

"Contemplative Verse" written & produced by the Richard Gray collection 650 515-1682 Copies available: *certified-environmental.com/Contemplative* 

## A profound message about the purpose of scripture.

The core idea, that all sacred writings aim to guide us back to a life aligned with the Spirit of God, steering us away from negative influences like the spirit of Satan, the temptations of the flesh, and the distractions of the world. The essence of this return is full reliance on and obedience to God's Spirit. The driving force behind this divine guidance is God's love and desire for our souls, aiming to restore His life-giving power within us. Essentially, when we achieve this spiritual realignment, scripture has fulfilled its ultimate purpose for us.

No matter how much you enjoy reading scripture, it won't truly transform you unless it leads you to rely completely on the Spirit of God. A human-based love or delight in scripture, no matter how holy it seems, is just the self-love of our flawed human nature. True, godly love can only come from God inspiring His life and nature within us. Just as we can only acknowledge Jesus as Lord through the Holy Spirit, we can only develop Christ-like qualities by being guided by the Holy Spirit.

This booklet conveys that all possible goodness and holiness have always been part of God and will always be inseparable from Him. This inherent goodness cannot exist independently of God.

Before God created anything, there was only one being who was good: God Himself. Even after creating many blessed, holy, and heavenly beings, the truth remains that there is still only one true source of goodness: God.

The goodness, holiness, divine temperaments, and heavenly affections seen in creatures are not their own creations or a result of their own powers. Instead, these qualities are simply manifestations of God's own goodness showing itself within creatures, to the extent that their created nature allows them to receive it. This relationship between God and His creatures is unchangeable. Goodness inherently belongs to God and is essential and inseparable from Him, just like His unity.

In summary, all goodness and virtue in the world are reflections of God's goodness and are not inherent to the creatures themselves. This divine goodness can only be present in beings as a manifestation of God's own nature.

Every good, great, and happy quality in creatures is actually a reflection of God's own greatness and blessedness. God's qualities manifest in different ways depending on the creature's capacity to receive them. True religion involves acknowledging that everything good in us comes from God and continually depending on Him. This applies to all intelligent beings, whether in heaven or on earth. The relationship between God and His creatures is based on total dependence on God for every kind of goodness and happiness.

Even the highest angels have nothing of their own to offer God; all their light, love, and purity come from Him. If they saw any goodness as their own, they would lose their place in heaven, just like Lucifer did. Angels are like flames of pure love, always connected to God, seeing and experiencing only His wisdom, power, glory, majesty, love, and goodness. They sing praises to God, filled with delight, because they recognize that it is God's Spirit within them rejoicing. Their worship is constant because they continuously acknowledge God's presence in everything.

True religion creates a deep connection between the spirit of a person and the Spirit of God, making them one in life, light, and love. God's Spirit plants the seed of this divine union in every soul, and religion helps this seed grow and flourish. Just like an animal needs the breath of this world to live, divine faith, hope, love, and devotion to God are like the spiritual breath that connects us with God. Just as an animal can only breathe because it has the breath of this world within it, no one can begin to have faith, love, and desire for God without God's Spirit first planting these divine feelings in them. And just like a plant grows by the same power that first created its seed, our faith, hope, and love for God can only grow by the power of God that first gave us these feelings. Therefore, divine inspiration and true religion are always connected.

Without divine inspiration, no religious acts or feelings can be truly godly. Creatures can only offer to God what they have first received from Him. To offer divine feelings and aspirations to God, a creature must have God's divine nature within it. Just like an object can only reflect light if it has received it, or a creature can only have earthly or diabolical feelings if it has an earthly or diabolical nature, a creature can only have divine feelings if it has the divine nature within it.

In summary, for any creature to have godly qualities and feelings, it must first have the divine nature of God living and working in it.

A person's love for God can only connect them to Him if it's inspired by the same divine Spirit of love that God has always had for Himself, even before creation. Newly created beings can't start loving God on their own; they can only love Him if the Holy Spirit's eternal love is within them. This divine love is the only kind of love that can draw creatures to God. Without it, they can't truly cling to Him, desire what He desires, or worship His divine nature. Therefore, the ongoing inspiration or work of the Holy Spirit is the only way we can continually love God. St. John says, "He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God," meaning that true love for God must come from the Holy Spirit. Any other love that doesn't originate from God's Spirit isn't true divine love.

The continuous inspiration of the Holy Spirit is essential for beginning and sustaining a divine life in humans. Just like natural or evil lives depend on their sources, a divine life in humans depends on God's Spirit. Resisting, quenching, or grieving the Spirit causes evil to flourish and leaves people vulnerable to sin. Only by obeying, trusting, and praying for the Spirit's inspiration can humans and churches avoid sin and idolatry. Without the Spirit guiding and empowering them, their actions remain earthly and sinful.

The true and perfect gospel state is fully revealed when the Holy Spirit manages everything. Even though the apostles learned from Jesus and performed miracles, they were not fully equipped to understand or teach the mysteries of God's kingdom until they received the Holy Spirit. After Jesus' resurrection, he continued teaching them for forty days but they still needed the Holy Spirit to fully comprehend and witness the truth. Jesus explained that it was necessary for him to leave so the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, could come and guide them into all truth. The Spirit's arrival allowed the disciples to truly understand and proclaim Jesus' teachings and establish his kingdom.

The apostles, even though they had witnessed everything about Christ's life, couldn't fully understand or testify about these events just based on their human understanding. They needed to be "baptized with fire" and "born again of the Spirit" because the truths and mysteries of Christ are actually realized through the work of God's Spirit within our souls. To truly know the mysteries of Christ's redemption, one must experience the redeeming work of God within themselves. No matter how educated a person is, they can't truly understand the gospel's mysteries until these truths are experienced and felt in their own soul. Until then, they can only talk about these mysteries like any other story they've heard.

A religion focused on self-interest, worldly success, and glory, while claiming to follow the gospel, is more harmful than the hypocrisy of the Jewish Pharisees. This is because it professes to deny self and follow Christ, but actually serves selfish desires, Satan, and the world. Writers who argue against continuous divine inspiration lead people away from the true essence of the gospel, promoting a self-centered religion that is more blameworthy than what Christ condemned. Any religious practice—praying, preaching, or other duties—done without the Holy Spirit's guidance is just self-serving and not truly spiritual. Only what is born of the Spirit is genuinely spiritual.

The sin against the Holy Ghost is so severe not because the Holy Ghost is more important, but because the Father and the Son come through the Spirit in their greatest power of redeeming love. Many misunderstand the nature of this sin, but it lies in resisting the last and highest dispensation of God for our full redemption.

Sinning against Christ was more unpardonable than sinning against the Father under the Law, and likewise, sinning against the Holy Ghost is more unpardonable than sinning against the Father or the Son. This is because the prior dispensations prepared for the full ministration of the Spirit. Rejecting the Spirit's work means resisting all that the Holy Trinity can do to restore and revive the soul, making it the unpardonable sin, as there is no higher power to remove it. Sins are pardonable because there is a remedy available, but the unpardonable sin rejects the final remedy for its removal.

Grieving, quenching, or resisting the Holy Spirit is the gravest sin because it hinders the work of redemption and separates us from union with God. These sins are possible because the Holy Spirit is always present within us, willing and working for our good.

- **Grieving the Spirit:** We can only grieve the Spirit if we disobey His will within us.
- **Quenching the Spirit:** We can only quench the Spirit if He is a holy fire of life within us.
- **Resisting the Spirit:** We can only resist the Spirit if He is working within us.

A spirit outside of us cannot be the Spirit of God, just as a man cannot stop a storm with his indignation.

Critics of continuous divine inspiration lead people into a habitual state of sinning against the Holy Ghost. To avoid this sin, we must continually reverence the Holy Spirit's presence within us and attend to His will, work, and manifestations.

Turning people away from dependence on the Holy Spirit is turning them away from true knowledge of God. Real knowledge of God comes from His Spirit manifesting as life, light, love, and goodness within us. This knowledge is eternal life, as Christ said no one knows the Father but the Son and those to whom the Son reveals Him.

Only those led by the Spirit of God belong to Him, and we are lost without the Spirit of Christ living in us. Therefore, we must depend on the continual guidance and teaching of the Holy Spirit within us.

The main purpose of scripture is to lead us to an essential God within us, where we can truly experience the divine. All learning and study are in vain if they do not achieve this. Within each person is the potential for both good and evil:

- **God within us:** Divine life, light, and love.
- **Satan within us:** Life of self, earthly wisdom, falseness, wrath, pride, and vanity.

There is no middle ground between these two forces. If we are not under the power of one, we are under the power of the other. Humans were created to be under the power of divine life, but turning away from this leads to the power of self, Satan, and worldly wisdom.

When Peter, out of human love, advised Christ to avoid suffering, Christ rejected him, saying, "Get thee behind me, Satan," because Peter's advice did not align with God's will but with human concerns. This shows that anything not from the Holy Spirit, no matter how good it appears, is actually the power of Satan within us.

Paul said, "By the grace of God I am what I am," acknowledging that God's grace is responsible for his identity and achievements. Similarly, those who rely on their own rational learning and desires for worldly recognition and rewards, instead of God's Spirit, can say, "I am what I am" because they turn away from divine inspiration.

Nothing prevents Christians from sharing St. Paul's perspective, who glorified only in the cross of Christ and depended on Christ for strength. The main obstacle is disregarding the presence of Christ within and choosing a self-centered religion based on human learning and worldly success.

The true power for Christians to overcome self, the devil, and the world lies in being led by the Spirit of God and Christ. Christians who seek anything else will create a Christendom that God views negatively, likening it to a spiritual Babylon or Sodom. Historical churches fell because they relied on worldly power and wisdom instead of God's Spirit.

True reformation and revival come from the Spirit of God, which converted sinners and established the holy apostolic church. Churches must die to their own will and wisdom and seek reform from the Spirit of God to restore true faith and holiness.

Jesus promises to be with us always. While this isn't meant outwardly, some learned individuals deny the inner presence of Christ, equating it with extreme enthusiasm or beliefs. For Christians to find comfort in Jesus' promise, they need to believe that Christ is within them, like a vine is connected to its branches.

Jesus says, "Without me, you can do nothing," and also promises that those who love Him will have both the Father and the Son dwelling within them. This means that all love for Christ comes from His presence within us. Therefore, the work of redemption in our souls is the continual and direct operation of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, restoring the divine life we lost through sin.

After His ascension, Christ says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." This door symbolizes the heart, where Christ is always present. If anyone hears His voice (meaning the inner voice of Christ) and opens the door (accepts Christ within), they will experience a spiritual connection and communion with Him. This inner communion brings the joy and blessing of the divine life, which was lost due to the fall.

This spiritual communion is more profound than the physical act of the Last Supper, which even Judas participated in. The Last Supper was an outward sign, while the true spiritual nourishment is the inward presence of the glorified Christ within the soul, quickening and renewing us. This profound spiritual experience goes beyond any external religious rituals.

Christ's continual knocking at the door of our hearts symbolizes the ongoing immediate divine inspiration within us. This divine presence is always with us, but it requires us to open our hearts, be attentive, and humbly wait for it to be truly felt and experienced.

Believing in, listening to, and obeying Christ's inner voice requires faith in the constant inspiration of the Spirit of Christ within us. Those who mock or dismiss this inner light and rely on their own strength or worldly wisdom do more harm to their own souls and others.

Everyone should take this to heart. The things of this world will end, and only those who trust in the Spirit and power of God within their hearts will be prepared for eternity. God must be our everything here on earth, or we cannot be His in the afterlife

Time serves eternity, and just as a person focused solely on worldly riches faces eternal poverty, so too does one focused only on human learning without divine guidance. True divine learning comes only from the Holy Spirit. Relying solely on human knowledge for spiritual growth will leave us spiritually bankrupt, like the rich man in the gospel who built barns for his wealth but lost his soul.

The apostle advises us to continually pay attention to the Holy Spirit's work within us, as it is dangerous to refuse or resist the divine guidance that comes from heaven. This speaking from heaven is not an outward voice but an inner guidance that we must either obey or refuse.

James tells us to resist the devil, which means turning away from the evil nature and spirit within us. Therefore, those who discourage us from depending on the Holy Spirit's continual inspiration are effectively leading us to resist God.

In summary, true spiritual growth and knowledge come from the continual inner guidance of the Holy Spirit. Ignoring or resisting this guidance leads to spiritual poverty and separation from God.

God represents spiritual good, and the devil represents spiritual evil. We can resist or obey these spiritual forces based on their operations within us. James teaches that resisting the devil makes him flee, meaning he loses his power over us. To keep God close and His work active in us, we must draw near to God, meaning we should not resist Him but let His will work fully within us. This allows God to manifest His presence and make us partakers of the divine nature.

The passage criticizes those who mock the necessity of continuous divine inspiration and accuse believers of enthusiasm. It points out the irony that the established church's liturgy itself teaches and requires belief in the continual inspiration of the Spirit as essential for having good thoughts and desires.

In summary, true spiritual growth involves resisting evil, obeying God's will, and relying on the continual guidance of the Holy Spirit within us. The criticism of continuous divine inspiration is misguided, as even the established church acknowledges its importance.

The prayer, "O God, forasmuch as without thee we are not able to please thee, mercifully grant that thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts," strongly emphasizes the necessity of continual divine inspiration. It expresses that without God's Spirit continually guiding and ruling our hearts, we cannot please God or have a meaningful connection with Him.

The inspiration needed is not limited to prophets and apostles but is required for everyone, in all aspects of life. The prayer underscores that without this constant divine guidance, nothing we do can be truly pleasing to God or unite us with Him.

### A soldier in a foreign land

I stand, A soldier in a foreign land. My prayer, a report of the day, to my General, I humbly say: "Today I fought with all my might, In the burning sun, through darkest night.

These were the battles, fierce and grand, these were the trials I did withstand. Tomorrow's plan, I lay before, with courage, I will fight once more.

Obstacles may block my way, but steadfast, I will not sway. My God and I, we ride as one, through pouring rain, beneath the sun.

Pale and starving, yet unbowed, In His presence, I am proud. 'Leader!' I cry, with voice so clear, He turns to me, His anguish near.

Our love is rough, yet deeply true, in this tavern of life, we renew. We share the wine, the bread, the strife, In this lowly, humble life.

Together, we will ride and fight, In the darkness, in the light." In this bond, so fierce and strong, I find my place, where I belong.

A soldier's heart, a prayer's embrace, In my General's loving grace.

With every battle, every tear, In His presence, I know no fear. His guiding hand, my constant guide, in faith and love, I will abide.

Through valleys deep, and mountains high, together we, my Lord and I, will face the trials, the struggles dire, fueled by His love, a holy fire.

In victory sweet, in defeats hard, God's grace remains, my soul's guard. No matter where my path may lead, in His embrace, my heart is freed.

In this journey, side by side, with my General, I confide. In endless love, we both unite, A soldier's heart, in divine light.

#### Kingdom of Heaven

Let's assume that the Kingdom of Heaven means the place where you go when you die – if you've been good. But the problem with this interpretation is that Jesus himself specifically contradicts it when he says, 'the Kingdom of God is *within you'* ... and 'at hand' ...

Your Kingdom of Heaven is really a metaphor for a *state of consciousness*; it is not a place you go to, but a place you *come from*. It is a whole new way of looking at the world, a transformed awareness that literally turns this world into a different place ... The hallmark of this awareness is that it sees no separation – not between God and humans, not between humans and other humans ... a complete, mutual indwelling: I am in God, God is in you, you are in God, we are in each other. ... There is no separation between humans and God because of this mutual inter-abiding which expresses the indivisible reality of Divine Love."

#### Kingdom of Heaven (poem)

The Kingdom of Heaven, not a distant land, but a state of heart, , a soul's command, a new way to see, with eyes reborn, in uni tive consciousness, true love is sworn.

No separation, no divide, God within us, and we inside, mutual indwelling, divine embrace, in every heart, we find His grace.

Nondual awareness, a sacred view, In God, in each other, love shines through, indivisible, eternal, divine, In this unity, our spiri ts align.

The world transformed, through eyes of love, Heaven on Earth, from God above, in every breath, in every face, we touch the D ivine, we find our place.

"Contemplative Verse" written & produced by the Richard Gray collection 650 515-1682 Copies available: *certified-environmental.com/Contemplative* 

# Finding God