
Spirit's Day Studies

The Writings of Jane Lead

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*Shake, shake your earthly dust away
Now it's the Spirit's Day,
that will admit of no delay.*

The Eight Worlds

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Abbreviations used in this study
www.janelead.org/SDS_Abbreviations.pdf

The Way to the S A B B A T H of Rest

or,

The Soul's Progress in the Work of the

New-Birth

By Thomas Bromley (1629-1691)

The Soul's progress in the work of Regeneration, being a brief experimental discourse of the New-Birth, in which many of the Serpent's wiles are detected, the mysteries of the cross unveiled, the death of the Old Man, the life of the New-Man, the Angelical Dispensation, with the entrance to the Divine.

By Mr. Thomas Bromley

Published 1692

*Except a man be born again, he cannot see
the Kingdom of God. John 3:3.*

*Whosoever does not bear his cross and come
after me, cannot be my disciple. Luke 14:27.*

*Be faithful unto death, and I will give you
a Crown of Life. Rev. 2:10.*

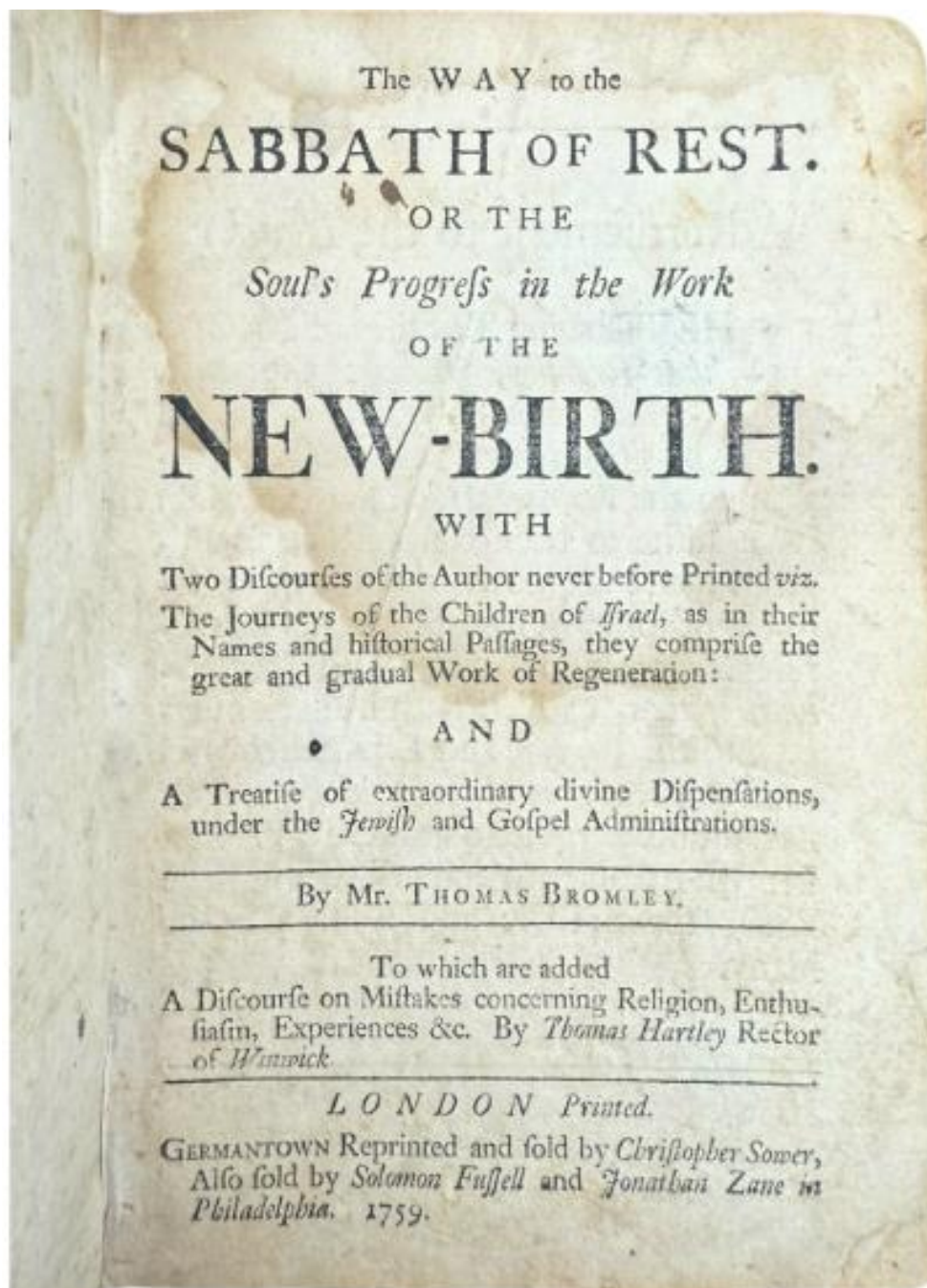
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Spirit's Day Version

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SDV Note

This Frontispiece image is from the 1759 Edition; however the text for this SDV version is from the 1692 publication.

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THE PUBLISHER TO THE READER

[WTS I:1] Christian Reader, the following practical and experimental treatise of the *New-Birth*, was written and published by the Author in his youth, about forty years since. And having been long out of print, and desired by many, has put those who are entrusted with his writings to communicate it to the public a second time, with some alterations and amendment by the Author's own hand, to prevent any occasion of offence or mistake.

[WTS I:2] And forasmuch as it has pleased the Lord, not long since, to take his Servant up into that *rest*, whereof so many years ago he had given him so ravishing a *Pisgah* sight (as will in part appear from the following sheets), it has been the desire of many of his friends (to whom his memory is and ever shall be most sweet and precious) that this Discourse might be ushered-in with a Short Account concerning him, and some of his last moments, till a fuller relation of his holy life be prepared for public view, which is a thing much desired by many, to the end that so saint-like and exemplary a life might serve for a copy and encouragement of the godly, and for the reclaiming and converting of the wicked and profane, in these dregs of time, wherein we have so great a scarcity of such examples, and in which true *religion* and the *fear of God* seem to have left the *Earth*.

[WTS I:3] But in the meantime, till some or other undertake this task, be pleased dear *Reader*, to accept of these short hints, concerning the *Instrument* by whom our good God has been pleased to reach forth the following truths and directions, in the *way and progress to the New-Birth* (that land of rest and peace) unto you, and all those who have *ears to hear what the Spirit says to the Churches*.

[WTS I:4] Mr. *Thomas Bromley* was born at *Upton*, upon the *Severne*, in *Worcestershire*, of an ancient and honorable family, according to the world's account.¹ He was in his younger years religiously educated, and after he had gone through the learning of the schools, became a member of *All-Soul's College* in *Oxford*, where God was pleased to reveal his Son in him, and to make great and glorious discoveries of himself unto him, such as, it may be, should they be here related, some would scarce be able to understand or bear.

[WTS I:5] And from that time forwards the *Supreme Love*, having ravished his heart with his all-surpassing beauty, became a veil to his eyes, keeping him from beholding vanity, or lusting after it. And he again, in return of this special divine grace and favor, wholly dedicated himself to his service from his youth. And parting with all, and denying himself, became a faithful follower and disciple of his great Lord and Master, the holy *Jesus*, and a true minister of the Gospel—not of the *Letter*, but of the *Spirit*; one that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the *Word of Truth*.

[WTS I:6] But having spoken a few words of the *rising* of this *Bright Star*, I must next lead you to its *setting*, passing by its whole course; he therefore having thus for many years *walked with God*, the Lord was pleased (before he took him to himself) to exercise him with a long continued weakness, which yet did not hinder him from exercising the functions of an evangelical preacher.

¹ But I think in mentioning this, I sink below the subject I am speaking of; for what is this to one who by his better birth, was a Son and Heir of God, and Co-heir with the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the holy and ever blessed *Jesus*?

[WTS I:7] About three weeks before his departure, he preached his last sermon from these words in *Acts 14:22*, the latter part of the verse, *That we must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God*; from which he took occasion to discourse not only concerning the *outward*, but more especially concerning the *great inward spiritual sufferings and combats of God's people*. After this *sermon* he grew so weak that he could not preach, and but seldom pray in the family. Yet at times when he felt the power of God upon him, he would have them called into his chamber, and would pray with great fervency and strength of voice, as if he had been in perfect health.

[WTS I:8] During this time (for his *setting* was of one piece with his *rising* and *whole course*) he gave many holy exhortations to those that came to visit him; and would often say, *He could take delight in nothing but God, as having been dead to the world these many years*. He declared to a familiar friend more than once, *That except the Lord would be pleased to restore him to such a degree of health, that he might preach the Gospel, and so help to edify the Church of God, he had rather* (if he might choose for himself) *die than live; For he knew where he should go, viz. to God and Christ, and all the blessed angels, etc., but that he must resign*. And would often say, *That he lived in the will of God*. He was observed to be much introverted and exercised in mental prayer, or prayer of silence; and when he heard too much talk in his chamber, he would say, *Be silent, be silent; for silence and stillness is best*.

[WTS I:9] One evening, being about ten days before he died, he had such a mighty power of God upon him, as many years ago he had experienced in the company and communion of his special spiritual friends; so that having called some dear friends up to his *chamber*, he broke forth into singing and praising of God, to the great joy, comfort and refreshment of all that heard him; and so likewise did about four or five days before his decease.

[WTS I:10] Sometime before this, he discoursed to some friends of the *difficulty of salvation, which was not to be secured but by giving our hearts wholly up to God, without any reserve whatsoever*. And then mentioned the great *love* he had to *souls*, and desire that they might not miss of *salvation*; and testified his *universal charity* to all that feared God, of whatsoever persuasion or division.

[WTS I:11] The day before he died, some friends, being come some miles to visit him, he with great earnestness and demonstration of truth discoursed to them of *God, of the immortality of the soul, the excellency of the Holy Scriptures, and how much those who profess to believe the Christian doctrines, are bound to live a holy life; and so gave a short, but powerful exhortation to holiness, as the only way to happiness*. And then said, *I have peace of conscience; I have lived up to my light, and loved God above all things*. And at another time he said to two intimate friends, *I have peace of conscience; I have walked with God, though I have made no noise in the world*.

[WTS I:12] The same day he died (on Easter-Monday, April 13, 1691), he often cried, *Come Lord Jesus, come quickly! O when! When!* And one time he said, *My Lord! My Rock! And my strong Habitation!* Which words came from him with great power. The last words that he ever spoke were, *Watch, watch*; whereupon he fell into a sweet slumber for an hour, and in it departed; thus truly falling asleep in him, to whom, for whom, and in whom he had lived; to whom be glory and praise forever and ever.

[WTS I:13] This was the end, dear *Reader*, of that precious *Saint*, who from the light and grace of God conferred upon him, penned the following *Treatise*; concerning which I shall not need to add anything further, seeing the following *Preface* of the Author gives a full account of the design and usefulness thereof. The *Paraphrase* in verse upon Chapter 13 of First *Corinthians* (printed at the end of the *Treatise*), being found amongst the Author's loose papers, was thought fit to be published here, because it expresses much of his spirit and temper.

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[WTS I:14] But I must conclude after that I have informed the *Reader*, that the Author has left several other excellent spiritual discourses behind him, which if this be well-received, are intended to be made public, for the use of the church in her present wilderness condition. The great and glorious God, who has given this *Seed* to the *Sower*, make it with all fruitfulness to spring up in the hearts of all that are of good-will to the *Regeneration* in *Christ Jesus*. Amen.

PREFACE by the AUTHOR

[WTS P:1] I have written this experimental discourse of the New-Birth, not for the wise and rich, who think they see and enjoy enough, but for the *poor in spirit*, who, inquiring the way to *Sion*, are sensible of their defects, and breathe after a supply. Let none then come with prejudice, for that will give a false tincture to the eye of the mind, and prevent the sight of truth, by a prepossession that it tis error. If any have attained, and enjoy as much, or more than is here expressed, let them bless God for his goodness, both to themselves and me; if not, let them not be ashamed to learn and practice more than they have already; for: *Teach a wise man, and he will be yet wiser* (Prov. 9:9). And it is no diminishing of esteem, to grow in true knowledge, or disparagement of age, to gain wisdom from those that are young; because *true* wisdom is the gift of God, who is no respecter of persons; bestowing his gifts on whom he pleases.

[WTS P:2] But think not that I have here chalked out a way for everyone to walk in; for I have only written my own experience. And I know there may be great variety in God's Work upon souls; so that none are to be confined to one exact path, though all are to be informed, that we must turn and become as little children, and be wholly dead with Christ, before we can be as the Angels in the resurrection, delighting ourselves in the light and life of Eternity; therefore *the perfect death* should be aimed at by all, for nothing less can fit us to enter glory. For how can any imperfection enter where there is nothing but perfection? or anything of darkness dwell with Him, who is *Light*, and in whom there is no darkness at all?

[WTS P:3] It is true that *many* (from mistaking the principle of God's being the root of all things). have endeavored to reconcile light and darkness, good and evil, flesh and spirit, Christ and Belial; and so to laugh all mortification and self-denial out of the church. But alas! What have the notions and practices of such ended in, but shame and confusion of face? For they have sowed to the wind, and reaped the whirlwind; grasped at an imaginary heaven and perfection; but have fallen like Lucifer into Hell and palpable darkness, having like foolish virgins, spent their oil, and received poison into their lamps, and so made themselves unfit to meet and entertain the Bridegroom.

[WTS P:4] *Others* there are, who come forth in such outward strictness and severity, as they are ready to judge all who are not in their peculiar method and form; and so refuse communion with some who have attained much further in the true death and resurrection (and are more acquainted with the renewal of God's image, and the state of restoration) than themselves.

[WTS P:5] And there be many *others* who, though not owning the first sort, and much disgusting the last, yet give themselves too much to earthly indulgements, under the notion of Christian liberty, and so make no real progress in the change of their souls. Some of whom are cheated with false notions of their being in Christ; and others with sublime apprehensions of false imaginary deaths, and ways of self-denial, which they much feed upon, instead of that death and cross, which should work their spirits and natures out of flesh into the true spiritual divine Image.

[WTS P:6] There are *another sort*, who are too much offended at forms, and all usual ways of enjoying, and speaking of God, decrying them as cheats, and empty things, though they be used never so spiritually and advantageously to those that appear in them; which is a great mistake, flowing from

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ignorance; and the want of a clear sight, which could not so confine the great and infinite *Jehovah* within the limits of no-forms, and exclude him from appearing and working in and through forms; inasmuch as it is of his own pleasure, to show himself how, and in what he pleases.

[WTS P:7] But lastly, *a great part* of those that profess religion, are such who rest too much upon the first work of regeneration, too much eyeing their first change; afterward running in a circle of duties and performances, without making that progress and growth toward perfection, which the frequent exhortations and examples of the Holy Scriptures call and incite us to.

[WTS P:8] Now the work of *regeneration*, renewing both the will and understanding, will bring those who persevere in it, to a clear sight of the aforementioned mistakes; by which they will be able to discern between light and darkness (chaff and wheat); and come to own the Good Seed in all; and endeavor by walking according to the Royal Law of Love and Charity, to cherish it.

[WTS P:9] Now this *Law of Love*, is the rule of perfection, being the scope and end of a Christian's progress; a true conformity to which, makes us like God, who is Love, and delights to impress his own eternal character of Love upon his children, who are nearer to, or further from perfection, as they partake more or less of this Essential Love, which is the Spirit and Life of Christianity; without which, all duties and observances are but as sounding brass, and perishing shadows: and in which, all have their worth and use. From the dictates and impulses of this law, I have written this treatise, believing it may be instrumental to undeceive many, who are wandering in the labyrinths of error; yet desirous of finding the true way; and to confirm, direct and strengthen others, who are making their way through the cross to the crown of life.

[WTS P:10] And truly this subject is of great concernment to all, because all are capable of the *New-Birth*; and none without it can ever be truly happy. *To mistake this work is very dangerous*; because it is the passage to eternal rest. The highest Heaven is situated in the large plains of eternity; yet the way to it is very narrow. At the entrance, the sharp sword of circumcision is placed: on the right hand, a deep water; and at the end, there stands a cherubim with a flaming sword, whose office is to cut off the relics of all corruption from the soul; so that the least grain of selfishness or flesh cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. The spirit of man is totally to be inhabited by Christ. There is not one weed to be left there. We are to be stripped of all the riches of corrupt nature, before we can pass through the last gate into the city. A naked spirit quickly enters. Thus the words of Christ, *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of God*. An empty spirit God will fill; for God is Love, and delights (through his Son) to communicate of his own fullness, to all that can receive it.

[WTS P:11] The soul cannot be emptied, but through regeneration; nor filled, if not *first* emptied. If we part with darkness, vanity and lust; we receive light, substance, and love. A complete exchange brings complete happiness.

[WTS P:12] How few are willing to sell all for Christ? How many distinctions are created by reason, to avoid the cross and death of Christ? But it is very dangerous to take up such principles that may indulge any part of that which must be destroyed. It may cause us to fall short of Heaven, when we expect to enter into it. It is far more safe to be too strict than too remiss: But the mean is best; which (I believe) is here somewhat clearly discovered.

CHAPTER 1 REGENERATION

The Necessity of Regeneration

[WTS 1:1] Regeneration is absolutely necessary to salvation (Joh. 3:3). Therefore it greatly concerns us to know its nature and operation; how it is to be considered, either in its initiation, progress, or consummation. As it is taken for the *beginning* of the work, it implies that first change of the Soul, when in general the frame of the will is swayed toward God and Heaven-ward. In its *progress*, it is the growth and motion of the soul, from the image of the earthly, toward the image of the heavenly. In its *end*, it is the bringing forth of the perfect and complete image of God in our humanity (1Cor. 15:49). When we attain this, we are complete in Christ, wholly new-born (2Cor. 5:17); and made fit to see and enjoy that eternal kingdom, which has been prepared for us from the beginning of the world.

Regeneration Defined

[WTS 1:2] *Regeneration* then, in its full latitude, comprehends all three states, and may be thus defined: *It is that transforming quickening work of God's Spirit, which begins, carries on, and completes God's image in us.* And so it is taken by Christ (Mat. 19:28), where he promised twelve thrones to his twelve disciples, as rewards for their faithfulness in following him *in the regeneration*; where it is expressed by an emphatic note, insinuating the fullness and completeness of it, as there meant.

Regeneration often mistaken for the complete New-Birth

[WTS 1:3] But in the ordinary acceptance amongst professing Christians, it is used in the most restrained sense, for the first change of the soul, when the bent of the heart begins to be habitually carried toward God in Christ. And by what I have heard and seen from most I have conversed with, I find too much weight laid upon this first work, as though it were the complete *New-Birth*; and that which might give sufficient ground of comfort, even to those who feel not the comfortable growth of the inward man in its motion towards perfection.

The Danger of this Mistake

[WTS 1:4] Thus many rest upon their first supposed conversion, and have a continual eye to it, as a great prop to their souls, though they feel their Chariot-Wheels stand still, yea, go backward; and are in much more deadness and drowsiness of spirit habitually, than when they first entered into the work of the *New-Birth*. But certainly this is dangerous (Eze. 18:24), and may much deceive the spirits of many, by making them more eye what they were, than what they are, or may be by pressing toward the mark of perfect union; for it stops their motion; and hinders their ascent toward Heaven, and their constant practicing conformity to the death of Christ; by which death only, we pass out of the Fall are fitted for glory, and at length attain the Crown of Life (Rev. 2:10).

Oh! Then take heed of resting there,
Where living flesh brings deadly fear,
And casts the soul on that sharp reed,
Which for a cure will make it bleed.

Then stand not still, nor turn thine eye
Backward unto mortality;
But winged with *faith*, move apace
Forward, in thy Heavenly Race

CHAPTER 2 FIRST WORK IN REGENERATION

[WTS 2:1] Having briefly showed what I mean by *regeneration*, I shall now proceed to its actual work, as it gradually discovers itself in the soul.

Conviction

[WTS 2:2] The first appearance of it in the heart is by *conviction* (Acts 2:37), through which, the soul comes to see its corruption in the darkness of the understanding, the vanity of imagination, the delusion of the will (in embracing defiled carnal objects), and the irregular motions of the affections, running earthward, like swift torrents down a precipice. In a word, the *light of God*, shining into the soul, gives it a view of its sad apostasy from its primitive state (Ecc. 7:29), when it was created in the image of God; whereas now it sees itself in the image of the Serpent, bespattered with the dust of the earth, clothed with polluted rags, wrapped up in darkness and hellish confusion, stained with the poison of sin, centered in the fire of God's wrath (Eph. 2:3), dwelling in the valley of the shadow of death, where devils are its associates and companions, pleasing themselves in the pollutions and stains of the soul, as delighting to dwell in such graves of corruption (Luk. 8:27).

The Effects of this Conviction

[WTS 2:3] Now when the soul once beholds this, Oh how amazed it begins to be! How it wonders at itself! What tumults begin to be raised in it! What earthquakes discover themselves! What a monster it appears to itself, when compared to the righteousness, holiness, and purity of God, expressed in the image of his Law! It sees it is impossible, in this state, ever to enjoy God, or come near him; for *without holiness no man can see the Lord* (Heb. 12:14). Here it sees it is eternally undone, without the great mercy and compassion of God, not being able to answer the strict requirements of the Law (Rom. 3:19), obliging to that which the soul is not capable to perform, through the presence and strength of corruption.

Conviction drives the Soul to Christ

[WTS 2:4] Here the soul is driven to Christ, the only Mediator between God and man, who long waited for this time, that so he might discover himself, having long stood in the midst of it unknown, and unregarded (Joh. 1:26); who upon the melting of the soul into tears of repentance, upon the renouncing of flesh and blood, with all corrupt objects, and upon the opening of the will (in the thirst and desire of *faith*) enters into the heart (Rev. 3:20), or rather, shows himself to be there, by opposing Hell, by shedding abroad his holy blood, to quench the fire of God's wrath, and wash the soul from those sad defilements it then lies under (1Joh. 1:7).

[WTS 2:5] Here he quiets the soul, and gives unto it *the wings of faith*, by which it flies above the reach of despairing fears, and by little and little, enters into peace and stillness, and shrouds itself in some measure, from the awakened storms of wrathful terror. Now, so far as the soul can get by faith into Christ, so far it finds ease, refreshment and peace; and a cessation from the sense of guilt, with cherishing belief of the present pardon of sin, as finding at such a time no stirring of the will to that which had so endangered it before, by its poisonous insinuations.

[WTS 2:6] Now therefore, beginning to hate evil as a monster, and to love Christ as a Savior, it feels the effects of Christ's meditation, by satisfying God's justice, taking away the enmity in the soul (Rom. 5:10), by the blood of his cross, by the meltings of Love which it feels towards God, and sweet refreshments it receives from him.

The Happy Fruits of this Revelation

[WTS 2:7] It comes now to be sensible, of how it has resisted God's Love, Christ's mercy, the Spirit's motions; how it has given the Devil interest in Christ's tabernacle, and shut Christ out from his own possession (1Cor. 6:20). Now flow tears of love, and soul-melting groans, with the mournings of the turtle. It now embraces Jesus, weeps over him whom it has pierced, and is wounded the more, the kinder Christ seems in returns of Love, in that he was before so much disobliged by the soul's unkindness. Now the soul wants ways of expressing love (Song 2:5), overwhelmed with the sense of goodness. In this state it feels it could die ten thousand deaths, or undergo anything in requital to its Saviour. All its motions and expressions tend to advance Christ, to extol Him, and predicate His unutterable Love (Song 1:2), thinking nothing enough for Him, who thought not his own life too much for it.

O that the soul would faithfully remain
In this sweet frame, until He comes again
To waft her in His chariot to that throne
Where God and an are in full union.
For Love does pitch its true pavilion there;
In other places Love is mixed with fear.

CHAPTER 3 DECLENSION and RECOVER

The State of the Soul under this Manifestation of Christ

[WTS 3:1] When the soul, after its shakings, attains this settlement in Christ's *Love* freely streaming towards it, it is usually much carried out in the sight and opening of *free grace*, which for a time strongly work upon it, and induce it to yield suitable returns, in constant obedience. And this, commonly, is a season of much joy and refreshment; the soul feeling that sensible consolation, and divine sweetness, that causes it to break forth into continual *praises* and *hallelujahs* to God.

[WTS 3:2] Now, as this flows from the lively apprehension of God's Love in Christ, so likewise from the clear sight of Christ in us (Col. 1:27), and of that mystical transcendent union, between him and the inward man; the soul, now beholding Christ in the ground and center of her own pure humanity (darting forth the rays of Love upon her), whom before she looked upon as at a distance, *without* her, as only sitting at the right hand of God in Heaven.

[WTS 3:3] Now while this dispensation lasts, the soul is in a perpetual spring (Song 2:4,11,13), and a kind of delightful Paradise, bathing and delighting itself in the sweet fruition of Christ's Love (Song 1:2), who in this time, expresses much kindness to it, and gives frequent testimonies of his divine presence.

The Declining of this State

[WTS 3:4] But this day seldom continues very long, and this summer by little and little usually inclines toward an autumn, in which the flowers of sensible comfort, and Love-raptures, begin a little to wither, and benumbing flesh again shows its power, in secret (almost insensible) dullings of the soul's affection, till by little and little, it comes to a sensible Deadness (Rev. 3:2), which is the more tedious and burdensome, the more the former dispensation was pleasant and joyous.

Reasons for its Decline

[WTS 3:5] Now what may be the reason of this declining in the soul's enjoyments, I shall not positively determine; for it may proceed from different causes, in different persons:

[WTS 3:6] In some it may flow from the want of Watchfulness over their hearts (Rev. 2:2); through the great elevations of *free grace*, in which time the flesh by little and little may collect strength; gifts then being more eyed than graces.

[WTS 3:7] It may also flow from the decay of the soul's lively apprehensions of God's Love, which it felt in freeing it from the poison and guilt of sin, when it groaned sadly under them; for so long as the strong impressions of that state remained (1Joh. 4:19), God's mercy (eminently discovered) forced the soul into suitable meltings at the sight of it; but these somewhat vanishing in time, the effects likewise might cease by little and little.

[WTS 3:8] It may also come from want of practicing the way of the cross, through our misapprehensions of being dead when we are not; or accidentally through the sensible overflowings, of new comforts, which may carry the soul out of that watchful exercise of the cross, which at such a time is most needful.

Means of Recovery

[WTS 3:9] But whatever is the cause of it, the soul ought to enter into a strict examination of itself, to sift every corner of its inward chambers, and to pray for a clearer light to view all subtle corruptions, that may gull it, and hinder its progress, and make it set up a standard as though all were done.

[WTS 3:10] Oh! it is dangerous sticking here, and resting upon former changes; for this tends to the indulging of spiritual drowsiness and stupidity, and may bring the soul in danger of losing its former works (2Joh. 8), by present idleness and relapses: For God looks not at what we *were*, but at what *we are*; our present state making us either capable of God's outflowing Love, or obnoxious to his chastising justice.

If so, awake dull soul! Think not to be
Excused from thy present lethargy
By former kindness, when the force of Love
Did pierce thy Heart, and made it upward move;
Awake! And pray that Christ in thee may give
New quickening to thy Dead, that it may live.

CHAPTER 4 DEATH, THE WAY TO LIFE

Many Continue Long under this Declension

[WTS 4:1] Many souls stick long in this condition, before they make a new advance towards perfection, usually much reflecting upon their former work of conversion, as the chief basis of their comforts. And though sometimes they look forward, and desire growth (Isa. 1:19), yet that desire of growth is so weak, that it terminates in itself, short of effectual accomplishment; and although they sometimes begin, yet their endeavors are nipped in their first blossoming (Gal. 5:7), and they themselves cast back into wonted deadness, and so they come to run in a circle, without getting ground of their corruptions.

Confirmed by the Author's Experience

[WTS 4:2] And I confess I was long detained in this state, without any clear evident progress toward eternity; and though I grew much in knowledge and mystical notions of the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, and of our conformity to his example, yet not in the power of his cross and death, working the same in my nature.

A Clearer Discovery of the Narrow way to Life

[WTS 4:3] But afterward I came to a clearer sight of the narrow way which leads to life eternal, and the necessity of our exact conformity (2Tim. 2:11) to Christ's sufferings and death to bring us unto his life, and resurrection: that every degree of life must come through a degree of death: and the *New Man* spring up by the continual decay of the Old (Rom. 8:13).

[WTS 4:4] And though I saw this before, yet not so distinctly and effectually as now: Here likewise I was more powerfully convinced of the straightness of the Pilgrim's Path (Mat. 7:13), which leads through the visible and invisible worlds, into the Third Heaven: Every step being to be made through death and resignation; and that the soul could not attain perfect bliss, but through a death to all things, which it came to love through the Fall (Luk. 14:33).

[WTS 4:5] For as the soul entered into selfishness, so it must come out of it, casting away all that clothing it is covered with, through lust. And as it descended from Paradise into the Spirit of the World, and the kingdom of the Devil, so it must re-ascend out of the spirit of the world, and the kingdom of the Dragon, through the root of fallen nature into the bosom of *Abraham* (1Pet. 2:21). Here I saw what a real progress the soul must make from the external into the internal, from there into the eternal. And as it descended, so it must ascend; as it fell, by a gradual change of the will into lust and earthliness, so it must rise, by a gradual renewing of the soul (1Cor. 15:49), from lust into Divine Love.

[WTS 4:6] Here I saw that nothing without us could advantage, but as it was applied to make a real change within. For except we turn, and become as Children (Mat. 18:3), we cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. It must be by a transmutation, and metamorphosis of the soul from the image of the earthly into that of the heavenly. Nothing can ascend into Heaven, but that which came from Heaven, even the true image of God (1Thes. 4:17); the earthly being predestinated to destruction: For earth it is, and unto

earth it must return. (I exclude not the soul, nor the resurrection body; for they both, vested with this image, shall arrive at immortality, and possess Heaven. 1Thes. 4:17.)

Ascending and Descending

[WTS 4:7] Now, the motion of the soul through the gate of death towards life eternal, is the motion of a spirit, which is to be looked upon as ascending or descending, as it comes nearer or removes further from God the center, as bodies ascend or descend in relation to their center, by their tending toward or from ward the visible heavens. Therefore *upward* to a soul is *inward*; *outward* is downward. The center is the highest, the circumference the lowest. God is in the center, being most inward; matter in the circumference being most outward, yet God is in the Outward, as his footstool, but in the most Inward, as his Throne (Isa. 66:1); filling both, though in both, not manifest alike.

[WTS 4:8] In the inmost, God shows himself wholly in the Love; in the outmost, in love and wrath, life and death, generation and corruption: but in the inward *Dark World*, altogether in death, darkness and wrath; as in the inmost, all in light and life.

The Soul's Progress described

[WTS 4:9] Therefore our progress is from the *outward*, through the *inward*, to the *inmost*. The *outward* is the place of good and evil, and as to its corrupt state, the Kingdom of the Beast. The *inward* is two-fold, either the *dark* or *light* world. The *dark* is the Kingdom of the Dragon—the center of evil and wrath. The *light* world is the Paradisical sphere, or that Garden of *Eden*, which is situated also in its *Mesopotamia*; or between the two great rivers of wrath and love. The first of which is called *The Lake of Fire, burning with brimstone* (Rev. 19:20); the last *a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, which proceeds out of the Throne of God, and of the Lamb* (Rev. 22).

Death the Only Way to Life

[WTS 4:10] The *inmost* is the eternal sanctuary, or the true eternal Tabernacle of God, and that spiritual land of peace, where *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, and all the glorified departed saints live and inhabit. But none can ever reach this but through the *perfect death*; and as we *die daily*, so we rise nearer and nearer it, death giving us a gradual passage towards this eternal Kingdom of Life.

And is it so, that death must waft us o'er
 The sea of nature, to the heavenly shore?
 Then bring thy boat, blest death, that thou and I
 May sail together towards eternity.
 A sweet companion thou wilt be to me,
 Till I embosomed am in unity.

CHAPTER 5 ENTIRE CONFORMITY

The Soul Resolves Upon a Total Self-denial

[WTS 5:1] The soul, having arrived so far as to see the necessity of a complete death, and of a perfect conformity to the cross of Christ, and discovering much selfishness which before it saw not (as matter of this death and cross), begins afresh the serious practice of the cross, with great earnestness and resolution of spirit, to indulge nothing that stands between it and God (Phi. 3:8).

The great Opposition it Meets with here

[WTS 5:2] Now it enters upon a strict inquiry into its own heart, searching its own Jerusalem with the candle of the Lord, that so all selfishness may be discovered and extirpated; and now finds that although (before this dispensation) the chief bent of the will inclined habitually toward the good, yet it was not strong enough to bear down that opposition of flesh that hindered its constant ascent towards Heaven, and had therefore need of a new alarm from there to awaken it, and raise it from that bed of drowsiness, and arm it with power and resolution to cast out the relics of the flesh (1Cor. 5:7), and corruption, and defend itself against the assaults of the Devil, who having long possessed the unregenerate part of the heart, is loath to quit his hold, lest the soul should get wholly out of his kingdom and reach.

[WTS 5:3] At this remove, therefore, the spirits of darkness exceedingly oppose (Rev. 12:7), and use all their art and strength to betray and weaken the soul's endeavors. Here then begins a new and great war in the soul, between the Seed of the Woman and the Serpent. *Michael* and his angels fight against the Dragon and his angels; Christ and Anti-Christ strongly oppose each other. The Wrath and Love bring forth their mighty wonders, being both stirred and awakened afresh in the soul. But the soul being now sensible of its present state, and seeing that there is no safety where the devils have such access and influence, sinks down into the mercy and love of God; and flies to the cross, embracing and delighting in it; that so the blood of the cross may be shed into it (1Joh. 1:7), to cleanse it throughout, and to take away those stains, which are the devil's mansions.

How the Soul Overcomes that Opposition

[WTS 5:4] And here it clearly finds there is no way of triumphing over the Prince of Death, but through death; so it dies daily (Rom. 6:5), to that which the Evil One lives in, and lives in that which is death to sin. In this way, much discouragement sometimes seizes on the soul, through the strength of Satan's working, and the reluctancy of flesh and the Outward Man, which is loath to subject his neck to the sharp axe of death.

[WTS 5:5] But this bitterness is recompensed with that refreshment the soul finds in its constancy of self-denial, which is attended with many glances of divine comfort, darting in upon the soul to encourage it. And though it should for a while remain in this progress, which is bitter to the flesh, without any sensible comfort (which may well be, through that great opposition the Dragon will make at this remove of the soul), yet when patience has had its work, and the soul is come to be wrapped up in contentment and passiveness, as to any change of its condition, and so fitted for enlargement; the showers of God's

Love will seasonably and sweetly descend to the strength and blessed support of the heart; so that it will be forced to cry out, *It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord* (Lam. 8:20). And what the spirit sometimes now enjoys, so sweetens the cross that it cannot but thus break forth:

An Exhortation to Love the Cross

Why should the soul refuse that cross
That gold returns instead of dross?
Why should it fear that piercing nail
Which rends away the fleshly veil?
And gives a prospect of that place,
Which time and age cannot deface?

CHAPTER 6 INWARD SPIRITUAL BODY

The Soul's advance in Self-denial

[WTS 6:1] By this time the soul begins to delight in the habit of strong self-denial (1Cor. 9:27), and watches diligently over itself, to discover whatever is to be slain upon the cross of God's pure will. And now it begins to be ashamed of all passions and affections that flow from the animal man; and therefore much restrains it, and keeps it in subjection to the angelical; which is according to that order God himself set at the beginning. Now it likewise sees how the animal mortal part (with its motions and passions) is too much embraced by most; few understanding how it was in the beginning; or how it is to be changed, and again subjected to the angelical part, in the Children of the *Resurrection*.

The Inward Spiritual Body

[WTS 6:2] But the soul having now some sight and enjoyment of the inward spiritual body raised from the dead, is much ashamed of the outward body, which stands in the curse, under awakened wrath; seeing what temptation spirits are exposed to, by union with this, which should continually be under the law of mortification, till its change; lest through its earthly inclination, it should infect the intellect (and draw the immortal soul into defilement), which now dares not hearken to the allurements of the sensitive spirit, which as tempting Eve often presents the apples of mortality, as those which are pleasing to the eye, and good for food.

Its Five Inward Senses and their Objects

[WTS 6:3] But through the renewal of the spiritual body, with its five faculties, or powers (Heb. 5:14), answering to the five senses of the external body, the objects and pleasure of the outward begin to be forgot, and to displease, instead of alluring and affecting the heart. For by the *exercise of the internal senses*, we see spiritual objects, as the internal light-world, visions of angels, and visions of representation. In this state we likewise hear the songs, voices, and harmony of angels, with the harpers upon Mount *Sion*, who continually praise the Lord. We smell the perfumes of Christ's garments, and are often entertained with Paradisical odors. We touch and feel the powerful tincture of Christ's body, which many times strongly affects the heart with powerful delight: We also often taste the Heavenly Manna, and those Dews of Paradise which are sweeter than honey, to that part which receives them.

Which all are not Equally Aware of

[WTS 6:4] I could more largely particularize the several objects, delights, and enjoyments of the inward spiritual senses; But because there may be great variety (1Cor. 12:5), according to the different gifts and capacities of several persons; and in regard some (for ought I know) may pass far in the progress of the New Birth, without a particular knowledge of those enjoyments; I shall not instance in many particulars, I could; nor set down my own (with some others) peculiar, and various experiences.

This Opening of the Inward Senses affords a great Support

[WTS 6:5] Yet in general I cannot but affirm that the unlocking the senses of the inward man, is a great privilege: and that the soul by it attains many great supports and refreshments to uphold it, and give it encouragement to hold out to the end. For truly, this communion it lives in now (Heb. 12:22), with the angels of God, and other divine objects, continually minds it of Heaven, and Paradise; and exceedingly draws the heart from all that is in the world, where death and corruption is wrote upon everything; And the Dragon and beasts bring forth their various wonders: But in this state the soul blesses God for that constancy he afforded under the cross; and for that death it has undergone, in resignation to his will, which has proved a passage into this life; in which the soul beholds the opening of a new world (2Kin. 6:17), with its glorious hosts: And begins to feel the sweetness of the angelical life, and to see what we fell from by descending into the spirit of mortality, and the sensitive nature.

Not Attainable without Dying to the Commanding Lust

[WTS 6:6] Now this state cannot be attained but by a death to that which was the chief engagement of the soul to the world, and the primary chain that hindered its gradual ascent towards God. And we may find there is something in everyone, which is the soul's *Delilah*, that shaves its locks and betrays its strength; and while this remains, it cannot effectually grow in the Love of God, and conformity to Christ's death. But when this subtle harlot comes to be discovered and killed, the soul flies apace, and very swiftly to eternity; for when this wheel is taken away, the smaller that depended on it, lose their strength and motion and so cease with it; giving freedom to the soul, of tending towards its true center; which (having regained this liberty, and attained in some measure the restoration of the holy powers of sensation) sings a song of praise to God, in this manner:

The Soul Praises God for Deliverance from this Yoke

Blessed be that power, which has that idol broke,
Which did so long depress me with her yoke!
Blessed be that hand which has restored to me
An eye, within this world, *a world* to see!
Where angels and blest spirits freely move,
As they are acted by the laws of love;
Whence they a visit sometime deign to give (Gen. 32:1,2)
To those embodied souls that purely live.

CHAPTER 7 THE BODY OF SIN CRUCIFIED

The Soul's Advance in the Straight Way of Resignation

[WTS 7:1] The soul having now attained to the death of that which so long hindered its growth in the pure life (and to the enjoyment of those spiritual objects, which exceedingly refresh and quicken the heart, in the midst of all discouragements) proceeds cheerfully in the strait way of resignation; offering up (Rev. 1:6) its Sin-Offering daily as a sacrifice to the Father's justice. For now the Daily Oblation is restored in the Holy Place, which must continue till the death of sin, and the rending away the veil of flesh (Heb. 10:20) from before the Most Holy: Now therefore the circumcising knife of God's power constantly cuts off the fleshly part, which is offered up in the fire of justice and consumed before the Lord.

Members of the Body of Sin to be Crucified

[WTS 7:2] Now the soul sees it must resist to blood (Heb. 12:4), that is, to the death of the Body of Sin, which is wholly to be separated from the Spirit, with all its members: For this is that false covering it has wrapped itself in, through the Fall, instead of that naked innocence in which there was no uncomeliness, and therefore no shame (Gen. 2:25). Except therefore this foreskin of the flesh be cut off, the angelical robe cannot be put on: and as that falls off, this is assumed; increasing as that decays: for, they cannot both rise and fall together; for while the outward man decays, the inward man is renewed day by day.

Natural Affections, how far Exempted from this Crucifixion

[WTS 7:3] Here it clearly appears, we must forsake *all* we have; otherwise we cannot be Christ's Disciples (Luk. 14:33). *All* objects of our carnal affections, all complacency in fleshly things; all propriety of will, which assuredly came through the Fall, and the soul's departing from the universal love (the true ground of heavenly community), into the particular objects of self-affections, which as it has been awakened by the soul's going out of God's will, into its own; so it must be crucified by returning from itself into the pure eternal will of God, which we can never attain, till we are dead to the affections of the sensitive part (Gal. 5:24).

The Christian Marriage State and the Single State

[WTS 7:4] For carnal love, joy, hope, fear, desire, displeasure, are all the selfish motions of the natural man, the corrupt members of the Body of Sin, together with earthly pride, covetousness, envy, jealousy, emulation, wrath, strife, all which are the legs of the earthly *Adam*, and therefore to be cast away and destroyed (Col. 3:5); and in their fall, the will comes to be crucified to all their objects, and so to all selfish propriety. Here we come to lose our own lives, to hate our selfish motions, to be slain to all fleshly things the will has espoused, instead of God in Christ. Here we begin to be truly poor, renouncing all for Christ (Mat. 19:27), in a resigned will and mortified affections, also a moderate, charitable and sanctified use of all temporal things.

[WTS 7:5] And as to the case of propriety in earthly estates, it is good to know and declare impartially the full and perfect thing designed to be brought forth in the church, that Christians of this day may at least wish and pray for it; though it seems indeed to be almost impracticable in the present degenerated state of the Christian Church; Nor to be set upon without an aid and concurrent power of the Holy Spirit, like that in *Pentecost*, where no man called anything that he had his own, but they had all things in common.

[WTS 7:6] We see here that the Earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; and that covetousness has been the cause of propriety, and of all those engrossings of land and money, which most are involved in, and Christ with his disciples, and his disciples afterwards with their followers, gave a pattern, and made a beginning of the renewal of the Law of Love; which regards our neighbor or brother as our self. And the least we can do in this point of day, must be for those that have estates, to be as though they had them not, and to use them as stewards for God and Christ, and also with regard to his body or members, being communicative according other will of God, in the more enlarged and generous portions of wisdom, goodness and love.

[WTS 7:7] We are also in this to see our present shortness, and bemoan the loss of the Spirit and power of primitive Christianity; and stand ourselves so lose and indifferent to all things, that if, or whenever God may please to restore the primitive spirit, power and life of Christianity again, we may be in a posture prepared and ready to give up all, and concur in the more perfect manner of such a blessed day, viz. in a heavenly community here on earth which may imitate the holy angels and glorified saints above, who inherit their eternal substance, as their eternal joys, without any self-appropriation, in blessed unity and community.

[WTS 7:8] Here likewise we die to and forsake earthly relations (Luk. 14:26), *as part of that we call ours*. And though we are not to destroy natural affection, nor to neglect the performing of any due obligation laid upon us by the law of nature (Luk. 14:27), as it accords with the will and justice of God; yet we are to die to all such propriety of affection, as flows from corrupt nature, and hinders the impartial communication of our love to everyone, according to the perfect example of our Heavenly Father, who takes in no fleshly respects, in the giving forth of his Love to his creatures, which is our pattern to imitate; for we are to be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect.

[WTS 7:9] Here those that have wives, are as though they had none, in sanctification of the marriage-bed, and subordination of inferior desires, by a superior regard to Christ, the Spouse of the Church, whereof they are here appointed a holy figure. Thus forbearing to idolize the woman of the world, and returning to the true Mother and Spouse of the soul in Christ Jesus, viz., the Virgin Sophia, or the Heavenly Wisdom, who is the unspotted mirror of the eternal world, the first and chief Spouse of Christ (Rev. 21:2). And they who can receive it follow the example of Christ, who lived and died in virginity, as he was born of a virgin: and this they do for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake, according to that precept, *He that is able to receive it, let him receive it* (Mat. 19:10-12); where Jesus speaks concerning the abstaining from marriage, and of those that made themselves eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven.

[WTS 7:10] Thus it is clear that a greater degree of dying to, and crucifying *the root*, from which the enjoyment in that state comes, is to such, a real means to the greater growth and increase of God's kingdom in the soul, which is to be presented as a chaste virgin to Christ (2Cor. 11:2); And St. Paul (1Cor. 7:21,31-35) prefers the virgin-state far before the married; and therefore (in verse 7) said: *I would that all men were as I am*; which certainly he spoke according to the true light, sound judgment, and great experience in the work and progress of regeneration.

The Comforts in the Way of Entire Resignation and Renunciation

[WTS 7:11] But in a word, in this state before described, we come to see that we ourselves are not our own, but the Lord's, and that we are to consecrate our bodies, souls and spirits to him, and to resign up all we call ours to him; whose is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. And truly our gradual incorporation into the Body of Christ, with the enjoyment of new relations and treasures, which are spiritual and eternal, make it the more easy to die to, and forsake all earthly things; which being of a lower nature, show their rise by their fall; for being of the earth, they are earthly, and return to earth, as utterly incapable to enter with us into the Kingdom of Love (1Cor. 15:50).

[WTS 7:12] As we then leave the Spirit of the World, they leave us; and so we arrive to a good degree of conquest and victory over that Beast (Rev. 13:16-17) in its mystical sense,² which rules the whole world which gives the soul occasion thus to express itself in praise.

Blessed be that power, by which the Beast
Is made to serve, and we released
From that base servile drudgery,
Which some mistake for liberty.
Sad liberty! That chains poor souls to dust,
And soils immortal things with mortal rust.

² Though I hint at the mystical sense of the Beast in Rev. 13, yet I deny not the historical, as it has been truly applied to a succession of persons in the signally lapsed or Anti-Christian Church.

CHAPTER 8 CASTING DOWN IMAGINATIONS

The Soul's Conquest ver Imagination

[WTS 8:1] The soul having arrived so far in the circumcision of the heart from the body of flesh, and in the renovation of the spiritual image, cannot but have attained a good step in the command over *imagination*, especially in the death of it to complacency in any corrupt fleshly object, which now becomes too gross for the renewed mind to regard. But yet we shall find the Tempter working much upon imagination, sometimes taking advantage of the strong influences of the external heavens. And if we are so strong as to reject thoughts, which tempt to speculative delight in objects, which our corrupt nature formerly embraced, but now (being changed) abhors, we shall find the Evil One drawing us to close with, and entertain thoughts, not evil in themselves, yet very evil to us, because they present and feed the soul with unprofitable pictures, which should be alone entertained with the sweet meditation of Christ's Love, and the way to be completed in it.

Disturbing the Rest of the Inward Man

[WTS 8:2] And I know many are exceedingly troubled with the working of their imaginations on inconsiderable trifling objects, when as they dare not entertain any thoughts grossly evil; and where this state is grown into a long habit, it will be difficult to come out of it, though a soul be very sensible of the vanity of it, and long to be freed from it, as finding the imagination in these workings to be like the Witch of *Endor*, raising up the old prophet *Samuel*, or the inward man, from the sleep of silence, and innocent stillness, to be disquieted with vain earthly things (1Sam. 18:15).

Watchfulness and the Exercise of the Cross

[WTS 8:3] In this case therefore, it concerns the soul to stand continually upon its watch, lest it be sometimes snatched away unawares, and engaged in vanity, before it sees where it is. Here the continual exercise of the cross is very necessary, that by it we may cast down imaginations (2Cor. 10:5), and lead captive every thought into the obedience of Christ: so that the chief work now, is the reducing this moveable sea into subjection to the illuminated understanding: therefore the soul prays and strives continually against the power of imagination and activity of thoughts, which hinder the silent actings of the intellect upon eternity, and supernatural truths.

Faith and Perseverance

[WTS 8:4] And here faith and perseverance are very needful: We need faith to believe that by the power and strength of Christ we may overcome these imaginations; and perseverance, that we may not faint in the way, and give off the constant exercise of the cross in rejecting, beating down, and ceasing from these motions of the imaginary faculty, till we come to be conquerors, and to command them; which is possible through Christ, who is come into our world, to destroy the works of the Devil, and to rule till he has put all his enemies under his feet, of which these idle thoughts are a part.

Other helps towards this Conquest

[WTS 8:5] And as the soul here uses the power it has received from Christ in checking, rejecting, and beating down all idle thoughts, as a means to overcome them; so likewise it is oft exercising of its understanding upon the eternal Love and free grace of God, and in considering the mystery of that Paradisical world (Phi. 3:20), in which the angels and spirits of the just are. It much also reflects upon the presence of its Savior who has promised to be with us to the end of the world (Mat. 28:20), filling all things in his divine nature (Eph. 4:10), for he continually stands at the door and knocks, so that the soul waits every moment for the fulfilling of that promise of his coming into it, and supping with it (Rev. 3:20). And this constant attending upon God with the eye of the understanding, proves a very effectual mean to the destroying of those imaginations which come to entangle the soul in unprofitable diversions.

Intellection Superior to Reason

[WTS 8:6] In this practice the understanding gets such power over the imaginations, that it enjoys almost a continual sight or apprehension of God's presence (Heb. 11:27); and sees beyond the working of imagination, by the eye of the understanding enlightened (Eph. 1:18), and by little and little attains that strength, that although we should have necessary occasion to take up our thoughts in some external employment, yet the understanding pierces through it, and in the very time of exercising its Reason on that particular, it has strong and clear apprehensions of the presence of God, and the spiritual world: which clearly shows that intellection, or the true acting of the understanding, is somewhat beyond Reason, which is not able to do two things at once, and act upon several objects, at the same instant.

The Continual Sense of the Divine Presence

[WTS 8:7] And this constant apprehension or sense of the divine presence is without any phantasm, it being in that moment when the phantasms are employed upon another object; and they having somewhat of materiality, cannot afford that spiritual sight and apprehension such a soul has constantly of God, which is without figure, color, or similitude (Acts 17:29); yet I must confess the usual contemplations of the soul (in this state) upon spiritual objects, whether of Paradise, angels, supernatural truths, and Scripture verities, are not without the use of phantasms, which being ordered by divine light and wisdom do in some measure (according to their nature) express spiritual truth.

Sense of the Divine Presence is without Phantasms

[WTS 8:8] Though I confess this is far below the true intellection of the understanding, informed with the presence of divine light, in regard these phantasms, being generally drawn from corporeal objects, cannot reach the essence of a spirit. And truly here the soul plainly discovers its fall from the divine mind, image (Gen. 1:27), and light, in which it saw intuitively, and could give names (Gen. 19:20) according to the natures of things, into the imaginary spirit (Ecc. 7:29), which belongs to this world, and is too gross a glass to express truly and essentially, spiritual eternal objects.

Reason often Misguides in Spiritual Matters

[WTS 8:9] And here it appears how easily man's Reason (being the apt and methodical ordering of his phantasms) may misguide (1Cor. 2:14) the understanding in spiritual things, as in comments upon Scriptures, which were inspired by the Holy Ghost, and wrote by revelation, and so require the help of that same Spirit (Joh. 14:26), to elevate the understanding above imagination, in the true interpretation of them, es-

pecially in things which are out of the road of those moral verities, which the light of nature impresses upon men's consciences, to steer them in their lives and conversations.

An Exhortation to Seek the Divine Light

Then let us pray for that true Light,
Which gives a true and constant sight
Of God, Christ, angels, who do lie
Much deeper than lapsed Reason's eye;
Which in the glass of phantasy,
A lively picture may espy,
But not the essence of *true verity*.

CHAPTER 9 CAUTIONS—SILENCE OF THE SOUL

Three Failures that Hinder the Soul's Progress

[WTS 9:1] The soul having arrived so far as to enjoy almost a continual apprehension of the presence of God and angels, finds itself much freed from those vain thoughts, which in former dispensations were very troublesome. But being conqueror over these, it must *take heed* lest the new objects of Heaven, angels, and spiritual gifts, set the imagination too much a work, in representing their excellencies, and picturing forth such a state of the soul enriched with them, which may yield too much imaginary delight, and draw the spirit into the admiration of fine pleasant pictures instead of the true substance (Isa. 2:16). Therefore we are strictly to *watch* over the phantasy, which may easily err in this particular, and not without great prejudices following upon it:

[WTS 9:2] For first, by such working of *imagination*, we come to slacken the exercise of the cross, both upon imagination itself (which is continually to be restrained, and as much as is possible reduced unto subjection {2Cor. 10:5}, to the illuminated understanding), and also upon the relics of the Old Man in any other faculty, which are always to be slain in their first buddings; and therefore to be strictly eyed, which cannot be, while imagination is so busy in its motions.

[WTS 9:3] The second is, that complacency which the soul may take, by representing itself adorned with, and enjoying the gifts of hearing, seeing, touching, tasting, and smelling, in a spiritual way (with all the beauty and sweetness of the objects of those faculties) both in itself so privileged, and in the objects themselves; most of which being but streams, and not the Fountain itself, the soul may be in danger of taking too much delight, and so of being entangled in them.

[WTS 9:4] The third inconvenience is, the obstructing that *still silence* of the soul, in which it should be oft wrapped up, as a mean to those extraordinary effusions of light and power which God many times affords the soul in its passive quiet waiting (Psa. 46:10); Whereas this labor of imagination too much keeps the soul in action, and so in an unfitness for those divine impressions, which very seldom come down but into a spirit profoundly silent.

Restraining of all Thoughts Recommended

[WTS 9:5] Seeing then there may be so much danger in indulging imagination, even in these pure objects, we shall find it very requisite, oft to cease from all imagination, and to act no thought upon anything, in the heights above, or the depths below; I say no thought, thoughts being but images, which reach not the essence of spiritual objects. But this practice excludes not that general, constant, intellectual sight and apprehension of God, which the soul (thus far arrived) enjoys.

[WTS 9:6] Therefore I speak not here to those who have not attained a continual, habitual apprehension of the Divine Presence; for if they should strive to cease from their good thoughts, they might fall into a kind of stupidity, far worse. But I here give directions to those who having attained constant habitual communion with God, press after perfection in their constant progress, through all impediments; of which, this working of imagination being one, we here give experimental directions to overcome it:

How Irregular Imagination is Overcome

[WTS 9:7] And certainly there is no better way than the annihilation of all thoughts, and the retiring from the phantasy into the silent mind (Rev. 1:10), which more fits the soul for divine irradiation, and spiritual embraces; for the more quiet we are, the less resistance we make against a supernatural impression, and the easier we perceive the beginnings of divine attraction, and so yield ourselves to it. And truly, when the soul has attained the power to throw itself (as often as it is meet) into the silent super imaginary state (which must be attained by the habitual constant practice of it) it will then come to internal openings (Rev. 4:2), and intellectual sights of the invisible worlds, and many times receive quickening glances from the eternity, with those strong infusions of Love that bring the soul many times near to a rapture: And truly, the enjoyment we have in this state fully recompenses all that self-denial, we pass through to the attainment of it.

[WTS 9:8] Here then the False Prophet (Rev. 16:13, 19:20), which is irregular *imagination*, comes to be conquered, being commanded by the inward mind, that now often draws up the soul into the Paradisical World,³ from the motion of phantasy and imagination.

And now the soul does bid adieu
 To fancy's glass, 'cause 'tis not true;
 And to that mirror turns its eye,
 Where things are viewed *essentially*:
 And there in *silence* waits that state to know,
 To which all former dispensations bow:
 Wait on, blest soul! And know this passive life,
 Will send you into *oneness*, from all strife.

³ Though I here allude to the false Prophet mentioned in the *Apocalypse*; yet I exclude not the Eternal Prophetic sense of this or any other part of the *Revelation*, which is a prophetic history of the Church to the end of the world.

CHAPTER 10 SPIRITUAL RELATIONS

The Conquest over Imagination and the Animal or Natural Man

[WTS 10:1] Imagination being now overcome, and the animal man mortified, the soul cannot but clearly discover its growth in the image of God, and the resurrection of the angelical man, which now evidently perceives itself springing up in a new principle, above the spirit of the world (1Cor. 2:12), and its mixed laws: And here we come to own and receive *new relations*, contracted by our progress in the New-Birth, and our tendency from the spirit of the world toward eternity.

From hence flow Spiritual Relations

[WTS 10:2] And as through the act of generation we came to be invested with earthly relations, so by the work of regeneration we come to possess those that are spiritual. Here we come to honor God, as our Father in the Spirit (not excluding any other of his beloved ones, who have been instrumental to beget us into the divine image and wisdom), and Jerusalem above as our true mother (Gal. 4:26): And so all other saints who have been begotten by the same power into the same nature, become our true brothers and sisters; all standing upon one root, drawing one nourishment, and knit together by one spirit (Eph. 4:4), which is the Instructor, Leader and Comforter of all.

The Reason of Spiritual Union and Sympathy

[WTS 10:3] But we shall here find a *nearer union and communion* amongst those who have been by one particular instrument begotten into the life of Christ, having a peculiar vein of spiritual enjoyment running through them; which others, who received not that particular tincture, do not partake of. And had we lived in the Apostle's times, we should have seen this among the primitive Christians. For certainly they that were begotten by St. Paul, had a particular endearment to him, and to one another; and so it may be said of those that were converted by *Apollos, Cephas*, and others: which is clear by that Scripture, *Every one of you says, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas* (1Cor. 1:12).

[WTS 10:4] And though Paul blames them here for contention, emulation and irregularity in their particular affections to their spiritual fathers; yet not for a peculiar ownership of those who instrumentally converted them; for that is according to the law of pure justice, seeing *he that converts a sinner, saves a soul from death, and covers a multitude of sins* (Jas. 5:20). And St. Paul himself in some places speaks of himself as a spiritual *father*, requiring of those he had begotten into the faith, due respect, obedience and love. But amongst those who are thus peculiarly united, we shall see some more closely knit in spiritual agreement than others, and essenced into one another's spirits; as may appear by that great union which Christ had with St. John, and that particular affection he bore towards him, which was the reason why St. John was called (by way of eminency and distinction from the rest) *The Disciple whom Jesus loved*.

Enjoyments Flowing from Spiritual Relations

[WTS 10:5] Now when we come to experience this, we shall know the meaning of that Scripture, where *bone* is said to come to *His bone* (Eze. 37:7): For as some bones are locked one in another, and

some members grow more immediately one out of another, though all make up but one organical body; so some spirits are nearer united in Christ's body than others, and stand closer jointed, and more intrinsically compacted, but all make up but one spiritual and mystical body. And this we shall find to flow from the harmony and agreement of spirits and natures, as they were signatored in the first moment of existence: For grace and the work of regeneration do not destroy our natural signatures, only rectify them by that heavenly principle, which reduces all our spirits into the highest perfection they are capable of, by their primary model and frame. Thus it appears that they are more truly brethren (even according to natural nature), who thus agree, and correspond their essences, then they that are ordinarily called so, who are many times very contrary signatored.

[WTS 10:6] And the reason of this assertion is in that when our natures come to their perfect rectitude and restoration by union with God; this secret propension and harmonious closing with those that are like-essenced remains; whereas from mere natural relation there nothing continues; though in those who are related, there may be this agreement too. But mere relation is not the cause of it, but that secret law of influence, which God has established to signature some one way, some another; some in much agreement and proportion; others more differing, though all representing something of that variety, which is wrapped up in the unity of the Eternal Nature. I could not but give an hint of this, because it may open some things concerning relations, which may lie dark to those who know not the deepest ground and root of them.

[WTS 10:7] But I shall proceed to the further opening of those enjoyments, which flow from union with new relations, which come now to be very dear; because the ground of their relation is so pure and good, being not of man, or the will of man, but of God (Joh. 1:13). Here we shall experience the happy effects of our pure union, which produces that Divine Love, that none can know, but those that enjoy it. But this will be strongest, where there is most harmony and agreement in spirits and natures; because the eternal tincture works upon, and through everything according to its nature and capacity. Thus we come to enjoy more from some than others; and some from us receive more than others.

[WTS 10:8] But that brotherly love and friendship, which now come to be renewed in spirit, far transcend any enjoyments merely natural. And whatsoever we parted with, in dying to all earthly affection and its objects, we regain in the resurrection of our spirits, in this pure Love, which is not affection but something above it; not consisting in sudden out-flowings and eruptions, but in a constant sweet inclination and secret propension of the spirit, to those who are one with it, in the pure life.

[WTS 10:9] And this good-willingness is so great, that from it the soul could give its life (1Joh. 3:16), or if there were anything dearer than life (Gal. 4:15), for its brother; and choose sufferings, to free others from them. In this state there will be a sympathizing in joy and sorrow; and where the union is eminently great, there may be some knowledge of each other's condition at a distance (Col. 2:5); which comes from their being essenced in each other's spirits and tinctures, which is the cause of this invisible sympathy.

The Animal Life and the Universal Life

[WTS 10:10] And they that are in this near union feel a mutual indwelling in the pure tincture and life of each other (2Cor. 3:2). And so, the further we come out of the animal nature, the more universal we are, and nearer both to Heaven, and to one another in the internal; and the fitter instrumentally to convey the pure streams of the heavenly life to each other, which no external distance can hinder. For the divine tincture (being such a spiritual virtue, as Christ imprinted into the heart of the disciples, with whom he talked after his resurrection, making their *hearts to burn within them*) is able to pierce through all distance, and reach those that are far absent; because it is not corporeal, nor subject to the laws of place or time.

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[WTS 10:11] Now this is known to some by experience, who in absence enjoy such influences of spirit, and secret insinuations of spiritual virtue from one another, that they cannot but value this spiritual communion, above all enjoyments in the world; which compared to it, seem but like the basest metal to the purest gold.

An Exhortation: The Natural State vs. the Spiritual

Then quit that wretched state, immortal soul,
Where poisoned ghosts in flesh together roll;
And take thy flight into that Mount of Love,
Where new-born spirits in bright bodies move,
And sport themselves in that eternal joy,
Which totally excludes lusts base alloy.
Lust's left below for those that flesh desire;
Love dwells on high, love fills the heavenly choir.

CHAPTER 11 REFINED SELFISHNESS

[WTS 11:1] The Love which in this spiritual union (before described) we come to enjoy, is inexpressibly refreshing, proving to be sweeter than the honey or the honeycomb; and continually raises the soul to the true fountain of it, who being the true cause of all *pure* union, both preserves and increases it.

Danger of Selfishness in Spiritual Relations

[WTS 11:2] But the soul now having a view and experience of the beauty and sweetness of the spirits of other Christians, and of the excellency of that love which may be enjoyed through them may (if it be not prevented by much self-denial and watchfulness) suffer very much *selfishness* to spring up in a new dress. For here may arise spiritual covetousness, or a desire of engrossing spirits to one's self. Here spiritual pride may also discover itself in desiring much esteem of such; envy likewise may start up against those we fear may draw them from us, or enjoy more Love from them than ourselves: and so all other selfish affections may here crowd in, in a refined dress: And as these *spiritual evils* may flow from the sight of the excellency and suitableness of the spirits of other Christians,

And from Gifts of the Spirit

[WTS 11:3] So also they may break in upon us from large and eminent gifts of the Spirit (2Cor. 12:7). For we seeing the amiableness and worth of these, may come immoderately to desire them; may fear to have them eclipsed; may reflect too much upon ourselves in the enjoying of them (Eze. 16:15); may look too much after eminency in the use of them, and (in a word) may take too much complacency in the pleasant fruition of them; even to an hindrance of our looking up to the Fountain, as all in all.

How to Obviate these Dangers

[WTS 11:4] If then the soul be here entangled (as it is hard totally to escape), it must fly to the cross (Gal. 6:14), and lay the axe to the root of the tree of *self*, that so it may be hewn down and cast into the fire: and it must pray for the sword of power, to circumcise and cut off this refined selfishness, as it did the grosser part: and to take away this propriety and self-ownment of all spirits, gifts and graces.

[WTS 11:5] Here we must come to offer up the very good itself, as *Abraham* did *Isaac* (Gen. 22:2), to God—the Fountain and Bestower. Here we must die to the coveting of any spirit, grace, vision, revelation, rapture, or sensible comfort. Here we must come to be nothing in all these; to enjoy them as though we enjoyed them not, and not to reflect upon ourselves on any account; to rejoice to see others flourish in the riches of those (1Cor. 12:25,26); and to have far more light, wisdom, comfort and honor, than ourselves; to be willing when we are rich in gifts (and esteem of the saints) to part with them (Phi. 3:8), if God so please, and to hang so loose from all things below God, as that nothing may the least hinder our conformity to the death of Christ, or our rising again in the pure life of love and innocence.

Though not without Difficulty

[WTS 11:6] And truly when we have known the glory of those spiritual objects, and have been rich in possessing them, we may find it exceeding difficult wholly to give up, and to own no propriety of will in

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them, becoming nothing in the greatest union of spirits, fruition of gifts and spiritual honor; keeping a sweet innocent spirit free from selfishness in all these.

[WTS 11:7] Now the reason of the difficulty in being wholly freed from self here, is the excellency of the objects, and the sweetness of their enjoyments: For their nature and effects being very suitable to the soul, they have the stronger influence upon it, to close with them in too much delight and adherence. Therefore it may be more difficult totally to give them up, than it was to leave outward gross things, which could not be so pleasing to the nature of the soul.

[WTS 11:8] And though some (who think they have passed far in the New-Birth) never experienced this, and may therefore look upon it as a thing not much to be regarded, yet let all such know that the reason may be that they never yet passed clear out of the Spirit of the World; nor overcame their animal nature, by a complete circumcision and renunciation; and so were not capable to receive any extraordinary enjoyments of visions, revelations, in-speakings, prophesies, unions of spirit; and being not come into the inward wilderness, where the soul is fitted for such things, and where these spiritual temptations arise to try it: Whereas being in the outward sensitive (spirit) and detained in flesh and blood, as Israel in *Egypt*, the inward spiritual faculties of sensation lie locked up and can have no knowledge of those spiritual operations and enjoyments:

Conformity to the Death of Christ

[WTS 11:9] But they that are come so far in the work of the New-birth, as to be acquainted with, and to live to these things, must of necessity die to them, and come to be nothing in them (2Cor. 6:10), giving up all to God, and forsaking the propriety of their own wills. Now this is a parting with our own lives, and the giving up the ghost of refined selfishness, which strikes at the root of sin and evil, and brings us to the death of the cross, in conformity to the example of our Savior's progress, who was crucified between two thieves: one of which was lost, though the other went with him into Paradise, which we in the mystery likewise fulfill. For our wills are crucified between the outward animal man, and the inward old man, or sinful nature; the first of which in the resurrection, shall be received (after purification) into Paradise; but the last, must be destroyed and swallowed up into the fire of wrath.

The soul which on the cross thus freely dies,
Becomes to God a pleasing sacrifice,
Through that Eternal Spirit and that blood,
Which by mere Reason are not understood;
Nor by those rabbis, who divines would be,
Though they know not the true Divinity.

CHAPTER 12 THE DESCENT INTO HELL

The Soul's Conformity to Christ's Descent into Hell

[WTS 12:1] After this death upon the mystical cross, the soul in conformity to Christ's progress, passes through a state analogous to that of Christ's descent into Hell, being that principle which stands as a smoking furnace before the entrance of Paradise, into which none can pass, but those that are dead with Christ, and washed from the pollutions of flesh and spirit by the blood of the Lamb: For whosoever retains the spots of *guilt* will be kept back by God's wrath, which in this principle burns like fire (Isa. 30:33).

This Principle of God's Wrath is spread through the World

[WTS 12:2] This also is spread (at least potentially as to its root) through the whole world; yet invisible to the outward eye. In this the Dragon and all evil angels and spirits are; for the Lord reserves the fallen angels in *everlasting chains under darkness* (Jude 6); or has *cast them into Hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment* (2Pet. 2:4). Now, though the fallen angels are everywhere tempting the Saints, yet they are always in the chains of this invisible darkness, which could not be, if this were not everywhere in this world. Therefore it is called *the darkness of this world* (Eph 6:12), of which the chief devils are the *kosmokrator*, or worldly rulers. And although evil spirits receive some refreshment by mixing with the souls of men, which are clothed with the animal sensitive nature, and live in the spirit of the world, yet they are still in chains under this darkness, as in their proper center.

Luke 8:31 Explained

[WTS 12:3] And although it is said that the devils, whose name was *Legion*, besought Christ (after they were cast out of the man) that he would not command them *to go out into the deep* (Luk. 8:31), as though the deep or bottomless pit had been at a distance from them: yet the meaning is, that they might not wholly go out of the spirit of the world, and out of union with it, deeper into the center of darkness and wrath. For in union, either with men or beasts, who live in the spirit of the world, they receive some mitigation of their torment, which they have not, when they are naked and unclothed in the Abyss.

[WTS 12:4] Therefore their going into the Abyss from union with the spirits of men or beasts, is not as we depart from one room into another (which are disjoined by outward distance), but a sinking deeper from the circumference toward the center, from the outward to the inward, which we call the *Dark World*, and *Hell*; which (according to the sight and experience of some deep mystical men) is made up of spiritual *sulphur*, *mercury*, and *salt*, not united and harmonized in sweet proportion, for then they would be Paradise; but as in discord and disproportion working in contrary motions, through the absence of that pure *balsamical* oil, which flowing from the heart of God, makes Paradise so delightful.

Visibles Proceed from Invisibles

[WTS 12:5] Now as all things in this visible world are compounded of these three material principles, *sulphur*, *mercury* and *salt*, so are the invisible worlds, in their spiritual nature, from which the visible

world proceeded, and in which it is erected; for the things which are seen were made not of things that do appear (Heb. 7:3), but consequently out of things invisible, as the Vulgar Latin has it, *ut ex invisibilibus visibilia fierent*, and to the same sense is the Syriac versions.

[WTS 12:6] But to proceed: the Dark World is called the Abyss or Bottomless Pit (Rev. 9:2.); and whosoever go down into this sea, sees God's wonders in the deep (Psa. 107:24). For there is the great *Leviathan*, the crooked Serpent, the Dragon (Isa. 27:1); Out of whose mouth *go burning lamps, and sparks of fire leap out* (Job 41:19-21). *Out of his nostrils goes smoke, as out of a seething cauldron. His breath kindles coals, and a flame goes out of his mouth* (v. 31). *He makes the deep to boil like a pot of ointment* (v. 34). *He beholds all high things: He is a King over all the children of pride*, which are the principalities, powers and spiritual wickedness of this Dark World: many of which in their dark bodies bear the forms of terrible beast (Rev. 9:3,17).

[WTS 12:7] Into this region, Christ descended after his giving up of the Ghost upon the cross; for this is a distinct article of the Ancient Creed, and agrees with Acts 2:27: *You will not leave my soul in Hell*, which was prophetically spoken by the Psalmist, of Christ's descending into Hell, and of his redemption from it; and Eph. 4:9, it is said, that before he ascended, he descended into the lower parts of the Earth, which cannot be meant of his outward body, because that lay in, or near the superficies of the Earth: or as in Mat. 12:40, into the Heart of the Earth: Where there is a parallel made between *Jonas* and Christ, the type and the antitype, which cannot well correspond except Christ descended into the sphere of the inward spiritual *Leviathan*,⁴ as *Jonas* into the belly of the outward: from where (in type of Christ) he said, *Out of the belly of Hell cried I, and you heard my voice* (Jon. 2:2).

Hell: Why it's called the Heart of the Earth

[WTS 12:8] Now *Hell*, or the Dark World, may be called the Heart of the Earth, 1. In allusion to that large sphere or Lake of Fire, which according to *Des Cartes* and some learned Hermetic philosophers, is seated in and about the center of the Earth. 2. In that according to the eternal gradation of beings and principles, it may be said to be within, in the middle or center of it; the Earth and all terrestrial matter being more outward, in the circumference. And though *Hell* is called *to scotos to exoterion* (Mat. 8:12)—the utter or more outward darkness; yet that is spoken in relation to Paradise and the Eternal World, not in reference to the Earth and this world.

Christ having past this way, draws all Men after Him

[WTS 12:9] Now Christ having passed through this principle into Paradise, draws us all after him, according to that promise: *When I am lifted up on the cross, I will draw all men unto me*. Now this is no other way, than that he went through himself; for there is but one way into Everlasting Life, and the Kingdom of Glory; and that very narrow too, according to Christ's words, *Strait is the gate and narrow, or afflicted, is the way that leads into life and few there be that find it* (Mat. 7:14). Even they only who deny themselves and take up their crosses, and follow him, who is the Way, not only through this world, but even through death and Hell also; for, though in conformity to his pattern, we come to be cast into Hell, which is called the furnace of Fire (Mat. 13:50), typed forth by *Nebuchadnezzar's* fiery furnace, into which the three children were cast: yet the Son of God walks there with us, keeping us from that torment and pain, which the damned undergo; and making us (with him) to triumph over principalities and pow-

⁴ I deny not but some great Sea-Monster is (in the Letter) here described; but that the Devil is here also alluded to, and intended, is not only my judgment, but of many of the ancients, as appears clear by ver. 34, which is a key to the rest.

ers, and to conquer them by the blood of the Everlasting Covenant; which quenching the fire of wrath, raises the spirits of the obedient out of this dark grave, into the joys of Paradise.

The Anguish of Hell, without Passing through as Conquerors

[WTS 12:10] But we must know that in our progress we may many times be cast into terror and anguish; Yea feel Hell awakened in us, and afterwards be delivered by some influence of Christ's Spirit, and infusions of his Love, and yet be short of this resurrection, and of passing through Hell as conquerors, which can never be till we descend there without guilt, in child-like innocence, with the candle of the Lord in our hands, which is the Pillar of Fire which alone can lead us through this night, into the Day of Paradise. To which state whoever attains cannot but sing thus, in the joy of their spirits.

A Hymn of praise for this Conquest

Ye Morning Stars, ye Sons of Light,
Rejoice with jubilation:
As once you did when that first night
Was scattered by creation.
Behold the Prince of Night is thrown
Into his proper place:
And he that cast the Dragon down,
Has raised me by his grace.
And now I stand above that grave,
Where wrath entombed is;
And wait, that rich crown to receive,
Which will be perfect bliss.

CHAPTER 13 INTERNAL PARADISE

Entrance into the Internal Paradise through the Inward Dark World

[WTS 13:1] By this time the soul experiences the happy state of being freed from the principle of selfness, in returning to God from the spirit of the world, and sees the real progress it has made from the outward through the inward Dark World, into the internal Paradise; where *Adam* lived before his Fall, and where Christ conversed, between the time of his resurrection and ascension. In this spiritual region the curse is not manifest, there being a perpetual spring. Here are the ideas of all visible bodies, in much beauty and appearing luster. Here are those bright clouds which overshadowed Christ on the mount; and when he was received up into Heaven, in which he will descend when he comes again to judge the Earth (Rev. 1:7).

Its State in this Angelical Garden

[WTS 13:2] Now the soul having attained to the state of this angelical garden, knows what it is to turn and become as a child (1Pet. 2:2), and to attain a secret and quiet life of innocence and pure love, free from those passions and evil affections it had formerly groaned under. And here it experiences what it is to be born of Water and the Spirit (Joh. 3:5), as a necessary qualification to do the will of God: And sees its conception in the womb of Wisdom (which is our new Mother) who here distills the milk of the Eternal Word (from the Eternal World), to feed and nourish the soul: to where it now travels as fixing its sight upon that pure river of Water of Life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the Throne of God, and of the Lamb (Rev. 22:1).

[WTS 13:3] But now likewise the soul lives the life of spiritual vegetation, and grows like a willow by the watercourses, or a Lilly in the Garden of the Lord (Hos. 14:5), being continually refreshed with the dews of the eternal heavens, and quickened by the beams of the sun of righteousness, and cherished with the enlivening gales of the Holy Spirit. All that are in this state are like the harmless flowers in a fruitful garden, springing from the same ground, yet differing in color, virtue, smell, and growth, according to their several natures, and times of planting; yet all serving to express the power, love, and wisdom of their creator, without any strife or contention for eminency place or esteem, being all satisfied with what God affords them, and their different capacities fit them for.

[WTS 13:4] O what a sweet harmony is here! What a beautiful consent in expressing the goodness of the great Creator of all things? How far are spirits here from envying the different beauties and ornaments one of another? How sweetly do they incline to mutual love and agreement, as being the branches of one pure root? as enjoying the same kind of nourishment, and receiving life from the same quickening Spirit (1Cor. 12:13)? How is all wrath and contention here forgotten? How amiable do spirits now begin to grow in the eyes of Christ, by their innocent childishness? And truly in this dispensation, we come to be clothed with humility, wrapped up in meekness; expressing nothing but the blessed effects of Heaven upon Earth; here we are full of love-meltings towards Christ, who baptizes us in the soft water of spiritual meekness; which overspreads the soul, not suffering any of the fire of passion to spring up.

[WTS 13:5] In this state the soul is very watchful over every motion, in the outward and inward man, fearing to step down again into nature, where before it had so much trouble and bitterness (Heb. 12:15); whereas now it is in a sweet pleasant rest, lying upon the bed of innocence, solacing itself in the sweet embraces of its Savior (Song 2:6), who now begins to show himself very clearly, and to afford almost continual refreshments: In a word, this is a life of stillness, silence, and spiritual simplicity; in which the soul, turning its eyes from nature, looks directly forward to Eternity (Heb. 12:2), and strongly breaths after its arrival there.

This State, the Fifth Day in the New Creation

[WTS 13:6] And here we come to know the work of the fifth day in our new creation, answering the fifth of those Seven Spirits, which are the eyes of the Lamb of God (Rev. 5:6).

If harmony in this *fifth* arise,
What will it be, when you Sabbatize,
In that last day, where all variety
Concenters in a perfect unity!
Then stand fast, poor *soul!* And keep your ground,
Till with Eternal Love you shall be crowned.
Take heed of lust which unlocked Adams Eyes,
And Cast him to the Earth from Paradise.

CHAPTER 14 INTERNAL FACULTIES RESTORED

The Blessedness of this State further Discovered

[WTS 14:1] When the soul is arrived to this baptism of meekness and innocent love, and has experienced the comfortable distillations of the heavenly dew, to its very great profit and growth, it comes to be much confirmed and established in this principle, and finds the effects of its present station to be very blessed, in comparison of what it was when it stood in the fire of awakened nature. And now seems as one that has passed through a hot fiery region into a moderate cool air, where gentle gales of wind breathe upon it, and refreshing dews entertain it, and cooling waters are afforded to take away the sense of thirst (Psa. 46:4).

[WTS 14:2] And now it perceives the happiness of those who have made their way by death through irregular and discording nature, into that spiritual state where there is joy, peace, rest and harmony (Heb. 4:3). This condition then brings with it a greater death to the world and all worldly things (Gal. 6:14), a total disrelishing of all things corrupt and impure though more refined, and so as it is deadened to the world and selfishness, it lives the more to God and all goodness (1Pet. 4:2), and finds its will more strongly drawn to Christ and eternity.

Restoration of the Internal Faculties of Spiritual Sensation

[WTS 14:3] And this dispensation into which the soul now enters, is a state of much life and quickening (1Joh. 3:14), and of much pleasing enjoyment from the objects of the internal senses renewed and restored by the Spirit of God; for here the internal faculties (Heb. 5:14) of spiritual sensation are more opened, and give a greater enjoyment of the first angelical life which was in Paradise (1Joh. 1:1): And we attain the use and restoration of these faculties, through our growth in regeneration, and as a privilege purchased for us by Christ: So that all saints shall partake of them, either here or in Heaven, according as their attainments are. In this state our internal *eye* is more unlocked (2Kin. 6:17) to behold the Paradisiacal World with those luminous objects and inhabitants that are in it:

[WTS 14:4] Here we see such bright clouds as the disciples saw on the mount (Mat. 17:5) and at Christ's ascension when he was taken up into Heaven (Acts 1:9). In which he will likewise descend again (Mat. 24:30). Here also we see the angels of God ascending and descending, as *Jacob at Bethel* (Gen. 28:12). In this state also our inward *ear* is sweetly entertained with angelical harmony, hearing the sweet harpers upon *Mount Sion* (Rev. 14:2), and the voices of those that sing the Song of *Moses* and the Lamb, and of those that cry Hallelujah! Hallelujah! (Rev. 19:1,3,4,6), with many other voices out of the Eternal World (Rev. 4:1).

[WTS 14:5] Moreover our internal *feeling* is almost continually entertained with the strong contactions of the Word of Life (1Joh. 1:1), which sometimes discover themselves by thrilling motions throughout the whole man; but most commonly by strong infusions of the pure burning tincture of Jesus (Luk. 24:32), into the heart.

[WTS 14:6] In this state likewise we often *smell* the hot perfumes of Paradise (Psa. 45:8), and are pierced through with most delightful odors, which infuse themselves into the tincture of the heart and create delight, and give a plain feeling and sense of the presence of Paradise, and that invisible light world where there is no curse nor corruption.

[WTS 14:7] And in a word, here we *feed* upon the Heavenly Manna, angel's food, which is living bread, that quickens, enlivens, and corroborates the soul; and we often *taste* very sweet dews diffusing themselves with much pleasure into that internal sense of taste, which lies within the organ of the tongue. Thus all the spiritual faculties of sensation are in this dispensation more opened, and more freely entertained with their peculiar objects.

A Caution not to set up our Rest in these Enjoyments

[WTS 14:8] But yet we are not to rest in these Enjoyments, nor to go to build Tabernacles with them, but to look forward and to press after perfect union with the Divine Nature in the Eternal World, where is our true Sabbath of Rest, in the vision of God, and perfect fruition of his Love forever (1Thess. 4:17; Heb. 4:9).

The pleasures which in this state we enjoy,
Are only known to those that do obey;
For souls that do Imbibe sins poison here,
Have neither eyes to see nor ears to hear
Those sacred objects of divine sensation,
Which are the pleasures of the new creation:
Man's lapsed sense and reason know them not,
They are the little *children's* sacred *lot*.

CHAPTER 15 HEAVENLY LOVE

The Soul's Enjoyments in it Approaches to the Eternal World

[WTS 15:1] By this time the Soul begins to draw near the Eternal World, in its fixed station and habitual Enjoyment, lying under the showers of Love, which descend from the heart of God and the bosom of *Sophia*: Here the blessed tincture of Jesus coming so powerfully, as though it streamed from his glorified humanity, flows into the soul like a river of oil mixed with fire, which affords that unutterable delight, which cannot be conceived by those that know it not experimentally.

By its Growth in Love to God

[WTS 15:2] Here Christ said, Drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved, and fills large cups of Love, Heavenly Love, to power into the soul; so that it sometimes comes to be sick of Love (Song 2:5), not knowing how to carry itself through the abundant showers that fall upon it. For Christ many times touches the soul with a piercing Beam of Love, which by this, is suddenly drawn to a quick return; and this gives freer passage for a new impression, which more exciting the powers of the soul to a new embrace, opens the way more for the King of Glory to enter, with that power and unutterable force of Divine Love, that the soul becomes filled, swallowed up, and transported into a kind of rapture, not being able to express those pleasures, gusts, embraces, Love-Ecstasies, which then are piercing thorough it; nor sufficient praises and hallelujahs to the great King of Saints, who bestows such royal tokens of Love upon it.

[WTS 15:3] And as in this state there is such holy commerce in pure Love between God and the soul, so there is between the soul and other Saints (Psa. 16:3), who cannot but wonderfully own and love one another, and delight in that likeness of God, which they see in each other, and bless him for those living powers of grace and Love that are communicated in the worship of God, by which they exceedingly refresh each other's spirits. Now this mutual Love chiefly flows from a sight and sense of oneness (Joh. 17:21), which exceedingly enforces this great closing and out-flowing of Spirit to delight, comfort, and refresh one another.

Its Fellow Members

[WTS 15:4] And here is that strength of Love that we could give our lives for the brethren (2Cor. 12:15), and endure much affliction to flee them from sufferings: Here we bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the Royal Law of Love; for we can keep nothing as our own, but what we heartily communicate and make our brethren partakers of, because they are part of ourselves. Here we come to practice that heavenly law, of loving our neighbors as ourselves, and of doing God's will on Earth as it is done in Heaven; for which end man and the visible world were brought forth. For the breaking forth of sin and wrath was not according to God's most pure and holy will, which is good, and tends to salvation and blessing, and the keeping of his creatures in that primitive harmony, in which they came out of God's hands as fitted to glorify him through mutual Love, and regular obedience. And this is the end of Christ's coming into the world of man's nature, even to restore it from the discord of sin and wrath, to the harmony of pure Love and righteousness.

And all Men

[WTS 15:5] Therefore it is a happy state to have attained this Habit of Love before described, which will not terminate within the sphere of our neighbors and brethren, but in some measure flow out to all; causing us to breathe after, endeavor, and pray for their change (1Tim. 2:1): for it is the nature of true Love to communicate itself, and to delight in propagating its own heavenly image, that so many may come to partake of bliss and happiness through it. And in this enjoyment, if we find any that know and possess but little, yet thirst much after God, O how will our hearts burn within us! How ready shall we be to employ our talents for their good, and to discover that way which leads through nature into the Kingdom of the Love? What labor and pains could we take to be instrumental in changing and quickening them, and in bringing them through the cross to our own state of happiness; so that this dispensation abounds much in Love, both to God and our neighbor, fitting the soul for ascension into eternity, there to see and know with satisfaction and delight, those wonders which the holy angels and glorified saints are continually viewing with joy and admiration.

Blessed is that soul which is arrived here,
Where quickening Love casts out dejecting fear;
And gives that sweet composure to the mind,
That it lies passive to that Holy Wind,
Which blowing from the highest Paradise,
Invites the soul to come and Sabbatize
In that bright day, where the Arch-Angels sing
Sweet Hallelujahs to our Christ their King.

CHAPTER 16 THE CONCLUSION

The Opening of the Eternal World

[WTS 16:1] The soul being brought thus far in the heart-work by the power of Jesus, through the practice of the cross, in self-denial and resignation, lives in habitual springings up of the love in the center of its spirit, where the work is near finished, the will being constantly drawn toward the Heart of God in the Chariot of Love. And in this state the soul is completely fitted for ascension, and the opening of the Eternal World, which is part of the head-work; for in that the spiritual eye is seated, which is capable to see and know the wonders of Eternity.

Not Attainable but by an Entire Resignation of the Will

[WTS 16:2] And though some in a rapture may be taken up into that world long before the work in their hearts, wills, and affections is finished; yet such must afterward go through the work in nature, of rectifying all their properties, and of bringing their wills into death, and pure resignation, that so they may be fitted for the Birth of the Love; Thus it is clear that this state of regeneration, attained in the will through the death, is far more considerable, and nearer perfection than the highest rapture without such a foregoing work; and the ascension after this work of regeneration in the heart, is more weighty, and more tending to perfection, than any rapture of transportation before, can be; because by such a work, the will is wrought up into a constant union with Christ, which by ascension, is more confirmed and established, the heart through that, being more raised above all mortal corruptible objects (Col. 2:1), and more reduced into a passive silent waiting, for the opening of the *Eternal Temple*, from which the infallible voice proceeds, and where the great High-Priest sparkles with the most bright beams of divine glory.

The Soul's Ascent an Effect of the Divine Power

[WTS 16:3] But the manner of the soul's ascending from the internal to the eternal world, is very remarkable and wonderful. It cannot of itself move one degree upward (Joh. 15:5); That same hand of power which carried it downward, to see the wonders of God in the depths, must carry it upward to see his wonders in the high places above. So that in this the soul is merely passive; The Spirit of Christ being the agent, which descending with an over-shadowing virtue upon it, wraps it up swiftly (2Cor. 12:2), and in a strong force (by which the soul's acts are for a while suspended) translates it, as it were, in a straight line from the inward, toward the inmost.

Wonders Discovered in this Ascent

[WTS 16:4] In this translation or ascension, what wonders are seen and felt, I shall not particularly express: But in general this I must declare, That there is an unutterable power transfusing the soul in this ascent, which first comes into the womb of the invisible worlds (out of which they issue) in which it finds an universal silence or stillness; and above which, it discovers a great glory, inhabited by glorified spirits, who live there in perpetual harmony and joy, singing hallelujah's to the Lamb of God; and continually waiting upon the infallible voice proceeding from the Throne of God.

[WTS 16:5] To be taken into this, is a further degree of ascension, being the second mansion in the Eternal World; where myriads of angels attend those commands (Rev. 5:11), which come out of the Most Holy Place, which is the last and highest mansion in that world, answering to *Love*, as the second to *Life*, and the first to *Light*, corresponding with the threefold manifestation of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. But to speak much of the last two requires greater experience than I have yet enjoyed. Neither is it expedient to describe the first, nor those wonders which are in it, in regard of that blindness and general enmity which is in men's hearts against the deep mysteries of God in invisible nature.

[WTS 16:6] But after ascension into the first, the soul becomes so much endued with the sense and apprehension of those spiritual mysteries it was there acquainted with; and has such a clear view of the outward world, and of the misery that most there lie in, that it cannot but weep over the greatest part of men, as Christ did over *Jerusalem*, as seeing them exceeding ignorant of eternity, and so of their own everlasting happiness; and involved in the spirit of the outward world, where the Prince of the World holds them captive, and makes them enemies to the Kingdom of Love, in which there is no enmity, covetousness, lust nor deceit, nor any such things as those are, which in the world are most courted and admired.

The Fruit of these Discoveries

[WTS 16:7] After this also, the soul begins to discover the evil properties and habits of men's spirits, very much portrayed in their faces, discovering in their very aspects and signatures those bestial and devilish passions by which they are swayed and captivated within, so that the eye many times affects the heart with grief, in viewing the sad estate of souls estranged from the life of innocence and pure virginity, and imprisoned in the dark chains of corrupt flesh and blood. Here likewise the soul is exceeding passive, and much comprehended in deep abstract silence, by which it much enjoys unutterable pleasures and gusts from the inward ground of eternity, having much sense of the nearness of that kingdom, where the angelical thrones sing hallelujahs, and sport themselves in the innocent delights of their eternal spheres and luminous mansions.

[WTS 16:8] And as the soul passes from the *First Mansion* towards the *Second* and *Third* (Acts 22:7, Joh. 14:21), Jesus of *Nazareth* (in his glorified humanity) begins to give great demonstrations of his presence (Joh. 14); and to visit the inward man with frequent and very great impressions; so that it cannot doubt but that he is sometimes personally present, infusing the tincture of his glorified body into the heart, which is sweeter than honey, and burns like oil and fire mixed together. And truly this dispensation is exceeding comfortable and very weighty; for the discovery of Christ's presence sometimes swallows up the soul into unspeakable joy, being transfused with the breath of his mouth, which is most odoriferous; and quickened by the touch of his body, which is most delightful; and pierced through with the sound of his voice, which is most harmonious and powerful; causing the soul deeply to admire the grace of God, and to cry out with Thomas, *My Lord and my God*.

The Opening of Eternity in the Heart, and in the Head

[WTS 16:9] In this dispensation Christ shows very powerfully the necessity of his mediation as God-Man; and that whatever we receive is through him, who standing in the deepest union with the Father, conveys all light, life and love from himself, into us, who at the time of the Restitution of All Things, will again *breathe the Holy Ghost* on his chosen vessels (Act. 3:21), of which those in the primitive time received but the *firstfruits*. He also reveals in this state how the Mystery of Iniquity (even the spirit of Anti-Christ) works in most sects of Christians; carrying them either to deny or slight the Great Mystery of his mediatory office: or by misconceptions, to cry up his blood and merits, to the prejudice of mortification, self-denial, and the imitating of his most innocent life, as our pattern to walk by in this world.

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[WTS 16:10] Moreover, in this dispensation the soul enjoys very great openings of eternity in the heart, which are different from openings in the head, where the inward senses of hearing and seeing are resident; for whatever in a divine sight (Eternity opening in the head) we clearly and distinctly view and behold the same (in a heart-opening), we really feel and handle in a spiritual way; for in it we come experimentally to know and perceive the motions and administering influences of angels, the virtue and efficacy of Christ's universal and particular Body: the harmony, love, and enjoyments of *the spirits of just men made perfect*; with much of the glory and majesty of that kingdom prepared for us from the beginning of the world, into which none can enter, but those who have forsaken all for Christ (Luk. 14:33), and have divested themselves of all the vestments of corruption, and have put on the robe of innocence, which is the garment of true virginity, in which they will not be ashamed to stand before the Son of Man in his Kingdom.

Then be ye wise Immortal Sparks of Fire,
And strive to get you garments of pure Light;
In which you may from mortal dregs retire
Into that glory, where is no spot of night.
O do but weigh how swiftly time goes by,
And how all earthly pleasures rise and fall;
As soon as they a Being have, they die,
And nothing can their hasty joy recall.
But when the outward garment is withdrawn,
Eternity presents its constant face,
In which all actions clearly will be shown,
Which ever have been wrought in time's short race.
But such alone can there possessed be
Of happiness, that have been born again:
Others will feel the pangs of misery,
Who in their wills corruption still retain.
Then die to sin, while on the Earth you live;
So after death, true life you shall receive.

THE END

A Brief Essay on 1st Corinthians Chapter 13

1. Though I with eloquence should vested be
Above the pitch of mere humanity;
So as in tongues with angels for to vie,
Yet all is nothing without *Charity*:
Like sounding brass, or the loud cymbals noise,⁵
Without true Life, I should but form a voice.
2. And though I have the Gift of Prophecy,
And hidden Wisdom be unveiled to me;
So that in Knowledge equal I become
To the great soul of Mighty *Solomon*:
Yea, though by faith vast hills I could remove,
Yet all is nothing without perfect Love.
3. Though all my goods on the poor I bestow,
And so great zeal for my religion show,
As to consent my flesh in flames should burn,
Rather than from my dear opinion turn:
Yet thus no profit to my soul can rise,
Except to Love, itself a sacrifice.
4. This Love by its true characters may be
Distinguished from pretended charity;
It perseveres in patience, and is kind,
Then when to try it, all things seem combined.
Envy's black Tincture it did never know,
Nor ostentation in its great deeds show.
It is not inflated, but will kiss the dust,
To help those souls, which in its goodness trust.
5. Comely to all itself it does express.
Through condescension seeking for to bless.
No self-love ever did its actions stain,
It stoops to suffer, to make others reign.
No bitterness⁶ did ever in it rise
From the worst actings of its enemies;
But still it thinks the best, is not severe
Sin to impute, but rather all would clear.
6. All falsehood and injustice distant are,
As from its joys, so from its spotless sphere:
But truth in heart, word, works, are its delight;
A pleasing object to a virgin sight.
7. It covers⁷ all that malice would reveal;
It pardons, and would fain all breaches heal.

⁵ The Greek words imports rather a loud sounding, than a tinkling cymbal.

⁶ The Greek imports, 'tis never provoked into high Passion, or embittered.

⁷ In the English, it bears all things; but according to the Greek it may be better rendered, It covers or hides all things: Else the last words of the verse and these import the very same.

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It believes all that may crimes excuse,
Except mere evidence makes it refuse.
And though things at the present appear bad,
It hopes at length they will be better made.
Thus it endures all things, waits to see,
Through the long patience, a full victory.

8. Which Love will gain; for it can never die,
But must outlast the Gift of Prophecy;
Yea, and of languages, for they must cease,
And give way to United Blessedness:⁸
When all our twilight knowledge will expire
In the bright beams of its Eternal Fire.
9. Knowledge and Prophecy are but in part,
But Love's that essence which must fill the heart;
By that imperfect gifts absorbed must be,
But that ends well that dies in Charity.
10. Children, like children, reason, think and speak,
Their intellectual actings are but weak;
But when to manly age we do arrive,
No longer then in childish things we live.
So when our hopes in Love consummate are,
Imperfect lights and gifts will disappear.
11. For little here but images we see,
And pictures of essential verity;
Eternal truths in riddles do appear,
Much is obscure, but very little clear.
Yet when the perfect Love we shall possess,
With intuition Heaven will us bless:
Then face to face we shall that beauty see,
By which Angelic Hosts astonished be.
Then shall we know, as we of him are known,
By rays of intellect and pure sensation.
12. Therefore when Faith, Hope, Love, we do compare,
Love has the palm; this Love the Crown does wear.
The evidence of things not seen faith is,
And Hope our anchor till we come to bliss;
But then they both expire, and both resign
To Love the Firstborn of the Sacred Trine;
Without which Heaven could not Heaven be,
Neither a place of rest, nor unity.
'tis this that links Eternity to Time,
And makes the Heavens with our Earth to chime.
'tis this that knits *eternal souls* in one,
And binds the *Angels* in conjunction.
'tis this that draws down the almighty powers
To overshadow us in Golden Showers,
That so our hearts might more enriched be
With the abundant fruits of Charity.

FINIS

⁸ The division of tongues divided and scattered mankind.