

If we say, . . . but if we walk. 1 John 1: 6, 7

In three marked passages, the beloved apostle guards against what men are apt to say, and indicates to them what it would be better for them to substitute in thought and speech.

MEN ARE APT TO SAY THAT THEY HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH CHRIST, AND YET CONTINUE TO WALK IN DARKNESS. It arises sometimes from their desire to stand well with their fellows, or because they do not realize how much darkness is still in their lives. But whichever be the cause, they lie and do not the truth. It is better to walk quietly in the light, so far as we have it; and thus we shall secure his blessed fellowship, and his blood will be continually cleansing us from sin, removing all hindrance on Christ's side to the free communication of his choicest gifts.

AGAIN, MEN ARE APT TO SAY THAT THEY HAVE NO SIN (ver. 8). It is a profound mistake on their part, arising from defective ideas of what sin is, or from self-ignorance. If they realized what God's standard of holiness and sinlessness is; if they understood that sin consists in coming short of his glory as much as in distinct violation of his will; if they knew that there may be sin in motive as much as in act, and even in want of love--they would not speak thus. As it is, they deceive themselves, though no one else. It is better to confess our sins and seek cleansing, even for those of ignorance, in the precious blood of Jesus.

AGAIN, MEN ARE APT TO SAY THAT THEY HAVE NOT SINNED. Though they have fallen below their own standard, they do not like to admit it, and cling tenaciously to their position of having got beyond the range of sinning. Much better to admit it, and obtain forgiveness through the one Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous.

我們若說，... 我們若 ... 行。 約壹一6-7

在這三段以「我們若...」開頭，所標出的經文裡(6, 8, 10節)，這位受愛戴的使徒警戒人們天生容易說的事，並且指出他們最好在思想和言語上要有替換。

人天生容易說他們與基督相交，卻仍在黑暗裡行(6節)。有時候因他們想要博得同伴的好感而產生這種事，或者因為他們還未曾意識到自己生命仍是非常黑暗。但無論何種緣由，他們是說謊且沒有行真理(6節)。我們最好還是就所得之光的程度，安靜地行在其中；如此我們就可以確保與祂有蒙福的相交，並且祂的寶血會一直潔淨我們脫離罪，除去一切攔阻基督上好恩賜的自由流通。

此外，人天生容易說他們沒有罪(8節)。這在人實在是一個嚴重的錯誤，這錯誤是因為對「什麼是罪」的觀念有缺欠，或者由於不認識自己。如果他們認識什麼是神聖潔和無罪的標準；如果他們理解罪包括虧缺神的榮耀，以及明確違背神的旨意；如果他們曉得罪可能存在於動機中，如同存在於行為中；甚至在缺少愛的情形中 — 他們就不會說自己無罪了。這樣看來，他們是欺騙自己(8節)，儘管沒有欺騙別人。我們最好還是承認自己的罪，並在耶穌的寶血裡尋求潔淨，即便是對那些無知的罪。

還有，人天生容易說自己沒有犯過罪(10節)。縱然他們已經落到自己的標準以下，他們還是不願意承認，而堅持自己在犯罪範圍之外。人最好還是認罪，靠著在父面前的中保就是那義者耶穌基督，得蒙赦免。

The world passeth away, and the lust thereof. 1 John 2: 17

The world stands for the entire system of human interests by which we are surrounded. It does not refer to what God made by his creative fiat and moulding hands, but to the shows, fashions, and pursuits of men. It is used here in the sense in which the devil took Jesus into an exceeding high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, and said, "It hath been delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will, I give it."

The word used of its evanescence is a remarkably interesting one. It is that employed of the rapid change in some scenic display or performance. A moment ago the stage was full of life and colour; but it is suddenly deserted, and the actors and actresses have put off their splendid dresses, and are habited in mean and common attire. Or we might compare the passing away of the world to the dying colour of the sunset. The tempter offers us some bait, some outward object which appeals to the eye of the body or the mind, and we reach out towards it; but as we grasp it, it is gone. We have caught at a soap-bubble, have journeyed after a mirage, have hunted the will-o'-the-wisp. So unsubstantial and fleeting are the things with which the men of this world try to appease their immortal appetite.

But it is to be noticed that the desire for these things is even more evanescent than the things themselves. The apostle says that the lust thereof passeth away. The power of enjoyment dies away. The eye is sated with spectacles; the mind with constant change.

How great the contrast!--"He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

這世界和其上的情慾都要過去。 約壹二17

這世界代表圍繞我們周圍人類關心之事的整個系統。這不是指藉著神創造的命令和祂塑造之手所造的世界，而是指人的展覽物品、潮流和追求。世界在這裡有種感覺像魔鬼把耶穌帶到高山，把萬國和萬國的榮華指給祂看，對祂說，「這原是交付我的，我願意給誰就給誰。(路四6)」

用來說到世界的消失這個字是很有意思的。這個字被用來形容舞台布景和表演的急速更換。片刻之前舞台還充滿了生命與色彩，突然就變成荒涼，男女演員脫掉他們華麗的服裝，換上寒微普通的穿著。或者我們可以將世界的消失比喻為日落色彩的消失。試探者魔鬼提供某種誘餌，某種外在的東西，吸引我們眼目、心思，我們就伸手；可是一旦我們抓住它，它就消失了。我們只抓住一個肥皂泡，追逐一個海市蜃樓，獵取鬼火。所以世人努力用來滿足他們無止盡之慾望的事物，是何等虛幻且短暫。

但值得注意的是，對這些事物的慾望，甚至會比事物本身消逝得更快。使徒約翰說，世上的情慾過去。享樂的能力逝去。眼目看膩了奇觀；心裡也厭倦不斷的變化。

何等強烈的對比！「惟獨遵行神旨意的，是永遠常存。(17節)」

Beloved, now are we children of God. 1 John 3:2 (R.V.)

It is our privilege, not only to be children, but to know that we are such. "Such we are" (ver. 1, n.y.). The world knows us not; but God knows us, and we know Him, and we know that we are his sons and daughters, through regeneration and faith. How do we know?

WE BELIEVE HIS WORD (John 1 : 12). By faith we have received Him, we do trust in his name; then, by the authority of that text, if there were no other, we may claim to have been born into the divine household.

WE HAVE THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT (Gal. 4: 6). The fact that our hearts look to God as Father, and appeal to Him with the infant's cry, Abba, is a proof that we are born again. Do not look for an audible voice in your heart, but notice whether the thought of the fatherly love of God towards you is not becoming more familiar and precious. It is not the perception of your childship, but of his fatherhood, which will reassure you.

WE ARE LED BY THE SPIRIT. If we are led by the Spirit, we shall love the things we once hated, and hate those we once loved. Our choices, tastes, methods of life, habits, and companionships, will undergo a radical alteration.

WE LOVE THE PEOPLE OF GOD (1 John 4: 7, R.V.). The converse is also true, that he who is begotten of God loveth.

WE DO NOT PRESUMPTUOUSLY AND HABITUALLY YIELD TO KNOWN SIN (1 John 3: 9, R.V.). The apostle is not speaking of some isolated act into which a man may fall under unexpected temptation, but of habitual courses of inconsistency and wrongdoing. Test yourselves, therefore, whether ye are indeed born again.

親愛的弟兄啊，我們現在是神的兒女。 約壹三2

我們的特權，不僅是神的兒女，而且知道我們是神的兒女。「我們也真是祂的兒女。(1節)」世人不認識我們；但神認識我們，我們也認識祂，藉著重生和信心我們知道自己是祂的兒女。我們如何知道的呢？

我們相信祂的話(約一12)。藉著信心我們接受了祂，並且信靠祂的名；然後，即使沒有別的經文，就藉著約翰福音一章12節這節經文的權威，我們也可以宣告我們已經出生在神的家中。

我們有聖靈的見證(加四6)。我們的心看神為父的這個事實，並如嬰孩呼叫祂「阿爸」，證明我們重生。不要在心中尋求聽得見的聲音，卻要留意神為父之愛對你是否越來越熟悉、越寶貴。不是對你作兒女身分的認知，而是對祂父親身分的認識，使你安心。

我們受聖靈引導。倘若我們受聖靈引導，我們就必愛我們以前憎恨的事物，恨我們以前喜愛的事物。我們的選擇、品味、生活方式、習慣及同伴，都要經歷一個徹底的改變。

我們愛屬神的人(約壹四7)。反過來，屬神的人也愛我們，凡從神生的就會愛。

我們不再放肆、習慣地向已知的罪屈服(約壹三9)。使徒約翰並不是在談論某個單一的行動，在單一的行動中，人可能受到意外的試探而失敗；使徒在這裡所談論的，是習慣性的反復無常和惡行。因此，要檢驗你自己，看你是否真的重生了。

We have known and believed the love that God hath to us. 1 John 4: 16

Life is one long education in various phases and aspects of love. First as a child, then as a friend, then as a lover, as wife or husband, as father or mother. We are perpetually being allowed to sit in some higher form for the progress of this divine study. For to love is to live. To be loved is to drink of the sweetest cordial that can be prepared from the vintages of earth. And all is intended to help us to understand better the nature of God, who is love. As each new experience enters our life, we should consider a fresh facet or angle to break up and reveal to us the glory of God's love. We should say to ourselves, Now I understand and know more accurately than before how God feels, and what his love is.

THE APOSTLE SAYS WE HAVE KNOWN THE LOVE OF GOD. Indeed, it is so. Through years of life, each of which has been filled with the most various experiences, but filled also to the brim with proofs of God's tender loving-kindness, we have had innumerable proofs of his love, for

*E'en the cloud that spreads above, and
veileth Love,
Itself is Love.*

THE APOSTLE SAYS WE MUST BELIEVE GOD'S LOVE. Standing on the sure foundation of what we have proved God to be in the past, we may look on the present and future with perfect faith. We have known Him too well to doubt Him now. We have known, and now we believe. He has made no mistakes. He is making none. He has done the best, and is doing it. We do not understand his dealings, but we know Him who is behind the mystery of Providence, and can hear Him saying: "It is all right, only trust Me. Fear not! it is I."

神愛我們的心，我們也知道也信。 約壹四16

人生是一個長期愛的教育，分為不同階段、不同方面。先是作孩子，然後作朋友，之後作戀人，作妻子或丈夫，作父親或母親。為了這個神聖學習的進展，我們不斷被允許參與某種更高的類型。因為愛就是生活。被愛就好比喝地上出產最甜的美酒。並且這一切都為著幫助我們更了解神的性情，神就是愛。每當一個新的經驗進入我們的生命中，我們都應當從一個全新的層面或角度來思考，好讓神愛的榮耀向我們揭開。我們應當告訴自己，我現在比以前更精準領會神的感受，並認識什麼是祂的愛。

使徒約翰說我們已經知道神的愛。的確如此。經過人生的歲月，每一個階段都充滿各樣不同的經歷，也充滿了神溫柔慈愛的明證，我們的確有祂愛無可計數的明證，因為：

甚至頭上烏雲密佈
遮蔽神的愛，
這件事本身就是神的愛。

使徒約翰說我們必須相信神的愛。我們站在過去對神驗證的穩固根基上，就可以用完全的信心看待現在和未來。我們已經十分認識祂，現在就不會懷疑祂。我們已經認識，所以我們現在相信。祂從來不曾出錯，現在祂也沒有出錯。祂所作的都是上好，並且還繼續這樣作。我們即使不明白祂的作為，但我們知道祂在天意安排的背後，也能聽到祂在說：「一切都沒有問題，只要信靠我。是我！不要怕！（約六20）」

We know that we have. 1 John 5: 15

This Epistle is full of certainty It rings with the words we know. And in these words we are taught that we may be certain in the region of prayer. Probably there is no region of the Christian life concerning which there is more uncertainty than this of prayer. Perhaps this is also the reason why there is so little prayer. Men doubt the use of spending time in shooting arrows, a very small percentage of which seem to strike the target.

THE FIRST CONDITION IN TRUE PRAYER IS TO BE SURE THAT IT IS ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF GOD. It is not difficult to do this when we base prayer on a promise. And this is what we should do to secure definiteness and assurance. There is nothing that pleases our Father more in his praying children than that they should bring his promises to Him for fulfilment, saying, "Do as Thou hast said." But in cases where there is no promise to guide us we shall discover his will as we pray.

THE NEXT CONDITION IS TO BELIEVE THAT GOD IS LISTENING. We need not pray long to know this. Only be quiet and silent before Him, and a blessed sense, induced by the Holy Spirit, will pervade your heart and mind, that you are literally speaking into the ear and heart of your Heavenly Father, who is listening as intently as if He had nothing else to attend to in all the universe.

THE THIRD CONDITION IS TO BE SURE THAT THE THING WE ASKED IS GRANTED. It may not have come to hand, and it may not come in the precise form in which we sought it; but it is ours. We must dare to believe that we have that petition, labeled with our name, consigned to us, perhaps started on its way to us, although it may take years to come.

就知道我們... 得著。 約壹五15

這封書信充滿確定。裡面充滿我們熟悉話語的聲音。在這些話語裡，我們受教導在禱告的領域裡可以有把握。基督徒的生命中，也許沒有任何一個領域，會像禱告這樣不確定。或許這就是禱告如此少的原因。人們不相信花時間射箭的益處，射箭射中目標機率極微。

真實禱告第一個條件是確實按神的旨意。我們根據應許禱告並不難。我們應該如此行，為得到肯定和把握。神兒女帶著祂的應許來到祂面前禱告請求兌現：「按你所說的成就吧」，沒有什麼能比這更討父神喜悅了。然而在沒有應許指引我們情形中，我們需要藉禱告發現祂的旨意。

第二個條件是相信神在垂聽。我們不需要禱告很久，就能認識這點。只要在祂面前安靜不作聲，從聖靈而來一種有福的感覺，充滿你的心和你的頭腦。你就是不折不扣地向天父的耳與心傾訴，祂全神貫注地聆聽，猶如全宇宙中再沒有其他事引祂注意。

第三個條件是確信我們所求的蒙應允。也許應允沒有出現，也許沒有按著我們所求的準確形式來到；然而我們已得著了。我們必須勇敢相信我們所求的，貼著我們的名字，已寄出來給我們，或許已經在路上，雖然可能多年後才來到。