

through this highest inspiration, which the inworking of the Holy Ghost alone can bring about in my soul, I know that it is God's will, and that it must be done. And then it is, if you like, a miracle, for then you do and suffer that which far supersedes your own strength. But the wall yields, it breaks, and you leap over. And on the other side of it you kneel down to ascribe praise and honor to him who has enabled you to do the superhuman.

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“MINE EYES ARE EVER TOWARD
THE LORD.”

In the *Te Deum* the church sings: “To Thee all angels cry aloud: . . . To Thee Cherubim and Seraphim: continually do cry, Holy, Holy, Holy: Lord God of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty of thy glory.” Continually, i. e. without ceasing, without pauses, always the never-ending ascent of the hymn of praise from angelic choirs before God. This unbroken, continuous, unchanging and fixed permanency of things is the peculiar characteristic of the world before God's throne. In the house of the Father there is no time, but eternity, and therefore there is no breaking down of life in a night, no transition from morning to midday, but it remains eternal morning. There is no standing still and beginning again. No stopping and resuming. No intermezzo of rest or relaxation. But life, ever springing up and coming back to itself, without waste of power, and consequently without need of change. There is no more development, hence transition from one condition into another is unthinkable. No break or disturbance mars the ful-

ness of the blessedness which is eternal, and therefore the word "continually" in the *Te Deum* expresses admirably the characteristic of the super-earthly, of what is devoted to God, even the kingdom of heaven.

It sounds paradoxical to us, when the apostle exhorts us to: "Pray without ceasing," or to: "Rejoice evermore," or to hear the Psalmist say: "I have set the Lord always before me" (Ps.16:8), "Nevertheless I am continually with thee" (Ps. 73: 23), "Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord" (Ps.25: 15), but in connection with this unbroken note of the higher life, he who is no stranger to the secret walk with God, feels the sacred stress of this "continually," "without ceasing," and "at all times." For "continually" sometimes means: "Now and then." A nurse in the hospital continually makes the round of her patients. But such is not the meaning here. When the Psalmist sings: "Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord," the word in Hebrew does not mean "now and then," but "always and without ceasing." It means to say: "The eyes of my soul are never turned away from God, but are always looking toward my Father who is in heaven." It means that in our secret walk with God we do not bring God down into time, but allow God to lift us up into the eternal. Secret fellowship with God is the foretaste of the heavenly. It is not a musical instrument from which tones are elicited from time to time, and meanwhile remains closed, but a self-playing organ that but waits for our ears to hear its heavenly melodies.

Do not say, that prayer without ceasing, always to be blessed in God, always to be looking unto

the Lord, to set him always before you, and to fix your eyes ever upon him, is simply impossible, because from the nature of the case, human life, surroundings, business cares and daily duties forbid it. For in this sense both David and Paul knew well that life is not ceaseless devotion and the world no monastery cell. But it was not meant this way by either Psalmist or Apostle. There are moments when on our knees we are alone with God and pray. There are moments when we retire to some secluded spot, in order to lose ourselves in thinking on God. There are moments when we shake ourselves free from every care and consideration of this life, in order to engage ourselves solely and alone with the things of the hidden life. It must be confessed that for first beginners this is about the only form in which they can imagine prayer, fellowship with God, and looking unto him, to be possible. Life to them is still divided into two parts. A life without God, broadly extending itself in the world, and alongside of this and apart from the world an exceedingly limited life with God. They have grasped something of the kingdom of heaven, but the life of the world is still the real life to them, and as an oasis in the wilderness of this worldly life, there are moments in which they devote themselves to God. And as long as such is the case, of course, prayer without ceasing, rejoicing evermore, and continual abiding with God, is impossible. For then there is no indwelling in God, but dwelling in the world, in order to go out from it now and then for a few moments of interview with God. Then prayer is brief. Thought of God is momentary. Presently it ends. Eyes open

again to the world, in the life of which the rest of the day is spent. Such is the existence of him who out of every twenty-four hours of the day spends eight in bed, more than fifteen in the world, and altogether scarcely half an hour with God. He has often tried to retire half an hour for prayer and sacred meditation, but life is too busy, it rushes on relentlessly, and even in moments of seclusion thoughts wander too far afield for serious concentration on holy things. And under the spell of disappointment the effort is all too readily abandoned.

Continuous, unbroken, unceasing fellowship with God does not depend upon thought, and can not be reached by the will, but springs of itself from the inner motion of the heart. If the body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, as we believe, so that God dwells in us, God's nearness to us and our nearness to him takes place of itself, whether we think of it or not. God, the Holy Ghost, does not come into the heart, presently to leave it again. There is indwelling. There is a coming once, in order to abide with us forever. And even when we do not pray, or know not how to pray as we ought, God, the Holy Ghost, prays in us with unutterable groanings. The mother keeps watch by the bedside of her new-born babe, even though the babe has no sense of it whatever. Hence the question only is, whether the inner disposition of the heart attains gradually that sanctification, that opening up to Divine things, whereby we begin to feel and to perceive what goes on in the secret chambers of our heart.

At first we live outside of the heart, and isolated, it floats as a drop of oil on the waters of life.

But gradually there comes a disclosing. We begin to live a little more with and in our own heart. And when we enter our heart sufficiently deeply, we find there God, the Holy Ghost, who has compassion on us. This of itself brings us to a life of two phases; one outward and the other inward. But though at first these two are strangers to one another, they gradually approach each other, mingle together and permeate each other, until the point is reached when the inner life lends its glow to all the outward existence, and when, not the clearly conscious, but the fellowship which is apprehended with the tentacles of the soul, progresses more and more unceasingly.

This is at first pure, sacred mysticism, and nothing more. But it does not keep itself at this. Unconsciously, the eye of the soul begins slowly to discover the clear reality that God dwells not only in the heart, but that in the outward life on every side he is the omnipresent, the all-directing, Almighty and the all-provident Worker. And so we begin to have an eye for God, who in all things, and by and through all things, presses upon us. The note which arises from the depths of the heart is echoed by all of the life in which we fulfil our calling. That which formerly drew us away from God in that life and threw us back upon ourselves, now begins with wondrous allurements to draw us more and more closely to God. And not by reasoning, not with outspoken thought, but in the immediate sensation of the life of the soul itself God begins both inwardly and outwardly to open the eye to his Majesty. It is true, sin works interruptions again. But sin never rouses hatred against itself more strongly in the heart

than when again and again it throws distractive discord into the harmony of the Psalm of life. And to break with sin, and to lose self again in worship and blessed fellowship becomes of itself the rising impulse of the heart.

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“THY OVERSIGHT HATH PRESERVED
MY SPIRIT.”

The spirit within us is that by which we live. It is at the same time our breath of life and our spiritual inner self. The spirit is what we are above and besides the body. It is that which has been breathed into the “unformed lump” to make us man, to make us live as man, to make us a person among the children of men. “To yield up the spirit,” as a rule, is nothing but to die, to breathe out the breath of life. When on the other hand the apostle says, that no man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him (I Cor. 2:11), the word “spirit” indicates our conscious ego, our spiritual existence as man, our inner personality.

Although this seems to be something entirely different, in Holy Writ the breath of life, the spirit which we yield up in dying is never separated from our spiritual existence. Both our life and our person are expressed by “spirit,” and both are called “our soul.” When the Psalmist cried: “O Lord, deliver my soul,” or rejoices: “Thou, Lord, hast delivered my soul from death,” it refers in Psalm 116 to the saving of life, to deliverance from danger, and not to spiritual redemption. But our inner spiritual existence is also called our soul. “As the hart panteth after the water brooks,