

UNION WITH CHRIST

O FATHER.

Thou hast made man for the glory of thyself,
and when not an instrument of that glory,
he is a thing of nought;

No sin is greater than the sin of unbelief,
for if union with Christ is the greatest good,
unbelief is the greatest sin,
as being cross to thy command;

I see that whatever my sin is,
yet no sin is like disunion from Christ by unbelief.

Lord, keep me from committing the greatest sin in departing from him,
for I can never in this life perfectly obey and cleave to Christ.

When thou takest away my outward blessings, it is for sin,
in not acknowledging that all that I have is of thee,
in not serving thee through what I have,
in making myself secure and hardened.

Lawful blessings are the secret idols, and do most hurt;
the greatest injury is in the having,
the greatest good in the taking away.

In love divest me of blessings that I may glorify thee the more;
remove the fuel of my sin,
and may I prize the gain of a little holiness
as overbalancing all my losses.

The more I love thee with a truly gracious love
the more I desire to love thee,
and the more miserable I am at my want of love;

The more I hunger and thirst after thee,
the more I faint and fail in finding thee,

The more my heart is broken for sin,
the more I pray it may be far more broken.

My great evil is that I do not remember the sins of my youth,
nay, the sins of one day I forget the next.

Keep me from all things that turn to unbelief
or lack of felt union with Christ.

THE NAME OF JESUS

ALL-SEARCHING GOD,

Thou readest the heart,
viewest principles and motives of actions,
seest more defilement in my duties
than I ever saw in any of my sins.

The heavens are not clean in thy sight,
and thou chargest the angels with folly;

I am ready to flee from myself because of my abominations;
Yet thou dost not abhor me
but hast devised means for my return to thee,
and that, by thy Son who died to give me life.

Thine honour is secured and displayed even in my escape from
thy threats,
and that, by means of Jesus
in whom mercy and truth meet together,
and righteousness and peace kiss each other.

In him the enslaved find redemption,
the guilty pardon,
the unholy renovation;

In him are everlasting strength for the weak,
unsearchable riches for the needy,
treasures of wisdom and knowledge for the ignorant,
fullness for the empty.

At thy gracious call I hear, take, come, apply, receive his grace,
not only submit to his mercy but acquiesce in it,
not only glory in the cross but in him crucified and slain,
not only joy in forgiveness but in the one through whom
atonement comes.

Thy blessings are as secure as they are glorious;
Thou hast provided for my safety and my prosperity,
and hast promised that I shall stand firm and grow stronger.

O Lord God, without the pardon of my sin I cannot rest satisfied.

JESUS MY GLORY

O LORD GOD,

Thou hast commanded me to believe in Jesus;
and I would flee to no other refuge,
wash in no other fountain,
build on no other foundation,
receive from no other fullness,
rest in no other relief.

His water and blood were not severed in their flow at the cross,
may they never be separated in my creed and experiences;

May I be equally convinced of the guilt and pollution of sin,
feel my need of a prince and saviour,
implore of him repentance as well as forgiveness,
love holiness, and be pure in heart,
have the mind of Jesus, and tread in his steps.

Let me not be at my own disposal,
but rejoice that I am under the care of one
who is too wise to err,
too kind to injure,
too tender to crush.

May I scandalize none by my temper and conduct, but
recommend and endear Christ to all around,
bestow good on every one as circumstances permit,
and decline no opportunity of usefulness.

Grant that I may value my substance,
not as the medium of pride and luxury,
but as the means of my support and stewardship.

Help me to guide my affections with discretion,
to owe no man anything,
to be able to give to him that needeth,
to feel it my duty and pleasure to be merciful and forgiving,
to show to the world the likeness of Jesus.

THE LOVE OF JESUS

O FATHER OF JESUS,

Help me to approach thee with deepest reverence, not with
presumption,

not with servile fear, but with holy boldness.

Thou art beyond the grasp of my understanding,
but not beyond that of my love,

Thou knowest that I love thee supremely,
for thou art supremely adorable, good, perfect.

My heart melts at the love of Jesus,
my brother, bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh,
married to me, dead for me, risen for me;

He is mine and I am his,
given to me as well as for me;

I am never so much mine as when I am his,
or so much lost to myself until lost in him;
then I find my true manhood.

But my love is frost and cold, ice and snow;

Let his love warm me,
lighten my burden,
be my heaven;

May it be more revealed to me in all its influences
that my love to him may be more fervent and glowing;

Let the mighty tide of his everlasting love
cover the rocks of my sin and care;

Then let my spirit float above those things
which had else wrecked my life.

Make me fruitful by living to that love,
my character becoming more beautiful every day.

If traces of Christ's love-artistry be upon me,
may he work on with his divine brush
until the complete image be obtained
and I be made a perfect copy of him, my master.

O Lord Jesus, come to me,

O Divine Spirit, rest upon me,

O Holy Father, look on me in mercy for the sake of the well-beloved.

YET I SIN

ETERNAL FATHER,

Thou art good beyond all thought,
But I am vile, wretched, miserable, blind;
My lips are ready to confess, but my heart is slow to feel,
and my ways reluctant to amend.

I bring my soul to thee;
break it, wound it, bend it, mould it.

Unmask to me sin's deformity,
that I may hate it, abhor it, flee from it.

My faculties have been a weapon of revolt against thee;
as a rebel I have misused my strength,
and served the foul adversary of thy kingdom.

Give me grace to bewail my insensate folly,
Grant me to know that the way of transgressors is hard,
that evil paths are wretched paths,
that to depart from thee is to lose all good.

I have seen the purity and beauty of thy perfect law,
the happiness of those in whose heart it reigns,
the calm dignity of the walk to which it calls,
yet I daily violate and contemn its precepts.

Thy loving Spirit strives within me,
brings me Scripture warnings,
speaks in startling providences,
allures by secret whispers,
yet I choose devices and desires to my own hurt,
impiously resent, grieve,
and provoke him to abandon me.

All these sins I mourn, lament, and for them cry pardon.
Work in me more profound and abiding repentance;
Give me the fullness of a godly grief that trembles and fears,
yet ever trusts and loves,
which is ever powerful, and ever confident;
Grant that through the tears of repentance I may see more clearly
the brightness and glories of the saving cross.

THE DARK GUEST

O LORD,

Bend my hands and cut them off,
for I have often struck thee with a wayward will,
when these fingers should embrace thee by faith.

I am not yet weaned from all created glory,
honour, wisdom, and esteem of others,
for I have a secret motive to eye my name in all I do.
Let me not only speak the word sin, but see the thing itself.

Give me to view a discovered sinfulness,
to know that though my sins are crucified
they are never wholly mortified.

Hatred, malice, ill-will,
vain-glory that hungers for and hunts after
man's approval and applause,
all are crucified, forgiven,
but they rise again in my sinful heart.

O my crucified but never wholly mortified sinfulness!
O my life-long damage and daily shame!
O my indwelling and besetting sins!
O the tormenting slavery of a sinful heart!

Destroy, O God, the dark guest within
whose hidden presence makes my life a hell.
Yet thou hast not left me here without grace;
The cross still stands and meets my needs
in the deepest straits of the soul.

I thank thee that my remembrance of it
is like David's sight of Goliath's sword
which preached forth thy deliverance.

The memory of my great sins, my many temptations, my falls,
bring afresh into my mind the remembrance
of thy great help, of thy support from heaven,
of the great grace that saved such a wretch as I am.

There is no treasure so wonderful
as that continuous experience of thy grace toward me
which alone can subdue the risings of sin within:
Give me more of it.

A DISCIPLE'S RENEWAL

O MY SAVIOUR,
 help me.
I am so slow to learn, so prone to forget, so weak to climb;
I am in the foothills when I should be on the heights;
I am pained by my graceless heart,
 my prayerless days,
 my poverty of love,
 my sloth in the heavenly race,
 my sullied conscience,
 my wasted hours,
 my unspent opportunities.
I am blind while light shines around me:
 take the scales from my eyes,
 grind to dust the evil heart of unbelief.
Make it my chiefest joy to study thee,
 meditate on thee,
 gaze on thee,
 sit like Mary at thy feet,
 lean like John on thy breast,
 appeal like Peter to thy love,
 count like Paul all things dung.
Give me increase and progress in grace so that there may be
 more decision in my character,
 more vigour in my purposes,
 more elevation in my life,
 more fervour in my devotion,
 more constancy in my zeal.
As I have a position in the world,
 keep me from making the world my position;
May I never seek in the creature
 what can be found only in the creator;
Let not faith cease from seeking thee until it vanishes into sight.
Ride forth in me, thou king of kings and lord of lords,
 that I may live victoriously, and in victory attain my end.

A MINISTER'S EVILS

BLESSED SPIRIT OF GOD,
Four evils attend my ministry—
 The devil treads me down by discouragement and shame
 arising from coldness in private meditation.
Carelessness possesses me
 from natural dullness and dimness of spirit;
 because in the past I have met with success
 and been highly regarded,
 so that it does not matter if I have now failed.
Infirmities and weakness are mine from want of spiritual light,
 life and power,
 so that souls have not been helped,
 and I have not felt thee to be near.
Lack of success has followed even when I have done my best.

But thou hast shown me that the glory of everything
 that is sanctified to do good
 is not seen in itself,
 but in the source of its sanctification.
Thus my end in preaching is to know Christ,
 and impart his truth;
 my principle in preaching is Christ himself, whom I trust,
 for in him is fullness of spirit and strength;
 my comfort in preaching is to do all for him.
Help me in my work to grow more humble,
 to pick something out of all providences to that end,
 to joy in thee and loathe myself,
 to keep my life, being, soul, and body only for thee,
 to carry my heart to thee in love and delight,
 to see all my grace in thee, coming from thee,
 to walk with thee in endearment.
Then, whether I succeed or fail, nought matters but thee alone.