

Articles by Walter Scott

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Be Still, And Know That I am God

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Be Still, And Know That I am God

It is hard to be still when all is turmoil and commotion around —when dangers thicken and troubles multiply on every hand. There is at least a moral heroism in battling single-handed with opposing hosts even if you fall in the struggle. Controversy has its uses as well as its dangers, and never let us forget that the Judah-remnants who returned to Jerusalem from their forced exile of 70 years were men who could wield the sword as well as handle the trowel. “For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded” (Nehemiah 4:18). There are times and seasons, when the advances of our wily foe on the citadel of our most holy faith, must be resisted in spiritual energy — foot to foot, and inch by inch. The sword must not be sheathed, must ever be sharpened and burnished for ready use. The armour is needed for conflict with Satan and wicked spirits in heavenly places (Ephesians 6:11-13).

There are, however, times when God seems to hide Himself, when our only safety is in doing nothing. The voice of our Saviour-God is heard beside many a Red Sea difficulty,—Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD.” It is a hard lesson to “stand still” in the presence of opposing foes. Jehovah is the Living God. Cloud and storm are beneath His feet and His throne remains unmoved. Can’t you, won’t you let Him act for you? Be still and see the wonder-working arm of Jehovah clearing a path for your feet. Once more the seas divide and Jehovah has triumphed, and then we sing.

— from the Selected Writings of Walter Scott

Counsels To Young Christians

THE START: NEITHER DOUBT NOR FEAR

Is there a lurking suspicion in the soul, a shadow across the heart, a quiver of conscience? If so, you are not perfectly clear as to your acceptance by God. Now, dear young Christian, to grasp the breadth or fathom the depth of God's mighty work of redemption, you must turn to the Cross. That is earth's and heaven's lesson for eternity. But there are three divine statements, which, if you grip, or rather if they grip you, doubts and fears are gone forever.

First. "When He had by Himself purged our sins, He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. 1:3). The purging of our sins was part of His divine glory. It is a divine work to create worlds and to sustain them. It was as truly a divine work to purge our sins from the face and memory of God. It is done. He has done that very thing. Your sins are purged, forgiven, forgotten, and blotted out. Why question it? You may justly fear and tremble, but only when the throne of the Eternal totters; only when the royal diadem falls from the brow of the Mighty One, Who, in love, grappled with our sins on the Cross, and there purged them once and forever from before the face of God.

Second. "The worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins" (Heb. 10:2). Now, through faith in the testimony of God, every believer, young and old, weak and strong, is once purged. Sins are purged from the sight of God, and purged from the conscience of the believer. This latter is an act within, as the former

was an act without. Both are of present and eternal value, and never need to be repeated. We are conscious of sin within and without, but once purged there is no more conscience of sins. This is enough to dispel every doubt, and set the troubled conscience at perfect rest. Your sins purged once by the blood of Christ, and your conscience once purged by faith are enough! God's eye is on the blood, and His Word is in your heart (Ex. 12:13). The former is for security, and the latter for confidence. Every young Christian needs to start with these lessons of priceless value.

Third. "By one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb. 10:14). The one sacrifice of infinite value to God has righteously enabled Him to set the weakest believer in His presence perfected forever. This is what God has said of you. You are not perfected forever because of your faith, or service, or walk, but simply and absolutely because of the infinite value of the one offering of Christ for your sins. It is by one offering He has perfected forever them that are sanctified or set apart to God. It is not a sinless state, but refers to God's absolute dealing with sin at the Cross, so that in all its worth, God views every believer perfected forever, made fit to stand before His throne in perfect peace.

Those three passages form a rock to which, if you anchor your soul, you will ride triumphantly over every wave of unbelief. Grip God's Word; get on the rock of imperishable Scripture; then all is well.

THE TWO NATURES AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit dwells in every Christian (1 Cor. 6:19), as also in the Church (1 Cor. 3:16). He is the power within (Eph. 3:20), while God is the power without (Rom.

8). Now when you were saved, the old nature, which is in everyone, was not sanctified nor removed. It is in you; but a new nature was given. Thus in every Christian there are two natures, the old and the new. The old is condemned, crucified, and in opposition to God (Rom. 6; 8:3, 7, 8). The new is holy, created, and delighting in God (Rom. 7:22; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10). Now these two natures in each believer are necessarily in opposition, as Romans 7 shows, which describes a past condition when the apostle wrote, and is in no wise the normal Christian state of believers. The Holy Spirit is the only power to repress the workings of the flesh, or sin within us (Gal. 5:16-18). The new nature, while holy in its tendencies and desires, is yet weak and powerless. It wills to do right, but lacks the power to accomplish it (Rom. 7:15,16), hence the Holy Spirit is the power which enables one to overcome the working of the flesh. No Christian is in the flesh, but the flesh is in him. How very important and practical for all to be clear on these truths so vital to Christian life and practice!

AMUSEMENTS

We can prescribe no rule. The buoyancy of youth demands a certain amount of liberty which needs to be kept within godly limits and controlled by godly principles. For our own part we have no desire to visit exhibitions save for instructional or educational purposes, not on the ground that these are sinful, but simply because we are satisfied without them. We find Christ and His interests enough for us. Besides, souls are perishing, eternity is nearing, and we have neither time nor inclination to mingle with the world in admiring its toys and sharing in its pleasures. The youngest

believer is made independent of the world. He has in himself a well of living water which is ever sparkling, perennial, and springing up for his soul's enjoyment (John 4:14). "Never thirst" and "never hunger" is the twofold description of every child of God. Instead, too, of the world ministering to our enjoyment, we minister to its need. "He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38). Let the rivers flow, and thus serve your generation. There are many games and amusements of an innocent character which may be enjoyed at home. We like to see young people happy, and hear their merry laugh. Our homes should be bright, happy and attractive.

PRAYER

Pray at all times, and under all circumstances. Neglect of private prayer is the certain path to a complete breakdown. We have followed the course of many saints and servants of the Lord. We have marked the progress and success of some, and mourned over the failure of others, and we can trace, to a large extent, these results to the use or neglect of closet-exercise (Matt. 6:6). The commencement of the Lord's personal ministry was marked in prayer (Luke 3:21). The ministry of the twelve was preceded by a night of prayer (Luke 6:12). The mighty work of God in Europe may be traced to a prayer meeting at the side of the river Gangites (Acts 16:13). The extraordinary ministry of Elijah, a service in which heaven and earth were made subservient to the man of God, was due to prayer (James 5:17). The conversion of 3,000 souls followed ten days of prayer (Acts 1 and 2). A man of prayer with one talent may accomplish the

mightiest results; while the prayerless servant, however gifted, is powerless and weak. A man of prayer is almost omnipotent. Who or what can touch him? In himself he is weak and defenseless, but the Eternal God is his strength and bulwark.

Young Christian, begin and close each day with God in prayer. Speak to Him often. Speak to Him at all times. Speak to Him under all circumstances. See that you keep short accounts with God. Never neglect personal, persevering, believing prayer. If necessary, curtail public engagements, but not your private devotions. Rest assured the more you give yourself to prayer and supplication, your life and service will have a corresponding character stamped upon them. Christians characterized by "one thing I do" are in great demand, people of purpose. The age is one of ceaseless activity. Time spent on your knees is regarded by some as wasted moments! It will be found in the coming day of trial (1 Cor. 3:13) that much now regarded as Christian work "shall be burnt," and the workman "suffer loss" (verse 15). It is not the amount, but the character of the service that is in question in the judgment of works. "Well done, good and faithful servant" is the Lord's word of welcome then (Matt. 25:21). Work! Pray! Watch! are not merely catch-words, but contain in themselves the moral elements of true success in Christian life. We cannot dispense with them.

BIBLE READING AND STUDY

Character is to a great extent formed by the books we read. The artificial culture of the day is destroying depth and force of character. Society and a light literature are forming a superficial race of men and women. The

present is a rare opportunity for individual character to assert itself and leave its mark. Reading everything and anything, and reading to waste away time hanging heavily on your hands, is ruinous to the mind. Thoughts are poured in and run out, leaving no lasting impression. What a waste of time and mind! As to choice of books, no fixed rule can be applied. History is always instructive. Science is dangerous when it is the product of unsanctified minds. Never read valueless books. Shun as you would the plague, a literature frivolous in character, or, worse still, one which directly or covertly denies the supreme authority of the Sacred Scriptures.

Vile and pernicious (pornographic) literature is wrecking the morals of the country. Noble men and women, and a pure-minded people, were more general in the past than now. Mind and character are formed by the literature of the day. But above all make the Bible your daily companion. The Bible will grow in interest the more you read and study it. It is the sufficiency of the man of God (2 Tim. 3:16,17). Have the Bible constantly beside you, in your pocket, or at hand for constant reference. Draw your doctrines from it, and not from a human compilation, whether "catechism" or "confession". The Bible will strengthen and guide you. It will support and cheer you in a lonely hour. It will impress certainty upon your life and actions. As you study the Book of books it will enable you to worship in the holiest, and serve in the harvest field intelligently. It will set you head and shoulders morally above your compeers. We would strongly advise a systematic study of the Bible. Writing short studies of Scripture is a great help to progress and exactness of thought.

COMPANIONS

Select as friends decided Christians. See that your companions are out and out on the Lord's side. Give a wide berth to persons of loose opinions and lax morals. "A man is known by the company he keeps"; by that you will be influenced either for good or evil. Cultivate the society of persons morally superior to yourself, and it will raise you in moral power. Above all, commune with the spiritual and godly. "Then they that feared the Lord spoke often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name" (Mal. 3:16). Repeated and, it may be, informal meetings of this character have the Lord's distinct commendation. Our earnest desire is, that you grow up to be men and women whose influence upon your generation will be felt; an influence which will stamp its own character upon souls on to eternal ages; for influence, good or bad, never dies. The impress of eternity is upon each of us.

Meet as often as possible with friends and companions for prayer and conversation upon the Lord's things and interests. This will prove a means of strength. The Lord has instituted Christian fellowship as an important help to our spiritual growth and blessing (Jude 20,21).

Christian young men, solemnly we warn you against the sin of trifling with the feelings and affections of those of the other sex. Be manly and straightforward. God is an observer of your actions and words. We have no desire to say more on this delicate subject; only this, do not be general lovers. Be careful in the choice of a companion whom you mean to make your wife, and be true and

constant to her in your love. Young sisters, we greatly desire your growth in spiritual life and in devotedness to Christ. Absolutely refuse all mere human attachments. Repulse every attempt; yes, reject the very thought of a life-long companionship with one not distinctly on the Lord's side. Do not be deceived on this point under any plea whatever. "Them that honor Me I will honor."

BEHAVIOR AND CONVERSATION

We wish our young friends would study carefully the first epistle to Timothy, and that to Titus. They contain instruction and advice of paramount importance. We want our younger brethren and sisters especially to shine as the Lord's lights in the sphere in which they may find themselves, adorning "the doctrine of God our Savior in all things" (Titus 2:10).

First, "Show piety at home." Disobedience to parents and guardians, and lack of respect to elders is a marked feature of the age. Be obedient and kind at home, and do not be running every night to meetings if your presence and help in the family circle are desired. Remember, you are Christ's representative and witness in the household, in the workroom, or other spheres of labor. Your ways and behavior at home and elsewhere will either prove a help or hindrance. Be modest and respectful. As to the question of dress, be simple. Some known to us put all their stock in the window, all show, tinsel, and no substance. These are foolish young men and women! Do they really think that sensible people cannot estimate at their real value frills and painted dolls? What littleness of mind! Christ is the great constraining power. When His love gets into the heart, these things go off.

Christian intercourse and conversation in general form the subject of instruction in that incisive portion of the Word, Eph. 5:3-6. Joking with the Word of God is a hateful and sinful habit. Some have a propensity in this direction. "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt" (Col. 4:6). There is the boasting tongue used by the bumptious. There is the lying tongue used by the untruthful. There is the murmuring tongue used by the discontented. There is the irreverent tongue used by the sceptic. Slang expressions are most unbecoming in a Christian. Remarks and conversations, too, of a light character weaken the mind and defile the conscience. "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips," so prayed the Psalmist, so should each of us. What you hear, speak, and read, leave impressions on the heart and memory which are never completely effaced. Chatter leads to gossip, and gossip leads to scandal. Oh, be careful and bridle the tongue! Check the outflow. If it is the outcome, the product of the new nature in you, then let it flow spontaneously (James 1:26). Words from the lips of some are as a sword (Prov. 12:18), from the lips of others they are as honeycomb (16:24).

DO ALL THE GOOD YOU CAN

Let yours be a useful life. May the holiest (worship) and the harvest (service) be fully occupied. In with God in the former; out for God in the latter. Do not trouble yourself about a distant sphere of usefulness. You will find your work at your finger ends. The world is your parish, and every creature on earth the subject of love and ministry. Let the grandeur of your mission, and not the "charmed circle," inspire you in your work. Do what

you can in the circumstances where God has placed you, and when you have done that, He may then enlarge your sphere of labor; yes, but only when you have served Him well in the smaller one. "She hath done what she could" (Mark 14:8). There could not be a higher commendation. May we each merit that! Throw your energies into whatever work the Lord gives you to do. "Do it with thy might." Be earnest and enthusiastic in every service, in every bit of work. See that your heart is as full of Christ as your hands are full of work.

In everyday life be holy and consistent; that will preach a far more eloquent sermon, and a more practical one, too, than the tongue can utter. Solemnly remember that one is your Master, even Christ, and to Him alone are you responsible. Not even a Paul could control the movements of another of the Lord's servants (1 Cor. 16:12). Individual and direct responsibility to Christ as Lord has to be firmly maintained. It needs divine wisdom to handle aright the trowel and the sword. We cannot dispense with either (Neh. 3:6). "Do good unto all men," but remember that the household of faith has the first claim (Gal. 6:10). Distinct call to special service at home or abroad requires gift, qualification, grace, and faith, not common to all. Persons of marked gift will not readily fit into a narrow groove; they will find out their own sphere in time, and create a place for themselves. Do not be proud of gift, nor of natural or acquired ability. When we have spent ourselves and done our best we are then but "unprofitable servants" (Luke 17:10). There is not much credit in simply doing one's duty, and the best servant cannot do more. Work on till the Master comes. Do it quickly and quietly, do it well, and in His sight.

Directions for Young Christians

1. Make the Holy Scriptures your sole authority for your justification, forgiveness, and hope of glory (Rom. 5:1; 1 John 2:12; Col. 1:27).
2. Make the Bible your daily companion, and prayer, at least night and morning, your characteristic daily habit (2 Tim. 3:15-17; 1 Thess. 5:17).
3. Confess Christ at all times, and under all circumstances, by word, behavior, or by silence (Lk. 12:8,9,11; 2 Tim. 2:12,13; 1 Pet. 3:4).
4. Do not in public relate your experience, telling how good you are, how devoted, how holy; let the life tell (Ex. 34:29; Ps. 66:16; Phil. 3:13-17).
5. Never go to meetings or join in amusements where you would not like the Lord to find you (Ps. 17:4,5; 1 Cor. 10:31; Titus 2:11-14).
6. Give up at once for Christ's sake, all habits, all ways unlike the Lord (1 Pet. 2:11; Eph. 5:13-18; 4:22; 5:1-4).
7. Do not choose as companions any who are not distinctly on the Lord's side (Ps. 1; Acts 4:23; 15:38-40).
8. Never ridicule or make fun of the mistakes or weaknesses of any, especially of Christians (Rom. 14; Eph. 4:2; 1 Cor. 12:21-26).
9. Avoid as you would the plague, all and every form of joking, jesting, and punning on the Word of God (Eph. 5:4; Ps. 119:22,63,103,133).

10. Make it a rule never to read books or periodicals, the writers of which do not regard the Bible as fully inspired (John 5:44-47; 1 Cor. 2:10-14; Rev. 1:3).

11. Meet with your companions often for prayer and conversation on the Lord's things (Jude 20; Mal. 3:16; Heb. 10:24,25).

12. Watch and pray. Live only and wholly for Christ. Wait for God's Son from Heaven (Matt. 26:41; 2 Cor. 5:15; Phil. 1:20,21; 3:7-15).

Helpful Notes For The New Year

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Helpful Notes For The New Year

Walter Scott

Devotedness to Christ is indispensable; it is the great regulating truth and principle of Christian life and progress. Seek by all means to satisfy the heart of the blessed Lord.

Unity is to be sought with all the Lord's people.

How blessed to witness it! (Psalm 133; Acts 2:41-47).

But on no account compromise the truth, yea, earnestly contend for it; nor sacrifice holiness in order to attain unity.

Work in fellowship with the Lord's people whenever you can do so scripturally; but solemnly remember that you are the Lord's servant and not the servant of men.

Reject dictation; welcome advice from godly people.