

God's Wonderful Book



Introduction

Next to praying there is nothing so important in the Christian life as Bible-reading. God has mercifully given us a Book which is “able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” (2 Tim. 3: 15.) By reading that Book we may learn what to believe, what to be, and what to do; how to live with comfort, and how to die in peace. Happy is that man who possesses a Bible! Happier still is he who reads it! Happiest of all is he who not only reads it, but obeys it, and makes it the rule of his faith and practice!

The books of the Old and New Testaments are all inspired truth, and yet the aspect of that truth varies according to the mind through which the Holy Ghost makes it flow. The handwriting and style of the writers differ enough to prove that each had a distinct individual being; but the Divine Guide who dictates and directs the whole is always one. All is alike inspired. Every chapter, and verse, and word, is from God.

We see many Bibles for sale. Bibles of every size, price, and style. But all this time I fear we are in danger of forgetting, that to have the Bible is one thing, and to read it is quite another.

Give me your attention while I supply you with a few plain reasons why everyone who cares for his soul ought to value the Bible highly, to study it regularly, and to make himself thoroughly acquainted with its contents.

By Dr. J.C. Ryle

THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD

1. In the first place, *there is no book in existence written in such a manner as the Bible.*

The Bible was "given by inspiration of God." (2 Tim. 3:16.) In this respect it is utterly unlike all other writings. God taught the writers of it what to say. God put into their minds thoughts and ideas. God guided their pens in setting down those thoughts and ideas. When you read it, you are not reading the self-taught writings of poor imperfect men like yourself, but the words of the eternal God. When you hear it, you are not listening to the erroneous opinions of short-lived mortals, but to the unchanging mind of the King of kings.

The men who were employed to write the Bible, spoke not of themselves. They "spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter 1:21.) All other books in the world, however good and useful in their way, are more or less defective. The more you look at them the more you see their defects and blemishes. The Bible alone is absolutely perfect. From beginning to end it is "the Word of God."

This is the Book about which I address the readers of this booklet. Surely it is no light matter *what you are doing with this Book*. It is no light thing that God should have caused this Book to be "written for your learning," and that you should have before you "the oracles of God." (Rom. 15:4; 3:2.) I charge you, I ask you to give an honest answer to my question. What are you doing with the Bible? – Do you read it at all? - HOW READEST THOU?

THE MOST IMPORTANT KNOWLEDGE

2. In the second place, *there is no knowledge needed to a man's salvation, except a knowledge of the things which are to be found in the Bible.*

We live in days when the words of Daniel are fulfilled before our eyes: - "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be

increased." (Dan. 12:4.) Schools are multiplying on every side. New colleges are set up. Old Universities are reformed and improved. New books are continually coming forth. More is being taught, - more is being learned, - more is being read, - than there ever was since the world began. It is all well. I rejoice at it. An ignorant population is a perilous and expensive burden to any nation. But this I say, - we must never forget that all the education a man's head can receive, will not save his soul from hell, unless he knows the truths of the Bible.

Chemistry never silenced a guilty conscience. Mathematics never healed a broken heart. All the sciences in the world never smoothed down a dying pillow. No earthly philosophy ever supplied hope in death. No natural theology ever gave peace in the prospect of meeting a holy God.

THE TREASURE IN ONE VOLUME

3. In the third place, *no book in existence contains such important matter as the Bible.*

The time would fail me if I were to enter fully into all the great things which are to be found in the Bible, and only in the Bible. It is not by any sketch or outline that the treasures of the Bible can be displayed. It would be easy to fill this booklet with a list of the peculiar truths it reveals, and yet the half of its riches would be left untold.

How glorious and soul-satisfying is the description it gives us of God's plan of salvation, and the way by which our sins can be forgiven! The coming into the world of Jesus Christ, the God-man, to save sinners, - the atonement He has made by suffering in our stead, the just for the unjust, - the complete payment He has made for our sins by His own blood, - the justification of every sinner who simply believes on Jesus, - the readiness of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to receive, pardon, and save to the uttermost, - how unspeakably grand and cheering are all these truths! We would know nothing of them without the Bible.

How comforting is the account it gives us of the great Mediator of the New Testament, -the man Christ Jesus! Four times over His picture is graciously drawn before our eyes. Four separate witnesses tell us of His miracles and His ministry, - His sayings and His doings, - His life and His death, - His power and His love, - His kindness and His patience, His ways, His words, His works, His thoughts, His heart. Blessed be God, there is one thing in the Bible which the most prejudiced reader can hardly fail to understand, and that is the character of Jesus Christ!

How encouraging are the examples the Bible gives us of good people! It tells us of many who were of like passions with ourselves, - men and women who had cares, crosses, families, temptations, problems, diseases, like ourselves, - and yet "through faith and patience inherit the promises," and got safe home. (Heb. 6:12.) It keeps back nothing in the history of these people. Their mistakes, their infirmities, their conflicts, their experience, their prayers, their praises, their useful lives, their happy deaths, - all are fully recorded. And it tells us the God and Saviour of these men and women still waits to be gracious, and is altogether unchanged.

How instructive are the examples the Bible gives us of bad people! It tells us of men and women who had light, and knowledge, and opportunities, like ourselves, and yet hardened their hearts, loved the world, clung to their sins, would have their own way, despised reproof, and ruined their own souls for ever. And it warns us that the God who punished Pharaoh, and Saul, and Ahab, and Jezebel, and Judas, and Ananias and Sapphira, is a God who never alters, and that there is a hell.

How precious are the promises which the Bible contains for the use of those who love God! There is hardly any possible emergency or condition for which it has not some "word in season." And it tells men that God loves to be reminded of these promises, and that if He has said He will do a thing, His promise shall certainly be performed.

How blessed are the hopes which the Bible holds out to the

believer in Christ Jesus! Peace in the hour of death, - rest and happiness on the other side of the grave, - a glorious body in the morning of the resurrection, - a full and triumphant acquittal in the day of judgment, - an everlasting reward in the kingdom of Christ, - a joyful meeting with the Lord's people in the day of gathering together; - these, these are the future prospects of every true Christian. They are all written in the Book, - in the Book which is all true.

How striking is the light which the Bible throws on the character of man! It teaches us what men may be expected to be and do in every position and station of life. It gives us the deepest insight into the secret thoughts and motives of human actions, and the ordinary course of events under the control of human minds. It is the true "discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Heb. 4:12.) How deep is the wisdom contained in the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes! I can well understand an old Pastor saying, "Give me a candle and a Bible, and shut me up in a dark dungeon, and I will tell you all that the whole world is doing."

All these are things which men could find nowhere except in the Bible. We have probably not the least idea how little we should know about these things if we had not the Bible. We hardly know the value of the air we breathe, and the sun which shines on us, because we have never known what it is to be without them. We do not value truths on which I have been just now dwelling, because we do not realize the darkness of men to whom these truths have not been revealed. Surely no tongue can fully tell the value of the treasures this one volume contains. Well might John Newton say that some books were copper books in his estimation, some were silver, and some few were gold; - but the Bible alone was like a book all made up of bank notes.

This is the Book about which I address the reader of this booklet this day. Surely it is no light matter what you are doing with the Bible. It is no light matter in what way you are using this treasure. I ask you, I request you to give an honest answer to my question, -

What are you doing with the Bible? – Do you read it? - HOW DO YOU READ IT?

THE WONDERFUL EFFECT OF THE BIBLE

4. In the fourth place, *no book in existence has produced such wonderful effects on mankind at large as the Bible.*

(a) This is the Book whose doctrines turned the world upside down in the days of the Apostles.

Twenty centuries have now passed away since God sent forth a few Jews from a remote corner of the earth, to do a work which according to man's judgment must have seemed impossible. He sent them at a time when the whole world was full of superstition, cruelty, lust, and sin. He sent them to proclaim that the established religions of the earth were false and useless, and must be forsaken. He sent them to persuade men to give up old habits and customs, and to live different lives. Never was there an enterprise to all appearance less likely to succeed!

And how did He arm them for this battle? He gave them no carnal weapons. He gave them no worldly power to compel agreement, and no worldly riches to bribe belief. He simply put the Holy Ghost into their hearts, and the Scriptures into their hands. He simply bade them to expound and explain, to enforce and to publish the doctrines of the Bible. The preacher of Christianity in the first century was not a man with a sword and an army. No! he was nothing more than one holy man with one holy book.

And how did these men of one book prosper? In a few generations they entirely changed the face of society by the doctrines of the Bible. They emptied the temples of the heathen gods. They famished idolatry, or left it high and dry like a stranded ship. They brought into the world a higher tone of morality between men. They raised the character and position of woman. They altered the standard of purity and decency. They put an end to many cruel and bloody customs. There was no stopping the change. Persecution and opposition were useless. One victory after another was won.

One bad thing after another melted away.

Whether men liked it or not, they were affected by the worship of Jesus Christ, and drawn within the whirlpool of His power. The tree of Christianity swelled and grew, and the chains the ungodly had cast round it to arrest its growth, snapped like thread. And all this was done by the doctrines of the Bible! Talk of victories indeed! What are the victories of Emperers compared with those I have just mentioned? For extent, for completeness, for permanence, there are no victories like the victories of the Bible.

THE BIBLE CHANGED EUROPE

(b) This is the Book which turned Europe upside down in the days of the glorious Protestant Reformation.

No man can read the history of Christendom as it was seven hundred years ago, and not see that darkness covered the whole professing Church of Christ, even a darkness that might be felt. So great was the change which had come over Christianity, that if an apostle had risen from the dead he would not have recognised it, and would have thought that heathenism had revived again.

The doctrines of the Gospel lay buried under a dense mass of human traditions. Penances, pilgrimages, indulgences, relic-worship, image-worship, saint-worship, and worship of the Virgin Mary, all formed the sum and substance of most people's religion. By what means was all this miserable darkness cleared away? By none so much as by bringing forth once more the Bible.

It was not merely the preaching of Luther and his friends, which established Protestantism in Germany. The grand lever which overthrew the Pope's power in that country, was Luther's translation of the Bible into the German tongue. It was not merely the writings of Cranmer and the English Reformers which helped to change England. The seeds of the work thus carried forward were first sown by Wycliffe's translation of the Bible many years before.

It was the royal permission to have the Bible translated and

set up in churches, so that everyone who liked might read it. Yes! it was the reading and circulation of Scripture which mainly established the cause of Protestantism in England, in Germany, and Switzerland.

Without it the people would probably have returned to their former bondage when the first reformers died. But by the reading of the Bible the public mind became gradually enlightened with the principles of true religion. Men's eyes became thoroughly open. Their spiritual understandings became thoroughly enlarged. The wrong teaching of the Roman Catholic Church became distinctly visible. The excellence of the pure Gospel became a rooted idea in their hearts. The people had seen the light. They had heard the joyful sound. They had tasted the truth. The scales had fallen from their eyes. The Bible had done its appointed work within them, and that work was not to be overthrown. The people would not return to bondage.

THE INFALLIBLE GUIDE

5. In the fifth place, *no book in existence can do so much for every one who reads it rightly as the Bible.*

The Bible does not profess to teach the wisdom of this world. It was not written to explain geology or astronomy. It will neither instruct you in mathematics, nor in natural philosophy. It will not make you a doctor, or a lawyer, or an engineer.

But there is another world to be thought of, beside that world in which man now lives. There are other ends for which man was created, beside making money and working. There are other interests which he is meant to attend to, beside those of his body, and those interests are the interests of his soul. It is the interests of the immortal soul which the Bible is especially able to promote. If you would know law, you may study Blackstone or Sugden. If you would know astronomy or geology, you may study Herschel and Lyell. But if you would know how to have your soul saved, you must study the written Word of God.

The Bible is " *able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*" (2 Tim. 3:15.) It can show you the way which leads to heaven. It can teach you everything you need to know, point out everything you need to believe, and explain everything you need to do. It can show you what you are, - a sinner. It can show you what God is, - perfectly holy. It can show you the great giver of pardon, peace, and grace, Jesus Christ.

I have read of an Englishman who visited Scotland in the days of Blair, Rutherford, and Dickson, three famous preachers, - and heard all three in succession. He said that the first showed him the majesty of God, - the second showed him the beauty of Christ, - and the third showed him all his heart. It is the glory and beauty of the Bible that it is always teaching these three things more or less, from the first chapter of it to the last.

The Bible applied to the heart by the Holy Ghost, *is the grand instrument by which souls are first converted to God.* That mighty change is generally begun by some text or doctrine of the Word, brought home to a man's conscience. In this way the Bible has worked moral miracles by thousands. It has made drunkards become sober, - immoral people become pure, - thieves become honest, - and violent tempered people become meek. It has wholly altered the course of men's lives.

It has caused their old way of living to pass away, and made all their ways new. It has taught worldly people to seek first the kingdom of God. It has taught lovers of pleasure to become lovers of God. It has made men think of heaven, instead of always thinking of earth, and live by faith, instead of living by sight. All this it has done in every part of the world. All this it is doing still. Those are the truly great miracles which are yearly worked by the Word.

The Bible applied to the heart by the Holy Ghost, *is the chief means by which men are built up and stablished in the faith,* after their conversion. It is able to cleanse them, to sanctify them, to instruct them in righteousness, and to equip them thoroughly for all good works. (Psalm 119:9; John 17:17; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17.)

The Spirit ordinarily does these things by the written Word; sometimes by the Word read, and sometimes by the Word preached, but seldom, if ever, without the Word. The Bible can show a believer how to walk in this world so as to please God. It can teach him to glorify Christ in all the relations of life, and can make him a good master, servant, citizen, husband, father, or son. It can enable him to bear afflictions and privations without murmuring, and say, "It is well."

It can enable him to look down into the grave, and say, "I fear no evil." (Psalm 23:4.) It can enable him to think on judgment and eternity, and not feel afraid. It can enable him to bear persecution without flinching, and to give up liberty and life rather than deny Christ's truth. Is he drowsy in soul? It can awaken him. - Is he mourning? It can comfort him. - Is he erring? It can restore him. - Is he weak? It can make him strong. - Is he in bad company? It can keep him from evil. - Is he alone? It can talk with him. - (Prov. 6:22.) All this the Bible can do for all believers; for the least as well as the greatest, - for the richest as well as the poorest. It has done it for thousands already, and is doing it for thousands every day.

The man who has the Bible, and the Holy Spirit in his heart, has everything which is absolutely needful to make him spiritually wise. He has the well of truth open before him, and what can he want more? Yes! though he be shut up alone in a prison, or cast on a desert island, - though he never see a church, or minister, or sacrament again, - if he has but the Bible, he has got the infallible guide, and wants no other. If he has but the will to read that Bible rightly, it will certainly teach him the road that leads to heaven.

THE UNERRING STANDARD OF TRUTH AND ERROR

6. In the sixth place, *the Bible is the only rule by which all questions of doctrine or of duty can be tested.*

The Lord God knows the weakness and infirmity of our poor fallen understandings. He knows that, even after conversion, our perceptions of right and wrong are exceedingly indistinct. He knows

how artfully Satan can cover error with an appearance of truth, and can dress up wrong with plausible arguments, till it looks like right. Knowing all this, He has mercifully provided us with an unerring standard of truth and error, right and wrong, and has taken care to make that standard a written Book, - even the Scripture.

This mighty rule of faith and practice is the Book about which I am addressing the readers of this booklet this day. Surely it is no light matter *what you are doing with the Bible*. Surely when danger is abroad on the right hand and on the left, you should consider what you are doing with the safeguard which God has provided. I ask you, I beseech you, to give an honest answer to my question. What are you doing with the Bible? - Do you read it? HOW DO YOU READ IT?

THE MOST LOVED BOOK

7. In the seventh place, *the Bible is the book which all true servants of God have always lived on and loved.*

Every living thing which God creates requires food. The life that God imparts needs sustaining and nourishing. It is so with animal and vegetable life, - with birds, beasts, fish, reptiles, insects, and plants. It is equally so with spiritual life. When the Holy Ghost raises a man from the death of sin and makes him a new creature in Christ Jesus, the new principle in that man's heart requires food, and the only food which will sustain it is the Word of God.

There never was a man or woman truly converted, from one end of the world to the other, who did not love the revealed will of God. Just as a child born into the world desires naturally the milk provided for its nourishment, so does a soul "born again" desire the sincere milk of the Word. This is a common mark of all the children of God - they "delight in the law of the Lord." (Psalm. 1:2.)

How affecting was the language of another old African, when some would have dissuaded him from learning to read, because of his great age. "No!" he said, "I will never give it up till I die. It is

worth all the labour to be able to read that one verse, 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'

It is a blessed thought that there will be "much people" in heaven at last. Few as the Lord's people undoubtedly are at any one given time or place, yet all gathered together at last, they will be "a multitude that no man can number." (Rev. 19:1; 7: 9.) They will be of one heart and mind. They will have passed through like experience. They will all have repented, believed, lived holy, prayerful, and humble lives. They will all have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. But one thing beside all this they will have in common: they will all love the texts and doctrines of the Bible. The Bible will have been their food and delight in the days of their pilgrimage on earth. And the Bible will be a common subject of joyful meditation and retrospect, when they are gathered together in heaven.

THE FOUNTAIN OF COMFORT

8. In the last place, *the Bible is the only book which can comfort a man in the last hours of his life.*

Death is an event which in all probability is before us all. There is no avoiding it. It is the river which each of us must cross. I who write, and you who read, have each one day to die. It is good to remember this. We are all sadly apt to put away the subject from us. "Each man thinks each man mortal but himself." I want every one to do his duty in life, but I also want every one to think of death. I want, every one to know how to live, but I also want, every one to know how to die.

Death is a solemn event to all. It is the winding up of all earthly plans and expectations. It is a separation from all we have loved and lived with. It is often accompanied by much bodily pain and distress. It brings us to the grave, the worm, and corruption. It opens the door to judgment and eternity, - to heaven or to hell. It is an event after which there is no change, or space for repentance.

Other mistakes may be corrected or retrieved, but not a mistake on our death-beds. As the tree falls, there it must lie. No conversion in the coffin ! No new birth after we have ceased to breathe ! And death is before us all. It may be close at hand. The time of our departure is quite uncertain. But sooner or later we must each lie down alone and die. All these are serious considerations.

Death is a solemn event even to the believer in Christ. For him no doubt the "sting of death" is taken away. (1 Cor. 15:55.) Death has become one of his privileges, for he is Christ's. Living or dying, he is the Lord's. If he lives, Christ lives in him; and if he dies, he goes to live with Christ. To him "to live is Christ, and to die is gain." (Phil. 1:21.) Death frees him from many trials, from a weak body, a corrupt heart, a tempting devil, and an ensnaring or persecuting world.

Death admits him to the enjoyment of many blessings. He rests from his labours - the hope of a joyful resurrection is changed into a certainty - he has the company of holy redeemed spirits - he is "with Christ." All this is true, and yet, even to a believer, death is a solemn thing. Flesh and blood naturally shrink from it. To part from all we love, is a wrench and trial to the feelings. The world we go to is a world unknown, even though it is our home. Friendly and harmless as death is to a believer, it is not an event to be treated lightly. It always must be a very solemn thing.

Every thoughtful and sensible person must consider calmly how he is going to meet death. Look the subject in the face. Listen to me, while I tell you a few things about the end to which we are coming.

The good things of the world cannot comfort a man when he draws near death. All the gold of California will not provide light for the dark valley. Money can buy the best medical advice and attendance for a man's body; but money cannot buy peace for his conscience, heart, and soul.

Relatives and loved friends, cannot comfort a man when he

draws near death. They may minister affectionately to his bodily wants. They may watch by his bed-side tenderly, and anticipate his every wish. They may smooth down his dying pillow, and support his sinking frame in their arms. But they cannot stop the achings of a troubled heart. They cannot screen an uneasy conscience from the eye of God.

The pleasures of the world cannot comfort a man when he draws near death. To be invited to feasts, and fancy-parties, gives him no ease. He cannot hide from himself that these are hollow, empty, powerless things. They jar upon the ear of his conscience. They are out of harmony with his condition. They cannot stop one gap in his heart, when the last enemy is coming in like a flood. They cannot make him calm in the prospect of meeting a holy God.

There is but one fountain of comfort for a man drawing near to his end, and that is the Bible. Chapters out of the Bible; texts out of the Bible, - statements of truth taken out of the Bible, books containing matter drawn from the Bible, these are a man's only chance of comfort when he comes to die. But I do say positively, that no dying man will ever get real comfort, except from the contents of the Word of God. All comfort from any other source is a house built upon sand.

I lay this down as a rule of universal application. I make no exception in favour of any class on earth. Kings and poor men, learned and unlearned; all are on a level in this matter. There is nothing of real consolation for any dying man, unless he gets it from the Bible. Chapters, passages, texts, promises, and doctrines of Scripture, - heard, received, believed, and rested on, - these are the only comforters I dare promise to any one, when he leaves the world.

Guidelines on reading the Bible

This booklet may fall into the hands of some one who *is willing to begin reading the Bible, but wants advice* on the subject. Are you that person? Listen to me, and I will give a few short hints.

(a) For one thing, *begin reading your Bible this very day.* The way to do a thing is to do it, and the way to read the Bible is actually to read it. It is not meaning, or wishing, or resolving, or intending, or thinking about it, which will advance you one step. You must positively read. There is no royal road in this matter, any more than in the matter of prayer. If you cannot read yourself, you must persuade somebody else to read to you. But one way or another, through eyes or ears, the words of Scripture must actually pass before your mind.

(b) For another thing, *read the Bible with an earnest desire to understand it.* Think not for a moment that the great object is to turn over a certain quantity of printed paper, and that it matters nothing whether you understand it or not. Settle it down in your mind as a general principle, that a Bible not understood is a Bible that does no good. Say to yourself often as you read, "What is all this about?" Dig for the meaning like a man digging for Australian gold. Work hard, and do not give up the work in a hurry.

(c) For another thing, *read the Bible with child-like faith and humility.* Open your heart as you open your Bible, and say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." Resolve to believe implicitly whatever you find there, however much it may run counter to your own prejudices. Resolve to receive heartily every statement of truth, whether you like it or not. Beware of that miserable habit of mind into which some readers of the Bible fall.

They receive some doctrines because they like them: they reject others because they are condemning to themselves, or to some lover, or relation, or friend. At this rate the Bible is useless. Are we to be judges of what ought to be in the Word? Do we know better than God? Settle it down in your mind that you will receive all and believe all, and that what you cannot understand you will take on trust. Remember, when you pray, you are speaking to God, and God hears you. But, remember, when you read, God is speaking to you, and you are not to

answer again," but to listen.

(d) For another thing, *read the Bible in a spirit of obedience and self-application*. Sit down to the study of it with a daily determination that *you* will live by its rules, rest on its statements, and act on its commands. Consider, as you travel through every chapter, "How does this affect *my* position and course of conduct? What does this teach *me*?" It is poor work to read the Bible from mere curiosity, and for speculative purposes, in order to fill your head and store your mind with opinions, while you do not allow the Bible to influence your heart and life. That Bible is read best which is practised most.

(e) For another thing, *read the Bible daily*. Make it a part of every day's business to read and meditate on some portion of God's Word. Do not scramble over and hurry your reading. Give your Bible the best, and not the worst part of your time. But whatever plan you pursue, let it be a rule of your life to visit the throne of grace and the Bible every day.

HONOUR THE BIBLE

This booklet may fall into the hands of some who can read, but never do read the Bible at all. Are you one them? If you are, I have something to say to you.

I cannot comfort you in your present state of mind. It would be mockery and deceit to do so. I cannot speak to you of peace and heaven, while you treat the Bible as you do. You are in danger of losing your soul.

You are in danger, because your neglected Bible is a plain evidence that you do not love God. The health of a man's body may generally be known by his appetite. The health of a man's soul may be known by his appetite. The health of a man's soul may be known by his treatment of the Bible. Will you not repent?

Oh, beware lest you repent to late! Beware lest you go on saying all your life, "Men do very well without all this Bible-reading,"

and find at length, to your cost, that men do very poorly, and end in hell! Beware lest the day come when you will feel, "Had I but honoured the Bible as much as I have honoured the newspaper, I should not have been left without comfort in my last hours!" Bible neglecting reader, I give you a plain warning. The Lord have mercy upon your soul!

LET US RESOLVE

Let us resolve *to read the Bible more and more every year we live*. Let us try to get it rooted in our memories, and engrafted into our hearts. Who knows but we may have a very stormy passage? Sight and hearing may fail us, and we may be in deep waters. Oh, to have the Word "hid in our hearts" in such an hour as that! (Psalm 119:11)

Let us resolve *to be more watchful over our Bible-reading*. Let us be jealously careful about the time we give to it, and the manner that time is spent. Let us beware of omitting our daily reading without sufficient cause. Let us read like a wife reading a husband's letter from a distant land. Let us be very careful that we never exalt any minister, or sermon, or book, or tract, or friend above the Word. Cursed be that book, or tract, or human counsel, which creeps in between us and the Bible, and hides the Bible from our eyes! Oh, to read with a hungry spirit, and a simple desire to learn from His Word.

Let us resolve *to honour the Bible more in our families*. Let us read it morning and evening to our children and households, and not be ashamed to let men see that we do so. Let us not be discouraged by seeing no good arise from it. The Bible-reading in a family has kept many a one from prison, if it has not kept him from hell.

Let us resolve *to meditate more on the Bible*. It is good to take with us two or three texts when we go out into the world, and to turn them over and over in our minds whenever we have a little leisure. It keeps out many vain thoughts. It preserves our souls

from stagnating and breeding corrupt things. It sanctifies and quickens our memories.

Let us resolve to *talk more to believers about the Bible* when we meet them. Alas, the conversation of Christians, when they do meet, is often sadly unprofitable! How many frivolous, and trifling, and uncharitable things are said! Let us bring out the Bible more, and it will help to drive the devil away, and keep our hearts in tune. Oh, that we may all strive so to walk together in this evil world, that Jesus may often draw near, and go with us, as He went with the two disciples journeying to Emmaus!

Last of all, let us resolve to *live by the Bible more and more* every year we live. Let us frequently take account of all our opinions and practices, - of our habits and tempers, - of our behaviour in public and in private, - in the world, and by our own firesides. Let us measure all by the Bible, and resolve, by God's help, to conform to it. Oh that we may learn increasingly to "cleanse our ways" by the Word ! (Psalm 119:9.)

O Word of God incarnate,
O Wisdom from on high,
O Truth unchanged, unchanging,
O Light of our dark sky;
We praise Thee for the radiance
That from the hallowed page,
A lantern to our footsteps,
Shines on from age to age.

The Church from her dear Master
Received the gift divine,
And still that light she lifteth
O'er all the earth to shine.
It is the golden casket
Where gems of truth are stored;
It is the heaven-drawn picture
Of Christ the living Word.

It floateth like a banner
Before God's host unfurled;
It shineth like a beacon
Above the darkling world:
It is the chart and compass
That o'er life's surging sea,
'Mid mists and rocks and quicksands,
Still guide, O Christ, to Thee

INVITATION

You are invited to send for samples of Leaflets and Tracts. Write to- Revival Movement Association, 2 Clara Street, Belfast, BT5 5GB, N. IRELAND.

