

***"Make me to go in the path of thy commandments;
for therein do I delight."***

Psalm 119:35

We are equally ignorant of *the path of God's commandments*, and impotent to *go in it*. We need therefore double assistance. Our mind must be enlightened; our hearts constrained; else our knowledge of this humbling *path* would make us shrink from it. But under the complete influence of Divine grace, when *understanding has been given* to discern the beauty of it, the soul's warmest desire is fixed upon it. Conscious helplessness looks upward--*Make me to go*: and he who said to the paralytic--"Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thy house," speaks the same word of quickening life and power to the soul "*giving heed*," "expecting to receive something of him." (Matt. ix. 6; with Acts, iii. 4, 5.) It is delightful to acknowledge of this work, that "all is of God"--that "it is he that worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (2 Cor. v. 18. Philip. ii. 13.) To him only can it belong. For since the natural inclination "is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. viii. 7), Almighty power must introduce a new and active bias--"Turn thou me, and I shall be turned." (Jer. xxxi. 18.)--"*Make me to go in the path of thy commandments.*"

But even when brought into *this path*, still we want accelerated motion to run with increasing alacrity. We want to take "the Lord God for our strength; and he shall make our feet like hinds' feet, and he shall *make us to walk* upon the high places." (Hab. iii. 19.) The *path*, indeed, is uninviting to the eye of sense. This distorted vision brings all its difficulties into full view; hiding all its counter-balancing enjoyments. Let us, however, exercise that "faith," which is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. xi. 1.) Let us exhibit our proper character, "walking by faith, and not by sight" (2 Cor. v. 7), and our discernment of unseen things will be more clear, and our enjoyment of them more permanent. The prayer will then be with increasing earnestness--"*Make me to go in the path of thy commandments.*"

But we must not be content with walking in this way; we must seek to *delight in it*." Delight is the marrow of religion. "God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. ix. 7), and accepts obedience, only when it is given, not when it is *forced*. He loves the service of that man, who considers it his highest privilege to render it, and whose heart rejoices in the way, "as a giant to run his race." (Ps. xix. 5; cxii. 1.) Fervent prayer and cheerful obedience mark the experience of the thriving Christian. As a true "child of Zion, he is joyful in his king" (Ps. cxlix. 2); he loves his service, and counts it "perfect freedom"--the rule of love, mercy, and grace.

But is the self-condemned penitent distressed by this description of a child of God? He cannot find the same marks in himself; and he too hastily concludes, that he does not belong to the heavenly family; not considering, that his very grief is caused by his love to, and "*delight in*" that way in which he is so hindered, and in which he daily prays--"*Make me to go.*" It was, probably, the same sense of weakness and inability, "*to go in the path of God's commandments*," which urged David's prayer; and if it urges yours, poor trembling

penitent--if it sends you to a throne of grace, you will, ere long, receive an answer of peace, and "go on your way rejoicing."

This *delight in the path* is not only following the "man after God's own heart;" but it is the image of David's Lord, and our forerunner in this path. He could testify to his Father--"I delight to do thy will, O my God" (Ps. xl. 8; with Heb. x. 7); and to his disciples--"I have meat to eat that ye know not of. My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." (John, iv. 32, 34.) And as a proof of the intenseness of his delight he could, to their great amazement, "go before them" (Mark, x. 32) to Jerusalem, unappalled by the "baptism" of blood which awaited him; yea, even "straitened" with the unquenchable ardour of his love, "until it was accomplished." (Luke, xii. 50.)