has made the pathway too difficult? Its difficulties will act as a separating principle to separate and refine a "peculiar people," "a little flock," to be "heirs of the kingdom," "heirs of glory," heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord – if so be that we suffer (death) with him.

As we toil upward on the narrow way, angels look on amazed at the grandeur of the plan which is able not only to rescue a fallen race from death, but to display "the exceeding riches of God's grace and loving-kindness towards us who are in Christ Jesus." – Eph. 2:7. And it will yet be more clearly seen in the ages to come. Yes, when the plan was first foretold through the prophets, angels desired to look into it and to know concerning the time, and manner of time of its fulfillment (see 1 Peter 1:12), and an "innumerable company of angels" still watch our progress and gladly become "ministering spirits," "sent forth to minister for those who shall be heirs of salvation" (Heb. 1:14), and soon be their rulers: for, "know ye not that ye shall judge (govern) angels?" – 1 Cor. 6:3. The Father, too, who has called us with so high a calling, looks upon us with loving sympathy, and desires that we make our calling and election sure by complying with the conditions.

And there is another who watches us with intense interest: it is he who redeemed us from death by his own precious blood and invited us to become his Bride and joint heir. If he loved us with such love while we were yet sinners, judge of his love now that we are his betrothed. He knows all about the narrow way – was tempted in all points as we are, without yielding, and now he stands ready to succor and strengthen us as we need and ask his help.

In view of all these things, let us, brethren and sisters, "come boldly unto the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need," while we fight the good fight of faith (warfare of the new against the old nature) and lay hold on eternal life.
