

No 1.

The brightness of the Christian's

Course:

A Discourse from the text:

"The path of the Just is as the shining
light, that shineth more and more
unto the perfect day." Prov. IV: 18.

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Hymns for Worship:

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|----|-----|-------------|
| 1. | 364 | Hymn Co. M. |
| 2. | 319 | Hymn S. M. |
| 3. | 336 | Hymn S. M. |

Gov. IV: 18.

The figures used in S. S. to describe the Christian course, & the Christian department, are quite varied. But among them all none is more common than that which brings to the mind the idea of a pilgrimage, a journey, a walk. Our Savior tells us that the way of Life is narrow, while the road to death is broad. Noah & Enoch walked with God. Paul tells us to walk in the Spirit. We are exhorted also that as we have rec^d. X^t. Jesus the Lord so we should walk in him,

Zach. & Eliz. walked in all the
commandments of the Lord blameless.

Those who wait upon the Lord we
learn, shall ^{not only} renew their strength
but shall also run without weari-
ness, and walk without fainting.

Moses in his address to Hobab
said we are journeying to that
land of which the Lord hath
said he will give it us; and

Paul ~~to~~ ^{the} Hebrews speaking of the
Patriarchs says "they confessed that
they were strangers & pilgrims on
the Earth. For they that say such
things declare plainly that they

seek a country. . . . But now they
desire a better country, that is an
heavenly; wherefore God is not
ashamed to be called their God;
for he hath prepared for them
a city."

But while the idea of journeying
to Heaven is clearly & undoubtedly
set forth by the word path in
our text, as shown by parallel
passages of S. S. quoted, as well as
by many others, yet we must be
careful to incorporate with it
also the idea of Christian
character, & destiny. It is in this

sense we are to understand the language of the Apostle when he enjoins upon Christians to walk circumspectly, & when he tells us that that those who are in Christ Jesus "walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." And the path of the Just is that in which they walk when walking with God and it means simply "to live in sweet communion with God, having a lively sense of his presence and endeavoring above all things to please him, and to be approved."

and accepted of him." This is also
the path in which all God's chn
walk to whom it is promised
that they shall ^{all} be taught
of the Spirit, & hence when we
are said to walk after the Spirit
it is meant that we are "led by
the Spirit guided by his counsels
and motions and that we regulate
and order our whole conversation
~~and~~ according to the rule & direction
of God's word & Spirit." This
is the path of the just. Who
then is the just? The word is
synonymous with righteous. And

as used here means one who is right
eous by the imputation of X^ts
righteousness. He is one who as
all men, having been under the
condemnation of the Law of
God has become acquitted
by having the righteousness
of Christ set down to his
account, & thus has been
delivered from all the claims
of the Law, set free from
the sentence of condemna-
tion of God's Law and
made an heir of Heaven by
covenant right thro' Jesus Christ.

And he is not related to God's
Holy Law merely in this judicial
sense of acquittal from condem-
nation, but he is now by an in-
separable consequence sancti-
fied, (i. e.) set apart from the
service of Satan to the love &
service of God. He is in a state
of gradually progressive assimila-
tion to God's Holy image
in knowledge, righteousness
and true holiness. It is of
such an one as this, that
the text declares that his
path is as the shining light

that shineth ^{more} unto the per-
fect day. It will be our pleasant
task to point out the particulars
in which the analogy holds good
between the Christian's course
and the shining light. In this
we shall find material
for exhortation, and for
consolation.

1. The first point of similitude is
that as Light shines so does X^{th} .
character and influence manifest
itself. It is an inseparable quali-
ty of Light to shine. It is incon-
ceivable that there should be

Light and yet that it should not
be known by its shining. You may ex-
tinguish it - but then it is no
more light, but darkness. So
long as it is Light - shine it
must, & it will illuminate
every part of that sphere of
which it is the centre, filling
every portion of that space
over which its influence ex-
tends. The disciples were called
by their Master "The light of the
world," & he ~~was~~ immediately
added "a city - that is set on a
hill cannot be hid." The Sun

breaks forth from darkness and
is visible by his own light. There
issues forth from him ~~as~~ as
from a great fountain, that light
that brings all things into the
range of vision, & bathes the
whole scene in a flood of
golden glory. There is no possibility
either that the light of the Sun
should be hidden. However
dark & gloomy the clouds
that enshroud his disk, yet
such is the change from night
to day that all are aware of it.
And an eclipse has never yet

been mistaken for night.
Now in all these particulars we be-
hold the Christian exemplified.
He is in his natural state in
darkness. And although the
light of the glory of God may
often fall upon this darkness
uncomprehended yet when the
H.S. sends this light into his
heart he then becomes him-
self a fountain of light, &
breaks forth amidst a world
that is as yet enveloped in
darkness, like the glorious
King of day rejoicing in the East.

As he walks forth thus resplendent
with the glories of reflected light
which fall upon him from
the Cross of Christ, he himself
becomes a luminary that serves
to light the world around
him and to display the glory of
God. Men thus take knowledge
of him that he has been with
Christ Jesus, & as the light of
his example shines among
men others seeing his good
works are led to glorify
the great Father of Lights.
It is precisely here that the par-

allel holds most truly. No
man can possess this Light
in himself without having
it made manifest to all
around him. The shining of the
Sun is the ^{inseparable} evidence that he
is in the Heavens. The operation
of religion upon the life & heart
of the man is the inevitable
result of his conversion. If
no light, that proves that there
is no Sun. If no fruits of
religion then there is no re-
ligion. "By their fruits ye
shall know them." And a

man can no more hide
his religion than the sun
forebear to shine. Some of
course shine with greater
brilliance than others. These
are fixed stars — suns which
are centres of systems, giving
light & shedding glory on the
lesser stars. But whether
stars or central orbs of
light, all shine with their
proper proportion of light
in their appropriate spheres.
If you are a Christian it
will be known. Tell me of the

Sun having arisen above the horizon and the world being at the same time enveloped in the gloom of night, and then you may tell me of one into whose soul the Light of the glory of God has been sent as it shineth in the face of Jesus, and yet that at the same time this individual shall be reflecting no light upon the world around him - as well expect us to believe the one as the other. Each is alike an impossible conception. And.

This shining of Christian light is
but the fulfilling of God's design
in giving the light to us. For as it
would be justly regarded a mark
of folly in men to light a candle
and place it under a bushel,
so it would be blasphemy to at-
tribute to the Great God, a course
of dealing with us which would
be fitly represented by one of folly,
as when he had shed into our
souls the Light of the Knowledge
of His Glory we should be
immediately commanded to
hide from the world around

us the light that is us. And as
men acting under reason, place
a lighted candle on a candle
stick so that it "giveth light to
all that are in the house," so
also it is the will & purpose
of God that all who have been
enlightened by His Holy Spirit,
should be equally manifest in
communicating light to others.
True it is an inseparable accompani-
ment of all human demonstrations
of Christian Light that there are
clouds which sometimes come
over them, & render the lightsome

what dim for a time. But first
there is in the midst of their
deepest gloom such remaining
abiding evidences of Light that
is shining inwardly & still reflect
ed in their outward ~~walk~~ walk &
upon their onward path, as
demonstrates that they are the
repositaries of a Light not of
Earth. And 2. The gloom is
not permanent; but "to the up-
right there ariseth Light in
Darkness," & ere long from the
murky folds of sorrow's cloud
the Sun of righteousness bursts

in all its native brilliancy &
gladness, showing that it was
obscured but not extinguished.

To remark again upon this point
of similitude we may say that
as the rising Sun is the most
noble & glorious object in the
Natural world, so Xhian xter
is the most ~~interesting~~ attractive
& lovely object of ~~mental~~ contemp-
tation in the moral world. All
are familiar with this figure. The
radiant glories of the morning
Sun to ~~be~~ understood must be
witnessed. No poet's fancy, or artist's

pencil can find the language, or
the coloring that shall fitly de-
scribe or portray the scene.

Among all the forms of heathen
idolatry the least marvelous
and the most excusable is the
worship of the Sun. Well may
we say with Everets "I do not
wonder at the superstition of
the Ancient Magians who in the
morning of the world went up
to the hill tops of Central Asia, &
ignorant of the true God adored
the most glorious work of his
hand. But I am filled with a-

mazement when I am told that in this
enlightened age and in the heart
of the Christian world, there are
persons who can witness his daily
manifestation of the power & wisdom
of the Creator and yet say in their
hearts, "There is no God." What the
Sun is in Nature, the Light of the
Gospel is in the moral world. And
as the Christian is the receptacle
of this Light, - the concrete of this
abstract, - so the Christian as he
should be, is the most glorious of
the works of God in his Kingdom
of Grace in this world of Sin.

Not for vain glory is the Khan
thus to be regarded. Let him
however only remember that
he derives all his glory from
Christ the Lord, and then it
will at once be seen how it is
that he is the most noble of
all earthly characters. And the
increase of this glory is always
in exact proportion to the con-
stancy of his intercourse with
Christ. Hence the intolerable glory
emitted from the face of the
Patriarch Law Liver, after his
communion with God upon

the Mount. There is something in
the Life of the consistent Child
of God, which commends the
religion of the Lord Jesus Christ to
the approval & admiration of
the whole world. There is no
argument so convincing. There
is no logic so irresistible. If
there be those to whom such
a character is odious they
must be those who hate the
light because their deeds are
evil, upon the principle that the
gloomy hooting solitary bird
of night hates the glories of the noon

day Sun. But the noble minded
who have a native inherent ability
to appreciate the Good the True
and the Beautiful, cannot
look upon the life of a godly
man as it is displayed in all
his relations to the world, ~~with~~ ^{without}
~~most~~ feeling an inward conviction
of the glory of Christianity as
thus exemplified. The presence
and countenance of such a man
reflects light & blessedness and
when he is removed, there is a
felt gloom pervading all his
former scenes of association.

And under the pressure of this gloom
that settles down upon the Church
& the land on the loss of one of these
great Lights, men of God cry out
with David in the depth of their an-
guish of Spirit: "Help, Lord, for
the godly man ceaseth; for the
faithful fail from among the
children of men"! And hence is
suggested another beautiful point of
similitude between the shining Light
and the Christian character, which
is that both are useful. To gaze
upon the glories of the risen Sun
may excite the admiration of the

refined and noble minded; but there
are thousands whose feelings of wonder
and delight are never excited by the
sight. It has become trite, & common.

It is impossible however for the
most insensible of mortals to be
blind to the fact that the Sun is
indispensable to the comfort and
subsistence ^{of the animal & vegetable Kingdoms.}

~~of Earth.~~ He warms
into life the torpid, and feeds
with his light the sickly plant
and invigorates all nature with
his cheerfulness, and illuminates
all the Earth so that all may
go forth to those labors which are

peculiar to the various spheres they occupy. Now nothing more beautifully exemplifies the influence of Christia-
xter than this great luminary, shining
noiselessly, without being solicited, with-
out interruption, without partiality.

The good man thus is not only the
light of the world, but the salt
of the Earth. He may be unconscious
of his good influence upon others, but
none the less useful on that account.
He may be disposed to regard him-
self as of no use in the world, but
others know & feel that he is exerting
an influence silent, & potent for good.

Many a child of God has been refresh-
ed by his godly representations of
precious truth. Many a child of want
has been cheered by his smile and
fed by his bounty. Many a son and
daughter of affliction have had the
gloom of their habitation illumined
by his visits. Many a reckless
~~out~~ sinner has been reached by
his solemn admonitions. Many
an abandoned outcast has been
allured from his dreary down-
ward way to virtue's path by
his efforts, & many an erring
fallen brother has been raised up

from the deep degradation into which
he had sunk, by his kind & helping
hand. He sounds no trumpet be-
fore him. He waits not for the
opportunity to do good, but seeks
out the occasions & objects of his
good deeds. He wears not in his
well doing from day to day. He
asks not if men are worthy
before he will do them good
but only is he a man, — a sinner, —
a lost & helpless sinner, a rebel
against God? Then is he my Brother
and mine be the task to seek
him out & do him good.

II. It is characteristic again of both the shining light & the star that they shine "more & more."

The operation of Grace in ^{the} Christian's heart is described everywhere in the S. S. as gradually progressive.

Every metaphor adopted brings these two ideas to view. Its beginning is small, but its growth is certain.

Thus the grain of mustard seed, the smallest of herbs, becomes so large & umbrageous a tree in oriental lands that it furnishes a shelter for the fowls of the air. And that waving & luxuriant harvest that burdens the field

was first the grain, then the
blade then the ear before it be-
came the full corn in the
ear. And the leaven was small in
proportion to the 3 measures
of meal in which it was hid, &
yet it spread by degrees until
the whole was leavened. So the
morning Light. At first a faint
grayish beam is seen in the East,
scarcely distinguishable from
the reflection of starlight, then it
brightens & gradually we become as-
sured that the darkness is past
& the true Light is appearing. And

as we gaze (to borrow Everett's descrip-
tion) "the timid approach of twilight
becomes more perceptible; the
intense blue of the sky begins
to soften; the smaller stars like
^{little} ~~stars~~ go first to rest; the sister beams
of the Pleiades soon meet ~~in~~ together
but the bright constellations of
the West and North remain
unchanged. Steadily the wondrous
transfiguration goes on. Hordes of
Angels hidden from mortal eyes
shift - the scenery of the Heavens;
the glories of night dissolve into
the glories of the dawn. The blue

sky now turns more softly gray;
the watch stars now shut up their
holy eyes; the East begins to kindle.
Faint streaks of purple ~~now~~ ^{soon} blush
along the sky; the whole celestial
concave is filled with the inflowing
tides of morning light which comes
pouring down from above in
one great ocean of radiance;
till at length, a flash of purple
fire blazes out from above the
horizon, and turns the dewy tear
drops of flower and leaf into ru-
bies and diamonds. In a few
seconds, the everlasting gates

of the morning are thrown wide open, and the Lord of day, arrayed in glories too severe for the gaze of man, begins his state.

It is just as certain, just as striking in the case of the Khan that he too shines more & more.

More frequently than otherwise the dawn of his light is faint, & feeble. His vision is obscure he sees men as trees walking. He is a babe in Christ. While possessed of every limb & lineament belonging to the race of man and thus presenting a

specimen of a perfect human
being in distinction from one im-
perfect & deformed, that new
born babe is the feeblest and
most dependent of animated beings.
Life is faint & slight in its mani-
festations, yet all may see that
life is there. And so the newly
born child of God, exhibits
the vitality of grace in every
part of his moral nature;
~~and~~ "old things are passed away,
all things have become new."
And in no case of this kind has
the germ been found to die in

its incipiency but it continues
to grow and ripen. The race
begun, he sits not down to rest.
The hand put to the plough
he looks not back. The enlist-
ment having been made in
the Holy War he seeks no
discharge. The seed planted
continues to grow. The leaven
is ever working in the soul.
The leaves soon make their ap-
pearance on the branches, &
are followed by the fruit.
The race is run with ever
increasing zeal & eagerness.

The furrow is followed with
unflinching industry. The hero
of the good fight, never thinks
the victory won so long as
he marches through the enemy's
country; but fights on till death
and until he can say with
Paul "I have fought the good fight
I have kept the faith, I have
finished my course; hereafter
there is laid up for me a crown
of righteousness, which the Lord
the righteous Judge will give me
at that day: and not to me
only but to all ^{them also} that love his

appearing." There is significance
in the figure of the Sun's light
adopted to set forth Xth star.
For you perhaps may conceive that
the conuersion of some meteor
light blazing in midnight gloom
athwart the sky & dazzling the
beholder with its glory might better
befit the lustre of so noble &
glorious a star. But while the
opinions professions of reputed
conuersion which so often are
witnessed may find their proto-
type in the meteoric glare be-
cause they are sudden, & be

cause they come not from the
upper heavens but from the dark
vapors of the Earth beneath, &
because they die out in the mo-
ment of their brightest effulgence
leaving the soul in profounder
gloom than before they ever
flashed with their brief lustre
across its sky; let us never
forget that the only true emblem
of the xto is the shining light
of the glorious Sun; because it
continues to shine more & more,
no man ever witnessed ^a ~~the~~ rising
of the Sun that did ^{not} climb to

gradually to its meridian point.

So also is it true

III That both the "Shining
Light" & the other shine more
& more unto perfection.

The orb of Day halts not on
his radiant pathway, but
is as a bridegroom coming
out of his chamber and re-
joiceth as a strong man to
run a race. His going forth
is from the end of the Heaven
and his circuit unto the ends
of it, and there is nothing
hid from the heat thereof.

It is carefully to be noted here
that the comparison is only
to that ^{portion of the} course of the Sun that
is passed over from the dawn
to the noon tide glory, as it is said
to shine more & more to the perfect
day. ^{as} The remaining portion of the
day would indicate only decline, it
is not to be used in this analogy.
There is indeed a sense in
which the Christian resembles
the Sun on his declining path;
it is in his mortal, physical life.
That decays & ~~winks~~ winks gradually
until like the Sun it becomes

lost & obscured behind the occident
of the grave. But as the Sun
remains but a brief night unseen
and then re-appears in the East
in the tabernacle of the Heavens
set for Him by the Great Creator
more glorious than at his setting,
So the Xtian, buried in the grave
sleeps away the night of death
and on the morning of the
Resurrection, bursting from
the temporary gloom, shall
rise re-animated with the
glory of the celestial body
and shine forth as the Sun in

the Kingdom of His Father. Yet although this be true it is not to this similitude we are now invited. For we learn that "though our outward man perish, our inward man is renewed day by day." The Christian is waxing stronger & stronger. He holds on his way. None of his steps shall slide, because the Law of his God is in his heart. ~~He is~~

"He is becoming daily stronger in faith, ^{hope,} love, & patience, and is renewed more & more into the holy image of God." He forgets the things that are behind & presses

on to the mark for the prize of
the high calling of God in St.
Jesus. He lays aside every weight
and the sin that doth most
easily beset him, & runs with
patience the race set before
him, looking unto Jesus the
Author and the finisher of
his faith. By & bye come trials.
And when he is ready to sink
under them, he hears the voice
of his great Leader "In the world
ye shall have tribulation but
be of good cheer I have over-
come the world." Again, the

day of temptation comes. Clouds
encompass him. His light burns a
little dim. But either the cloud
passes quickly from him & the
light of his religion, ^{burns} the brighter
for the temporary gloom. Or if
he suffers an eclipse of his
faith for a time under the
intervention of some foreign
body between him & the great
central Sun, he speedily
emerges by repentance & faith
and the light shines on yet
once more, brightly & gloriously
and amid many fears, & conflicts

sorrows, and temptations, he closes
his career like the morning star,
"Which goes not down behind the
darkened west, nor hides obscu-
red amid the tempests of the
sky, but melts away into the
light of Heaven!" There then
the finishing touch is given to
the xter of the Utian. The crown
of glory that fadeth not away
is placed upon his head, and
his soul "being made perfect
in holiness, immediately passes
into Glory," where no sin nor
sorrow ever more shall enter in.

1. My fellow disciple of Jesus. Let me ask you how your own experience tallies with this description? Be it known to you, it is the word of the Lord which thus describes the path of the just. If we therefore cannot trace a resemblance to it in our career, let us conclude at once that we are defective in some prime requisite of X'tian X'ter. Remember unless we shine, & shine more & more, we have no reason to conclude ourselves to be the chn of God. We are of the class

to whom our Lord having com-
mitted talents we have only
buried them in a napkin &
hid them in the Earth. Re-
member the fate ^{of such} & tremble
lest it befall us. God does
not require all to shine
with equal brilliancy & to
be conspicuous equally
far throughout the world.
But he does expect of all
to improve our talent, and
shed some light around
us. Alas! that there should
be any of us who profess

to be Christians who yet live to
so little purpose that the world
is not at all profited that we
have lived, and no one will
miss us when we die. Oh
when we think of the 1000^s
who with not half our ad-
vantages have blessed the
world by their lives of labor
in the cause of Christ, &
left the track of Life illumined
wherever they have gone, and
departing have left behind
them a bright train of heavenly
light in their ascent to Glory, how

Should we feel stirred to
the exertion of every power
to the achievement of some
worthy deed in the the great
Enterprise of the World's con-
quest to the dominion of
our Lord! It is thus our path
shall be "as the shining Light
~~which~~
~~with~~ shineth more and more
unto the perfect Day," and while
we shall be content to labor
on, toiling in the Master's
vineyard so long as it shall
be His pleasure, we shall
earnestly look for the period

of our release to depart & be
with Jesus. Ours shall be the
feelings of the Xthian Pilgrim, who
would not be always on the journey
Not always on the journey when the
home, the place which is pre-
pared for his abode stands open
to receive him when he comes,
& he exclaims
Why sh^d. I wish to linger in the
wild, when thou art waiting, Father
to receive thy child. It is a
weary way & I am faint; I pant
for purer air & fresher springs,
O Father take me home, there is
a taint, a shadow on Earth's
purest, brightest things; This

World is but a wilderness to me,
~~There~~ is no rest, my God, no peace
apart from thee!

Come gentle Death, tho' I have
feared thee long, And thou art
dreadful still to mortal sense,
Come, thou art stingless now, I
did thee wrong, Thou shalt but
aid me to escape from hence,
Come, I can meet thee, for the
Conqueror's arm Upholds my
shrinking soul & shields me
from alarm. Shrink not, Oh
human Spirit! The everlasting
arm is strong to save, Look up
Look up frail Nature, Put thy trust

In Him who went down mourning
to the ~~grave~~ ^{dust} & overcame the grave.
Oh best immortal One, Through
boundless space, And stand with
thy Redeemer face to face.
And stand before thy God,
Life's weary work is o'er, Thou art
of Earth no more, Here no bootless
quest, The City's name is Rest,
Here shall no fear appall,
Here Love is all in all,
Here shalt thou win thy ardent
soul's desire, Here clothe thee
in thy beautiful attire. Lift, lift
thy wondering eyes, Yonder is

Paradise, and this fair shining
band, Are spirits of thy land,
And these that throng to meet
thee are thy kin, who have
awaited thee redeemed from sin.
The city's gates unfold, enter
oh enter in. "