

Spiritual Thoughts from Barton W. Stone

Prayer

Prayer is the means by which we receive the grace of God, and enjoy sweet communion with the Father and the Son. Enjoying this, we have communion one with another, and grow up into Christ our living head in all things.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1826), 236-237

Prayer is the offering up of our desires to God for things agreeable to his will. The habitual performance of this duty produces that habitual sense of the presence and inspection of God, and of our entire dependence upon him, which is the foundation of a holy life.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1826), 235

We have good reasons for believing in the direct and immediate operation of God upon the mind in answer to the prayer of faith and desire.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1826), 235

Live and walk in the Spirit daily at home and abroad. In order to this be often found on your knees in prayer, and often exercise yourselves in meditation and self examination.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 241

So the elect of God humbly and earnestly cry to him day and night, and perseveringly pray to their heavenly Father for constant supplies. They always feel their poverty, and that all help must come from God alone; therefore in him alone they trust.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 205

The Holy Spirit

The denial of the direct operation of the Spirit cuts the very nerves of prayer. We have known some, who were once warmly engaged in the duty of prayer, love the very spirit and practice of it, by speculating and philosophizing on the subject. Such a doctrine stands opposed to the spirit and practice of Jesus, our pattern, to the doctrines and example of the apostles and primitive saints, and to the experience of every living Christian.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1826), 236

We have been too long engaged with defending ourselves, rather than the truth as it is in Jesus. Let us trust our little selves with the Lord; and rest not, till by faith in the promised Spirit and by incessant prayer we receive and be filled with it, like they were of old in the ancient order of things.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 271

We are getting to be very fond of co-operating meetings. Can we not appoint one for the express purpose of praying to the Lord to give us his Holy Spirit? Do you not believe that he will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him? I know you profess it. Such a meeting as this I should rejoice to attend before I die.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 272

Then they received the Holy Spirit of promise, whereby they were sealed unto for the day of redemption. They were prepared as blank paper, not to be inscribed with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God. So evident is the inscription, that it is known and read of all men. This is designed of God for the good of all men. For the manifestation of the Spirit is given to or for all men that all may be profited. This inscription written by the Spirit of God on the fleshly table of the heart is that strong bias in the Christian to holiness.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 366

Hearing the gospel will not save; obeying the gospel will not save, only as the means of leading us to the Savior, who alone does save us from our sins by his Spirit. He sheds abroad his love into our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us—that perfect love of God, which casteth out tormenting fear. It is the Spirit of love, of power, and of a sound mind.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1844), 261

An apostle with the miraculous gifts of the Spirit could effect more in one day than all the missionaries in the field can for scores of years. I have for many years indulged in this cheering hope, that such gifts may yet be restored.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 333

Take heed to yourself, and learn this truth, that without the Holy Spirit you can do nothing. Christ the great teacher of the world never preached the gospel until he was full of the Holy Ghost. His apostles were forbidden to leave Jerusalem and preach the gospel until they had received the Holy Spirit of promise—endued with power from on high.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 258

Holy Living in the Spirit

But by the reception of the Spirit, the Scriptures are experimentally known in their power and glory, and the person renewed in knowledge after the image of him who created him. They are no longer lead by the flesh but by the Spirit—they follow not after the flesh, but after the Spirit—they are justified and saved from sin, are new creatures, created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1844), 9

To hunger and thirst after righteousness, is the very breath of the new creature—the creature created anew in Christ Jesus. Nothing is so desirable to him—he therefore takes up the cross daily, and follows Jesus in order to be holy.

Barton W. Stone, *The Christian Messenger* (1843), 209

Let us live and walk in the Spirit every day, every hour, and then our labors of love will prove effectual, not only to make proselytes, but also Christians.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 37

Be an example in spirit. Always cherish a meek, gentle, and quiet spirit—a humble, loving, heavenly, and praying spirit. Such a spirit will almost silence the tongue of slander, or cause its poisoned darts to fall harmless at the feet.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 259

We need practical, heart searching truth, more than the speculative and philosophic doctrines of the age in which we live. We need a greater reformation of the heart, than of the head, in order to grow up into Christ Jesus, and be as he was, and still is—in order that we may be profitable to the unbelieving world, and at last obtain the eternal inheritance of the saints in light.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 180

Let us reform and be living, humble, holy, Christians; then will our aspect be glorious and exemplary. Others seeing our good works will glorify our Heavenly Father.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 242

Righteousness is both inward and outward conformity to the law of God. Inward righteousness is to love God with all the heart, mind, and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves. Outward righteousness is to keep his commandments, and to do to others as we would they should do unto us.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 289-290

It is feared that many who profess Christianity have not experimentally learned it. This is the cause of so much worldly mindedness, so much death and barrenness, so much division, and so little piety and brotherly love.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 17

To hunger and thirst after righteousness, is the very breath of the new creature—the creature created anew in Christ Jesus. Nothing is so desirable to him—he therefore takes up his cross daily, and follows Jesus to be holy.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 209

Grace is a perfection of God. It is the beginning and ending of our salvation. From it bursts forth the ten thousand gifts to man—temporal and spiritual—called the gifts of grace, so often found in the scriptures.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 296

Let parents remember and do their duty, bring up their children in the nurture, fear, and admonition of the Lord, by teaching them his ways; and by their admonitions and example, encourage them to do them. Were they to spend the Lord's Day in this exercise, and in worship, they would see the fruits of their labors.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1835), 18

He is merciful to all the unthankful the poor as well as the rich and grateful receiver. What can induce him thus to act? What but infinite benevolence? He does not hope nor expect to receive a compensation for these favors. If he did, we are too poor to give it. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father is merciful.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 50

But the children of God, all his children, are the children of peace. They have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ—they have the peace of God ruling in them, and this leads them to live in peace with all men, and to cause them to make peace among all as far as their influence extends, and to labor to put down wrath, strife and division in the world.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 232-233

The great secret of church government and organization has almost been overlooked. It is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in each believer, and member of the church. The fruits of this Spirit are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, fidelity, and temperance; against such there is no law. Such a church as is composed of such members, is easily governed by the law of Christ.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1844), 119

Spiritual Unity

Show how opposite to truth is sectarianism, and preach union, not of the sects as such, but of Christians, not a union founded on the wisdom or devices of humans, but that based upon the word of God, not only of the letter, but of the spirit of the word. Be careful to avoid all offensive language as much as possible. Let all your things be done with charity, humility, and meekness, but with boldness in the faith.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 35

Rich and the Poor

Be an example in charity, or love, not in word or in tongue, but in deed and truth, by administering of your goods to the poor and needy. The salvation of their souls is equal to the kings of the earth.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 259

We may boast of raptures, ecstasies, transports, and angelic feelings—but pure and undefiled religion consists in acts of mercy, as visiting the widow and fatherless, and relieving their distresses, and those of suffering humanity, and even of brute creation.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 231

We pray not for stores to be laid up for many years. This is the spirit of avarice and independence, and hateful to our God—our gracious, kind, and wise benefactor. His benevolence provides for all, from the tallest angel in glory to the lowest reptile on earth.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1844), 143

But have not we in a Christian land our idols too? How many worshippers of the god mammon are there among us! How many admirers of gold and silver eagles, or their paper representatives! With how much toil, and labor are they sought! With what greedy grasp are they held when obtained! With what warm affections are they viewed and gazed upon! What pleasurable thoughts do they inspire! To part with them without value received, is like rending the heart-strings of life. The love of money is the root of all evil.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 292

Rich men are never pre-eminent in religion. The necessary cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, that they may bring no fruit to perfection. The mania at this day for acquiring wealth has seized upon the religious community and almost is religion, pure and undefiled religion, banished from the earth. This mania has also invaded the ministers of the gospel.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1844), 329

We must return to the government, laws, and ordinances of our rightful king, the Lord Jesus, before we shall be ever gathered together and become worthy subjects of his kingdom.

Barton W. Stone, *The Christian Messenger* (1844), 227

How far above the standard of humble Christians have we risen! We must sink down to the standard of Christian perfection, humility, love, kindness, goodness, and meekness. We must be stripped of the love of the world, of the honor that cometh from man, of the love of money, and be filled with the Spirit of our Lord, else the door of heaven will be shut and barred against us forever. Solemn thought!

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 50

Where are the mourners in Zion? Where are the tears whose fountain is the heart, bursting from streams from the eyes of Christians for the desolations of the world? Where are the sacrifices made for their recovery? Alas! Where?

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 274

No Christian then considered ought he possessed his own, but the Lord's, and cheerfully resigned them to promote his cause on earth. The Christians then loved not the world, not the things of the world. They were crucified to the world, and the world to them.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1844), 144

Our Lord's example was certainly given for our imitation. He could have commanded the wealth of the universe; but he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. The foxes had holes, the birds of the air had nests, but the Son of man had not where to lay his head. His example was a veto against covetousness, and a rich ministry.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 369

The God of this world has blinded the eyes of professed Christians and is fast leading them deceived into their ranks into captivity—into bondage and death. Christians are virtually forsaking the government and laws of heaven, to prop up and sustain the governments and laws of men, whether ecclesiastical or political.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1844), 226-227

Beatific Vision

In his flesh and blood on the cross, we see a foundation laid for salvation, redemption, pardon, justification, sanctification, and glorification, to a fallen world. Here then is soul satisfying food, as boundless as our wants, and as lasting as eternity.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 113

All that love, mercy, grace, faithfulness, truth, power, benevolence, we see in Jesus, in his works, in his words, in his tears, in his sufferings, in his death and resurrection, is the true character of God manifested in the flesh—like a mirror, he presents the true image of the invisible God—the true form of God in all his divinity; for the fullness of it dwells in him; the full exhibition of the truth as it is in Jesus.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 47

In the flesh of Jesus, on the cross especially, we see the love of God preeminently displayed.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 113

Glory, honor, immortality, eternal life, and full and free salvation are by him offered to the world, on the condition that they believe in and obey the Savior. O glorious hope! And such is the hope, which the good and gracious God has set before the ruined world subjected by him to death.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1844), 157

Then we shall see him as he is, face to face, and not through the veil of mortal flesh. The word “to see” frequently means to enjoy. In this sense the pure in heart enjoy their God on earth, through faith, and are as happy as mortality can bear.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 232

The mysteries of God were revealed; the way of salvation was made known; the love of God to man was manifested; the fountain of grace burst forth from his lips; the world of glory—the heaven of eternal life and immortality was discovered; and the resurrection from the dead plainly revealed.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 110

Enough! Enough! What shall we render to the Lord for all these gracious benefits? Eternity, eternity will be too short for us to pay the debt of love and praise so justly due.

Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger* (1843), 114