

Sixteenth Decree: Forgive and Ye shall be Forgiven

“And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us.” Luke 11:4.

“We are not forgiven because we forgive, but **as** we forgive.”
Christ’s Object Lessons, 251

“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”

1 John 1:7-10.

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and
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As We Forgive

“We are not forgiven because we forgive, but **as** we forgive. The ground of all forgiveness is found in the unmerited love of God, but by our attitude toward others we show whether we have made that love our own.

Wherefore Christ says, “With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.” Matthew 7:2.”

Christ’s Object Lessons, 251.

Sixteenth Decree: Forgive and Ye shall be Forgiven

“The religion of Christ means more than the forgiveness of sin; it means taking away our sins, and filling the vacuum with the graces of the Holy Spirit. It means divine illumination, rejoicing in God. It means a heart emptied of self, and blessed with the abiding presence of Christ.

When Christ reigns in the soul, there is purity, freedom from sin. The glory, the fullness, the completeness of the gospel plan is fulfilled in the life. The acceptance of the Saviour brings a glow of perfect peace, perfect love, perfect assurance.

The beauty and fragrance of the character of Christ revealed in the life testifies that God has indeed sent His Son into the world to be its Saviour.” Christ’s Object Lessons, 419.

“And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?

If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.” Genesis 4:6-7.

“Cain hated and killed his brother, not for any wrong that Abel had done, but “because his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous.”
1 John 3:12.

So in all ages the wicked have hated those who were better than themselves. Abel’s life of obedience and unswerving faith was to Cain a perpetual reproof. “Everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproofed.” John 3:20.

The brighter the heavenly light that is reflected from the character of God’s faithful servants, the more clearly the sins of the ungodly are revealed, and the more determined will be their efforts to destroy those who disturb their peace.”
Patriarchs and Prophets, 74.

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Resentment

“Do not suffer resentment to ripen into malice. Do not allow the wound to fester and break out in poisoned words, which taint the minds of those who hear. Do not allow bitter thoughts to continue to fill your mind and his [hers]. Go to your brother [sister], and in humility and sincerity talk with him [her] about the matter.

Whatever the character of the offense, this does not change the plan that God has made for the settlement of misunderstandings and personal injuries. Speaking alone and in the spirit of Christ to the one who is in fault will often remove the difficulty.

Go to the erring one, with a heart filled with Christ’s love and sympathy, and seek to adjust the matter. Reason with him [her] calmly and quietly. Let no angry words escape your lips. Speak in a way that will appeal to his [her] better judgment. Remember the words: “He which converteth the sinner from the error of his [her] way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.” James 5:20.”
Counsels for the Church, 256.



Sixteenth Decree:
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“Take to your brother the remedy that will cure the disease of disaffection. Do your part to help him. For the sake of the peace and unity of the church, feel it a privilege as well as a duty to do this. If he will hear you, you have gained him as a friend.

All heaven is interested in the interview between the one who has been injured and the one who is in error. As the erring one accepts the reproof offered in the love of Christ, and acknowledges his wrong, asking forgiveness from God and from his brother, the sunshine of heaven fills his heart.

The controversy is ended; friendship and confidence are restored. The oil of love removes the soreness caused by the wrong. The Spirit of God binds heart to heart, and there is music in heaven over the union brought about.”
Counsels for the Church, 256.

Sixteenth Decree:
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“Blessed are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of God.” Our Heavenly Father is a God of peace. When he created man he placed him in an abode of peace and security. All was unity and happiness in the garden of Eden.

Those who are partakers of the divine nature will love peace and contentment; they will cultivate the virtues that insure those results. They will seek to allay wrath, to quiet resentment and fault finding, and all the evil passions that foster quarrels and dissensions.”

Redemption: Or the Teachings of Christ, the Anointed One, 61.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,
longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,


Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with
the affections and lusts.

If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”
Galatians 5:22-25.

“There are today many as ignorant of the Holy Spirit’s work upon the heart as were those believers in Ephesus; yet no truth is more clearly taught in the word of God. Prophets and apostles have dwelt upon this theme. Christ Himself calls our attention to the growth of the vegetable world as an illustration of the agency of His Spirit in sustaining spiritual life.

The sap of the vine, ascending from the root, is diffused to the branches, sustaining growth and producing blossoms and fruit. So the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Saviour, pervades the soul, renews the motives and affections, and brings even the thoughts into obedience to the will of God, enabling the receiver to bear the precious fruit of holy deeds.”
The Acts of the Apostles, 284.

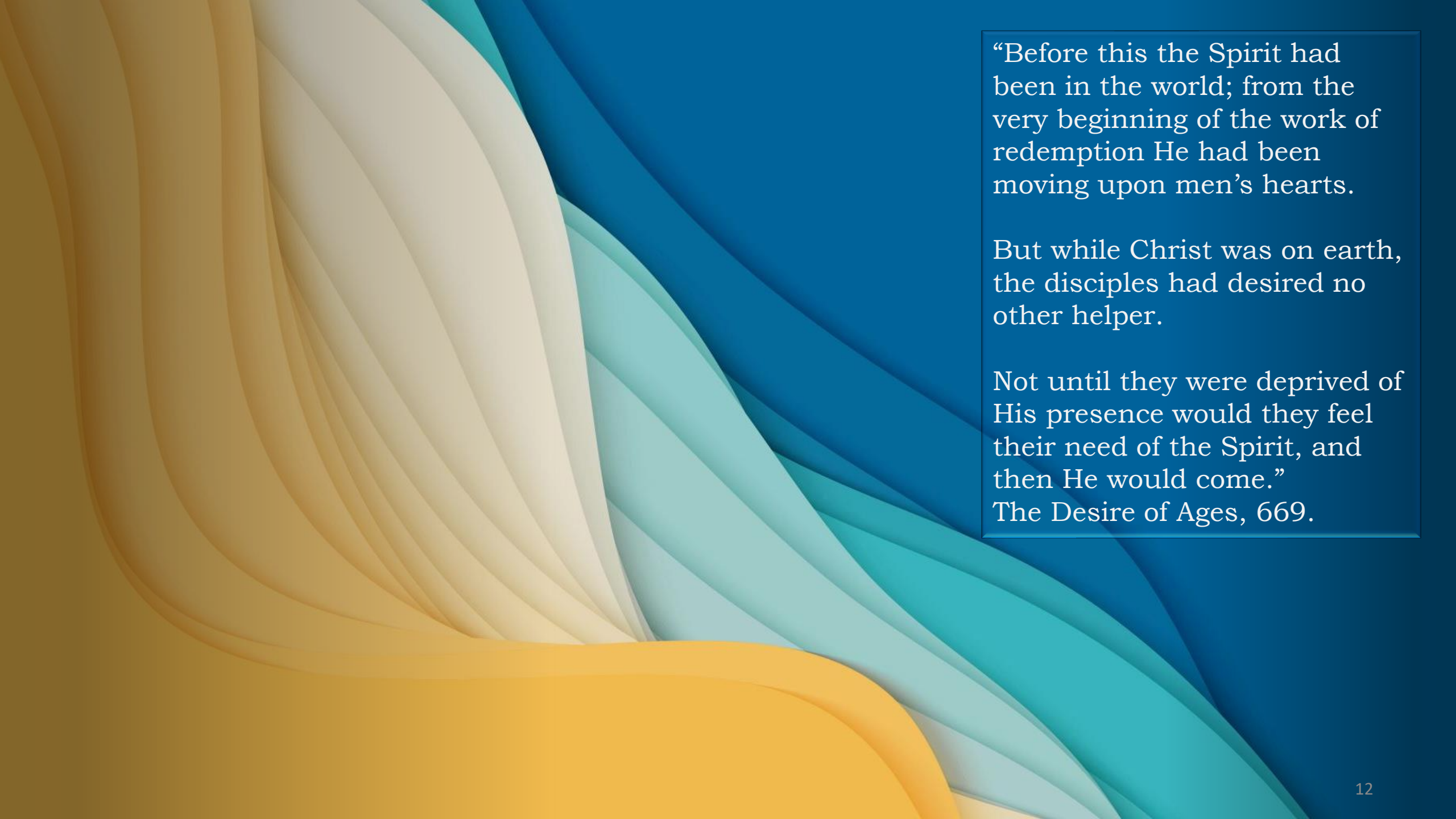


“The Author of this spiritual life is unseen, and the exact method by which that life is imparted and sustained, it is beyond the power of human philosophy to explain. Yet the operations of the Spirit are always in harmony with the written word. As in the natural, so in the spiritual world. The natural life is preserved moment by moment by divine power; yet it is not sustained by a direct miracle, but through the use of blessings placed within our reach.

So the spiritual life is sustained by the use of those means that Providence has supplied. If the follower of Christ would grow up “unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:13), he must eat of the bread of life and drink of the water of salvation. He must watch and pray and work, in all things giving heed to the instructions of God in His word.”
The Acts of the Apostles, 285.

“Before offering Himself as the sacrificial victim, Christ sought for the most essential and complete gift to bestow upon His followers, a gift that would bring within their reach the boundless resources of grace.

“I will pray the Father,” He said, “and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you orphans: I will come to you.”
John 14:16-18.” The Desire of Ages, 668.



“Before this the Spirit had been in the world; from the very beginning of the work of redemption He had been moving upon men’s hearts.

But while Christ was on earth, the disciples had desired no other helper.

Not until they were deprived of His presence would they feel their need of the Spirit, and then He would come.”
The Desire of Ages, 669.

“The Holy Spirit is Christ’s representative, but divested of the personality of humanity, and independent thereof. Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally.

Therefore it was for their interest that He should go to the Father, and send the Spirit to be His successor on earth. No one could then have any advantage because of his location or his personal contact with Christ. By the Spirit the Saviour would be accessible to all. In this sense He would be nearer to them than if He had not ascended on high.” *The Desire of Ages*, 669.

“At all times and in all places, in all sorrows and in all afflictions, when the outlook seems dark and the future perplexing, and we feel helpless and alone, the Comforter will be sent in answer to the prayer of faith.

Circumstances may separate us from every earthly friend; but no circumstance, no distance, can separate us from the heavenly Comforter. Wherever we are, wherever we may go, He is always at our right hand to support, sustain, uphold, and cheer.” *The Desire of Ages*, 669.

“I have yet many things to say unto you,” He continued, “but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you.” Jesus had opened before His disciples a vast tract of truth. But it was most difficult for them to keep His lessons distinct from the traditions and maxims of the scribes and Pharisees. They had been educated to accept the teaching of the rabbis as the voice of God, and it still held a power over their minds, and molded their sentiments. Earthly ideas, temporal things, still had a large place in their thoughts.

They did not understand the spiritual nature of Christ’s kingdom, though He had so often explained it to them. Their minds had become confused. They did not comprehend the value of the scriptures Christ presented. Many of His lessons seemed almost lost upon them. Jesus saw that they did not lay hold of the real meaning of His words. He compassionately promised that the Holy Spirit should recall these sayings to their minds. And He had left unsaid many things that could not be comprehended by the disciples. These also would be opened to them by the Spirit. The Spirit was to quicken their understanding, that they might have an appreciation of heavenly things. “When He, the Spirit of truth, is come,” said Jesus, “He will guide you into all truth.”
The Desire of Ages, 670.

“In describing to His disciples the office work of the Holy Spirit, Jesus sought to inspire them with the joy and hope that inspired His own heart. He rejoiced because of the abundant help He had provided for His church. The Holy Spirit was the highest of all gifts that He could solicit from His Father for the exaltation of His people. The Spirit was to be given as a regenerating agent, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail. The power of evil had been strengthening for centuries, and the submission of men to this satanic captivity was amazing.

Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power. It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church.” *The Desire of Ages*, 671.

“Christ has promised the gift of the Holy Spirit to His church, and the promise belongs to us as much as to the first disciples. But like every other promise, it is given on conditions. There are many who believe and profess to claim the Lord’s promise; they talk about Christ and about the Holy Spirit, yet receive no benefit. They do not surrender the soul to be guided and controlled by the divine agencies. We cannot use the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is to use us.

Through the Spirit God works in His people “to will and to do of His good pleasure.” Philippians 2:13. But many will not submit to this. They want to manage themselves. This is why they do not receive the heavenly gift. Only to those who wait humbly upon God, who watch for His guidance and grace, is the Spirit given. The power of God awaits their demand and reception. This promised blessing, claimed by faith, brings all other blessings in its train. It is given according to the riches of the grace of Christ, and He is ready to supply every soul according to the capacity to receive.” *The Desire of Ages*, 672.

“In His discourse to the disciples, Jesus made no mournful allusion to His own sufferings and death. His last legacy to them was a legacy of peace. He said, “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

Before leaving the upper chamber, the Saviour led His disciples in a song of praise. His voice was heard, not in the strains of some mournful lament, but in the joyful notes of the Passover hallel:

“O praise the Lord, all ye nations:
Praise Him, all ye people.
For His merciful kindness is great toward us:
And the truth of the Lord endureth forever.
Praise ye the Lord.” Psalm 117.”
The Desire of Ages, 672.