

Short Description
of the
Effective Grace of God
in the
Enlightened, Protestant Preacher,
Jacob Albright

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Jacob Albright was born the first of May, in the year of our Lord, 1759, in Douglas Township, Montgomery County, in the State of Pennsylvania. In his childhood his parents afforded him the enjoyment of the benefit of holy baptism and subsequently saw that he was given instruction in reading and writing the German language as well as also the basic doctrines of Christianity according to the Evangelical Lutheran doctrine, and he was received and accepted as a member of such a congregation in that township. He entered the state of matrimony in the year 1785 and soon after this he took up his residence in Earl Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

This is all that is known to the author concerning the life of this remarkable man up to the thirty-second year of his age, since he has not produced and left us anything written about his life, and, concerning his temporal affairs, has never told enough to make it possible to construct a connected account of them. This is nevertheless of no great consequence to the object of this essay, since the author will confine himself exclusively to the task of briefly imparting to the public the story concerning the heart and the ministerial services of his immortal friend. He hopes by this means to provide a pleasurable service to all those who with him were witnesses to the exemplary piety and the activity and tirelessness with which this godly man dedicated himself to service of the Lord. And he would feel himself more than repaid for this agreeable endeavor if their attractive example should awaken some sort of zealous emulation.

The condition of Jacob Albright's soul before the thirty-second year of his life appears not to have been the best; at least he always thought of it with remorse and humiliation, and often expressed great sadness about it to his friends. However we will allow him to tell it himself just as he expressed himself on several occasions to various persons in words approximately as follows:

I wandered carelessly on the path of life, was joyful with those who were joyful and thought little of the purpose of human existence. I did not heed the duties of a human being, much less of a Christian. I lived as if this brief time would last forever and committed many sins for which God has promised a severe punishment.

In such a condition of heart the majority of people seem to be happy, perhaps many also judged so of me, because I seemed content, and serenity smiled upon my brow. But for all that, I was not entirely happy, nor do I believe that any person in such a condition can be entirely happy. After the gratification of all the joys the world can offer there still remains a void, an uneasiness in the heart, which arouses a painful feeling—this is the obscure voice of conscience. This voice embitters all forbidden pleasures and enjoyments. True joy, true happiness comes only with the consciousness

of duties fulfilled (Matt. 5:6).¹ Oh! I often heard the whispering of this obscure voice and also it sometimes spoke clearly and loudly and seemed a self-accusation when I allowed myself to be guilty of an evil deed—when I had not done something good that lay in my path or when I had been disobedient to the prescriptions of virtue—to the commandments of my Creator. In the beginning I little heeded this exhorter, the conscience, but nevertheless, since I always heeded it somewhat, it thus continually and more strongly repeated its exhortation; and the more I heeded it, the more loudly it called in my soul until I finally began to comprehend my sinful condition and halfway decided to better myself. But this decision still remained merely a plan and did not attain fulfillment, because my flesh forcefully set itself against it (Gal. 5:17; Rom. 8:7-8). Thus would it apparently have proceeded for a long time, perhaps forever, if God’s grace had still not made me aware of several circumstances the observation of which I had previously altogether neglected. As a matter of fact, I fell at times into great danger to body and life, and my rescue was often so sudden and marvelous that it set me in a state of astonishment. I then often felt myself involuntarily impelled to thankfulness toward the beneficent providence so that I felt my bosom contract, and the heart longed to pour itself out with power in a thankful prayer. But as often as I raised my eyes to heaven, I heard the voice of conscience, “You are unworthy of grace, the only sacrifices which please God are pure hearts” (Micah 6:8). Oh! That humbled me deeply. God also aided me in yet another way. In my early youth I had received instruction in the Christian religion. At that time I was not yet able fully to grasp the great truths thereof, nor to have a vivid experience of them. Nevertheless I retained a feeling of reverence toward God from those times, which, to be sure, was actually only obscure, but still it was sufficiently extensive that every place where God was worshipped was revered by me without regard to the manner of such worship. No thought of scoffing or scorn of those persons who occupied themselves with worship ever entered my soul, whether they belonged to a sect or to a confession. Out of this reverence arose my practice of frequently attending meetings for worship and attentively heeding the exhortations of the preachers. Through mutual effect of those inner feelings and the voice of the Gospel, I finally recognized thoroughly what fulfilling one’s duties as a person and as a Christian involves so that one might stand justified before Him who knows the most intimate thoughts of the human heart and from whom no facet thereof is hidden. It was natural that the contrast between my behavior and those duties struck me, and just as naturally did I comprehend that I was far removed from being able to say: “I am an unworthy servant, I have done my duty” (Luke 17; 10). Rather, I was a wanton sinner, an enemy and blasphemer of a *righteous* God (I Cor. 15:9), of a *just* Judge who not only rewards every duty performed, but also punishes severely every sinful deed, alas, even every sinful thought. I was horrified with myself. God’s judgments stood before my imagination. My spirit felt deep depression which no external stimulation of the senses could dispel. The feeling of unworthiness increased day by day until at last in my thirty-second year, on a particular day in the month of July, it had risen to such a state that it bordered on despair. I felt myself so small, and my

¹ The biblical references have been added by the editor and translator in consultation with Professor Irvin W. Batdorf of United Theological Seminary.

sins so great that I could not comprehend how the righteous Judge who judges on the basis of merit would not be forced to dash me into the abyss of damnation. My heart's anxiety increased with every moment, so that I could have cried out, "Ye mountains fall upon me and ye hills cover me" (Rev. 6:15-17). I thought, Oh if only I had my life to live again and had it to do over again, how entirely differently would I organize my behavior! I recognized not only my sins and felt their magnitude, but from this recognition followed a lively remorse, and immediately therefrom the resolution in future to desist from all sin and to so order my life that I could at least put my conscience at rest, even if I at the same time had no hope for the forgiveness of the offenses against my Creator and Redeemer of which I had been guilty. Just as my heart experienced this lively feeling of remorse, and this firm resolution for betterment emerged in my soul, so I also felt the need of prayer in order to pour out my heart before the Lord. I felt the power to pray deeply, heartily and with submission. I fell upon my knees; bitter tears of remorse flowed down my cheeks and a long, warm and fervent prayer for grace and pardon for my sins rose to the throne of the Most High. This incessant and warm supplication at last brought me nearer and nearer to my enlightenment. I felt the power to consecrate myself to the good and surrender my will entirely to God's will. I heard the voice of comfort in my inner self (Rom. 7: 22), for I learned to comprehend and became convinced that since God does not desire the destruction of the sinner (I Tim. 1:15)—but that he be converted and live—He would regard my honest remorse, repentance and contrition of my heart with gracious eyes; and that the merit of my Redeemer, of His bitter suffering and death, would fulfill the task.

I now constantly continued steadfastly and fervently to entreat the grace of God, to plead for the assistance of His Spirit, that He give me the power to battle against sin and at last to gain the victory (Rom. 6:8). I watched scrupulously over every one of my actions, over each thought, over every impression made upon my heart by any sort of outward matter. Through this incessant striving, I finally managed to release myself entirely from the way of the flesh and to look only to that which is above (Eph. 2:1-6). Into the place of all sensuality there stepped a holy love toward God, toward His Word and toward all true children of God. Little by little all the dread and anxiety of my heart disappeared; comfort and blessed peace in God inspired my breast. God gave witness to my spirit that I had become a child of God (Rom. 8:16; Gal. 4:6). One glad sensation after another and such blessed joy coursed through my innermost self as no human pen can describe nor the mouth of a mortal express. In contrast to this, all the fullness of earthly joys, which I had heretofore enjoyed, even unto the highest order of the same, were merely wretchedness and miserable deception (Phil. 3:7).

Now my prayer was no longer a mere supplication. Praise and hearty thanks, accompanied by tears of joy, were also brought as sacrifice to the Giver of all that is good.

No longer was the practice of good a burdensome business to me. I was now inclined to hate sin and every evil. It was my joy to serve God and I had a sense of blessedness when I could converse with my God in prayer.

Since I had now attained the grace of justification (Rom. 5:1-6), I soon perceived that the easiest and surest way to progress in clearing the path

for salvation of one's soul and to be always ready to fight a good fight (II Tim. 4:7) would be to take one's part in the cross (Gal. 6:14) in community with other pious Christians, to pray and to watch with and for each other, and to edify one another through an instructive example in the service of God (I Cor. 12-14).

There was at that time no class of Christian confessors known to me that seemed to me more lively and active in the good and whose excellent discipline and order pleased me better than the Methodists. Therefore I adhered especially to them and received among them occasion to obtain great blessing and profit for my soul. At that time much about their practices still remained obscure to me because they were then conducted in the English language, and I was not all that well versed in that. So I applied myself diligently to learning it, and soon progressed far enough that I could acquaint myself with the articles of their faith-teaching and their disciplinary order. I was greatly pleased with these. I scrupulously governed myself in accordance with their prescriptions and arranged my service of God accordingly. I sought to persevere in restraint and practiced much in fasting and prayer (I Cor. 7:5), which I always found the best means in times of trial. I then had heavy and hard temptations and inner trials, and since I did not know whether I could or dared accept the counsel of others, I held constantly and persistently to prayer, which always helped me to overcome. Yet I must confess that often pious and true servants of God, through their well-intended admonition and faithful counsel, which were founded in grace and experience, were likewise a support for me to lean on.

In this way I became ever more practiced in the knowledge of God. Through battle in testings and victory, which the grace of the Lord granted me, my faith and commitment to goodness grew more steadfast. And through steadfast and fervent prayer I constantly gained a greater trust. Through all this my joy in God grew from day to day and I obtained power to pray forcefully in the public meetings, this to my own edification and that of others. In this I continually gained more and more strength, and upon the request of my fellow Christians I now and then delivered an exhortation, which did not remain fruitless.

By nature I had no gift for speaking at all and must freely confess that I was less suited for it than anyone else who might have stood up. But when I felt myself transported by the Spirit of God, when prayer had brought my soul closer to my Redeemer, when I was on fire with abhorrence toward sin, when the righteousness of a severely testing Judge stood before my eyes and I at the same time also felt His overwhelming love toward His fallen creatures, then I was grasped by an inspiration that unlatched my mouth so that eloquence streamed from my lips and God's grace worked through my words to the conversion of fallen and unconverted Christians and to the edification of the faithful (I Cor. 14:26).

Thus I spent some years in the state of grace. I served the Lord with gladness and felt His blessing in the attainment of the knowledge of His Being; a fervent inward love dwelt in my breast toward my Creator, toward the true children of God and toward my fellow humans in general. Through this love, which poured the peace of God into my soul (Rom. 5:1), it then also came about that I saw in what great ruin true Christianity was with the German nation in America. This affected me very deeply. I recognized in all persons, even in the fallen, the creative hand of the

Almighty. I saw in them my brethren, and my love wished them to be just as happy as myself. In this mood I often flung myself upon my knees and pled with hot tears that the Lord might yet lead all my German brethren on the way of knowledge and bring them to the knowledge of truth (I Tim. 2:4), that He would present them good examples and give them true teachers who proclaim the Gospel in its power (Rom. 1:16-17; I Thess. 1:5) among them, in order to awaken the dead and drowsy Christians among them out of their sleep of sin (I Thess. 5:5-7) and to bring them once more to the true life in godliness, wherewith they also may become partakers in the blessed peace with God and of the communion of the saints.

I pled thus daily and persisted in prayer for the well-being of my brethren. Whilst I thus conversed with God, it then seemed suddenly to become bright in my soul. Likewise I heard the voice of my heart ask me, “Did it happen by accident that the miserable condition of your erring brethren has entered your heart with such force? Was it chance that your heart and just *your* heart so greatly overflowed with sympathy for the well-being of your brethren? Is not rather here made visible His hand whose wisdom directs the destiny of individual persons as well as that of nations? What if His infinite love, which wishes to lead each soul into Abraham’s bosom (Luke 16:22) has chosen you to lead your brethren on the way of knowledge and to prepare them that they may be enabled to partake in God’s mercy?”

In my soul it became brighter and brighter. I felt a holy trust in the granting of my prayer. I heard, as though it were the command of God, “Go out, work in My vineyard (Matt. 20:2), proclaim the Gospel in its original purity to My children, with vigor and power, and trust My fatherly love that all those who hear it and believe shall participate in My grace.”

Yet as clear as all of this was to me, my humanity nevertheless still interjected some doubts against it. Indeed I did not fancy that this commission contradicted God’s nature and His Word. But, I thought, “I am an entirely uneducated and incapable person. How many men of greater gifts and learning there are who would be better instruments for this than I, and who have more authority and possess more impressiveness.” With such reflections my courage often failed me, and then I most fervently prayed to God that He might after all give this commission to another who would be more able and more worthy of it than I, the incompetent one.

To such objections, however, the voice of my conscience persistently answered me, that on my part I must merely trustfully obey without scrupling; God’s grace would do the rest. It equips those whom He has selected as the instruments of His all-encompassing love and power from on high (Acts 1:8) and lends blessing and prosperity to their undertakings. Then my conscience also painted for me a smiling picture of the joys and reward, which awaited me if I would obey the call of God, and showed me on the other hand the injuries and ruin which would come to pass for me if I should refuse to hear His voice and resign myself to the will of the Lord. In the distance I saw the crown glittering that awaited me as my reward (I Pet. 5:4; I Tim. 4:8) if I would—as I was often clearly convinced that I should—follow the call of the Lord, proclaim His Kingdom through the Gospel, and build His Church upon

Jesus Christ, the Rock and Cornerstone (Mark 12:10; Acts 4:11; I Pet. 2:7) of all the faithful in communal unification according to the commandment of Christ and His Apostles.

Thus went the ebb and flood in my soul. Despite every conviction of a divine calling, my flesh nevertheless still raised for me some objection, so that after all I was often undecided about following. But then I felt deeply, deeply humbled. Immense burdens seemed to rest upon my shoulders. I felt neither satisfaction by day, nor rest by night. A depression took possession of my spirits, which nothing could relieve. My inner peace fled and I could obtain no comfort from the thought that it would be nearly impossible for me to travel through the country and preach alone, without authority, without support, without the helpful association of others, without any kind of connection. All the outward dangers and hardships that would threaten me under such circumstances graphically presented themselves before my imagination. And regardless of the fact that I had the promises of God on my side, I trembled in the hour of temptation, when I considered my incompetence and reflected that I would then have to stand entirely alone, without having one supporter to whom I could cling! For I was convinced that God was testing and proving me through temptations (Heb. 12:5-11).

But with such doubts, my conviction—brought about by God's grace—once more determined that God is powerful in the weak (II Cor. 9), that He does not load more on anyone than he could carry (I Cor. 10:13), that to those to whom He lends courage to do battle, He also gives the capacity to overcome and to win, if only they have His honor and the glory of His name before their eyes and as their object; that He alone is mighty and every power lies in His hands, and with them He equips those who act in accordance to His good pleasure (Eph. 6:10-20). All this I have then in due time often and abundantly discovered, after having submitted myself to His will.

I became ever more and more, finally entirely firmly convinced. Through doubt, which was raised by my sensuality and was once more overcome by the inner call of grace, I became convinced that God has called me to the great work of proclaiming His Word and Gospel to my erring brethren. Everything that had at the beginning opposed itself to this undertaking—all the objections that the fear of men, mistrust of my own powers, fear about the failure of my work and anxiety concerning my steadfastness had introduced—had become trifles to the eyes of my soul.

And on the other hand, God—through the influx of ardent love for my brethren, through trust in His mighty protection and help, through reliance upon His blessing and through a spiritual glimpse into the future of the high reward which awaited me for faithfully rendered service (II Tim. 4:6-8)—had laid so many inducements on my heart that I no longer refused but resolved to obey the calling of His voice. But I continually postponed the execution of this resolution from one time to another. I always believed that I saw an obstacle, and when this was removed from the path, then I convinced myself of the existence of another.

For this vacillation the Lord finally punished me with a severe illness. A ceaseless rending smart convulsed every one of my nerves; an almost unbearable pain coursed through my members; my form so wasted away that, so to say, nothing remained of me but a shadow. An indescribable weakness so lamed every

muscle that I could no longer do any kind of business, and what was for me still more horrible than every bodily terror—sometimes the terrifying feeling seized my heart as if I were entirely abandoned by God. What I suffered in soul and body during this illness is hardly to be described. I at times screamed so, in the feeling of dereliction, that it was frightful, and everyone who saw and heard me turned away from me with horror and shock.

In this chastisement I now saw more than ever the finger of God (Luke 11:20), and learned with the uttermost conviction that a person can do no better thing than to surrender entirely to the will of his Creator and to obediently follow His calling, neither looking forward nor backward. Even as miserable as my condition was, the Lord still had such unmerited compassion for me that He maintained me in the state of grace. I therefore constantly persisted in prayer, humbled myself before His throne (Rev. 4 and 5), pled with hot tears for pardon and promised most solemnly, and fixed the firm resolve that if I should become well once more, I would follow His call—and *that* at once—by preaching throughout the country, proclaiming His Gospel everywhere. He might send me wherever it pleased Him if only He would be with me (Matt. 28:18-20).

As soon as this firm decision was established in my heart, it was as if a heavy burden rolled from my soul. I felt an utter relief and peace in my breast once more restored with my own self. Just as the repose of my soul was restored, so also the pain of my body soon disappeared. My powers soon returned, new life permeated my members, and in a short time I was entirely restored.

As soon as this had taken place I immediately readied myself to travel and prepared myself in such a way as I regarded appropriate. Qualification to proclaim the Gospel I sought only from the Lord, in incessant prayer and in searching in His revealed Word. I also sought to consecrate my body entirely to the service of the Lord, and so to prepare it that no passion, desire, nor love of comfort might limit or hinder my career. For God clearly showed me what a miserable and unfortunate condition it is to preach the practice of virtue to others and be reprehensible oneself (I Cor. 9:26-27). Therefore I fasted, at the beginning, whole weeks long, so that my body often was so fevered and inflamed that I had to bathe myself in cold water in order to cool down the inflammation of my members. And overall, I did everything within my power in order to stun my sensuality, so that my own flesh could not rule, but the Spirit of Christ within (Rom. 8:5-13). And God so powerfully blessed my efforts that my heart was almost constantly lifted up to Him and attained the capacity to preserve me temperate in all things; to love God alone above all else and my neighbor as myself (Matt. 22:37-39). For God and Christ with His Spirit so enlivened my soul that I lived not to myself but to the honor of my God (Rom. 14:7-9) and the welfare of my fellow humans and neighbors.

In possession of such grace, which was a gift of the Lord, equipped with the power of His righteousness and holiness, sealed with His Spirit (Eph. 1:13-14), in love, faith and hope (I Cor. 13:13), I set out on the itinerant ministry in the year 1796, in the month of October, in order to obey the call of God in the revelation of His holy will through the Gospel.

I traveled through a large part of Pennsylvania and Virginia, and the Lord so lent me His blessing that I was welcomed so that I was able to preach in churches, schoolhouses and private houses. I also received here and there some support, so that I could continue to travel, for my ministry through the Gospel was fruitful (John 15:1-8) so that through it many sinners were awakened and converted to God.

Since I had preached for about four years and had especially devoted myself to proclaiming the Gospel at those places where the life from God and Christian order and discipline were yet unknown, I also sought through grace that had come down to me from on high (Acts 1:8) to give appropriate direction to the awakened and converted souls as to how they might work out their souls' salvation (Phil. 2:12) in communal practice, and in the unity of faith edify themselves according to the precept of Christ and His Apostles.

And God so granted His blessing to this, my undertaking, that through the aid and assistance of this communal unification among one another the light of truth arose for many souls that had before lived in darkness and ignorance (John 1:5; I Thess. 5:5). And God, my Helper and Supporter, also strengthened my heart and understanding with His grace so that I not only preached a pure doctrine to the souls that He had entrusted to me, but I sought to confirm them through my mode of life.

And now I thank God, the Most High, and to Him alone be eternal praise for His grace, which He has manifested to me in that He has maintained me steadfast in faith and pure in conduct in the presence of every temptation, persecution and suffering that I have encountered here below (Matt. 5:10-11); and now allows me to see that His grace was not fruitless in me. For my brothers and sisters now converted to God, whom I have begotten by the Gospel (Gal. 4:19), are the seal of my office. Of them I am certain and assured to see them once more in heaven if they remain true in faith, love and hope. And my firm trust is fixed on God that my inheritance will be in heaven with all the saints—a crown that does not fade (I Pet. 5:4).

This is the story of the conversion of Jacob Albright and also of his calling from God to build His congregation, just as he himself has confessed it several times. The author has taken the essence of his narrative and placed it in suitable order with the intention to inform all those who read this about the course of the awakening in grace and acquaint them with the story of the heart of this man who set as the chief object of his desire to promote the happiness of his fellowmen.

The author has known this friend of humanity not only from his own narration but was himself a witness of his exemplary behavior and of his perpetually active zeal to serve God and to build His congregation. He was always steadfast in goodness and sacrificed every power of his body to the service of the Lord in such a manner that he, being already weak and sickly, was nonetheless constantly traveling, preaching and working to the honor of God, until about four weeks before his end. At that time his excessive weakness forced his decision to return home and confine himself to rest. But his weakness had already advanced to such a degree that he was forced to lie quietly in the home of good friends, and after several days confined to bed, he, in their arms, slept away into eternity. His passage from this temporality took place on the eighteenth of May, 1808, in his fiftieth year. And on the twentieth of that month his lifeless remains were buried in a suitable and Christian manner.

The body was followed by a great number of those who had been enlightened through his doctrine and labors. He left behind a widow and three children, and besides these his departure was mourned by a great number of the converted who loved him as their father, and who must now do without the blessing and rich instruction of his fellowship. They felt their loss deeply and often expressed their feelings in tears of sadness. Their pain would have been inconsolable if their love for him had not wished him well in the enjoyment of a sweet rest, after the burden and heat of the day (Matt. 20:12) and the blessed reward which awaited his faithful service, and if they had not realized that their lives too in this vale of tears are but short; and that only a single step, one which is often taken even more quickly than one suspects, would reunite them with their spiritual benefactor in boundless time, eternally.

His final illness was the result of his many journeys and exertions in preaching—an exhaustion of his bodily powers that shortly before his death broke out in a consumptive cough.

He retained his intellectual powers until his physical dissolution. His face was overspread with a peace that only the consciousness of noble and good deeds can give, and a joy that only the assurance of a future life and anticipated bliss can impart. He bade a moving farewell to those who were present at his departure and exhorted them to join him in praising God who would soon now take his soul to Himself. And with hearty fervor he thanked his Creator for all the providences with which He had visited him, for they had fulfilled him with comfort, joy, lively hope and childlike trust. None of those who witnessed his death remained unmoved. Each one found edification and felt the lively wish also finally to be able to die, as did this righteous man. —What is our whole life as against the moment in which time and eternity embrace one another! The deathbed determines the worth of a human life. The most joyful life of the most fortunate child of the world is outweighed by a bitter death. And at the gates of eternity the pilgrim who has suffered and endured here below looks back smiling at his past hardships and would not exchange his present prospect beyond the grave for any long life spent under the most splendid circumstances.

This godly man preached the Gospel for almost twelve years, and the fruits of his work were almost 300 souls converted to God. These strove after goodness in accordance with disciplinary order and endeavored to do what God teaches us in His Word, to flee from and avoid all sins and everything evil and to edify one another in communal exercise, in the unity of faith in accordance with the mandate of Christ and His Apostles as this faithful teacher set forth in the instructions that he has given to his brethren. This same teaching of doctrines of faith and Christian disciplinary order also with God's blessing appeared in print about a year after his death and accomplished great blessing and brought many upon the way of truth and the true knowledge of God.

His public prayers and sermons were powerful, penetrating and convincing, after a childlike manner, not in high words of human wisdom, but he spoke impelled only by the Power and Spirit of God (I Cor. 2:4-5) whose Being revealed Himself in all his address. An universal love toward his neighbor animated him. He prayed for his enemies and persecutors (Matt. 5:44), and he neglected no opportunity in which it was possible for him to promote their souls' salvation and to lead them into the path of truth. Indeed even his bearing, countenance and

movements often betrayed the presence of God's Spirit in his breast, so that the hearers were deeply moved without his saying many words. And there were times in which he so entirely forgot his humanness and even himself—when such a high rapture worked on and in him—that he was driven from his position as far as halfway through the house in which he spoke without he himself even being aware of it. And after such a shaking of his spirit, one then saw on his face a special joy and the laud and praise of the Highest poured from his lips, and one saw him so moved that all his limbs were in motion—. What comes from the heart goes to the heart, therefore his hearers were generally so moved that his seeds of the Word did not fall among thorns (Mark 4:7, 18-19), but often bore beautiful fruit. He administered his preaching office steadily and with singular industry and precision. He never neglected to attend to an appointed meeting if the circumstances of his health permitted, and he carried out all his official duties, not merely to dispatch them but he undertook them with pleasure and joy.

With the utmost pains he sought to tie and to maintain a spiritual bond among his converted brethren. He watched with fatherly care over their outward behavior. In this he himself led them by the best example; and his highest endeavor was to awaken true holiness (Heb. 12:14) of heart among them and maintain it in steadfast purity.

He bore all the persecutions and sufferings, which he had to endure for the sake of God and the Gospel with patience and opposed nothing to them except gentleness. And he heeded them but little because he regarded the grace with which the Lord had showered him as such a great benefit, that all the sufferings of this time can in no wise compare to it (Rom. 8:18). He thus remained ever steadfast in the doctrine Christ had established to awaken the sinner to repentance and faith in God and to edify the faithful in community, to follow after sanctification. And so he was one of God's chosen instruments to the revival of true godliness; for God's grace was manifest with him. As much as they troubled themselves, none of his adversaries could find the least thing against him, for in everything that he did, his purpose was directly to promote the honor of God. This was one of his chief, fundamental principles according to which he constantly operated, and he also always sought to inculcate the same. For this reason he also gave the following counsel to his brethren who worked with him in the vineyard of the Lord as he met with them for the last time in this life: "In all that you do or think to do, let it be your object to promote God's honor and to spread and to increase the working of His grace in your own hearts and among your brothers and sisters, and be industrious abettors of the same on the way which God has shown you, whereunto He will give you His blessing."

He had passed almost eighteen years in the state of grace (Gal. 5:4) and had encountered many experiences of God's gracious providence and sustenance on his career. The restricted plan of this author does not permit that all this be portrayed extensively at this point. He hopes that what has been undertaken in these few pages will be sufficient to indicate to an attentive reader the working and the way of God's grace and to fill his heart with thankfulness toward the Giver of all good things who chose this man as His instrument and kept him steadfast in order to revive true Christianity and to promote virtue and truth.

This short description also demonstrates that those people who have followed after his doctrine and disciplinary order in no way need be ashamed to confess

that they have become acquainted with God and Christ through the instruction of this faithful teacher—not even for the fact that they, perhaps from ridicule and perhaps also from some good opinion, are called the *Albright's People* because they have come to the true knowledge of God through his instruction. They certainly know and are assured that they belong to Christ with all true Christians and in no way do they wish to be separated from all those who in the crucifixion and slaying of all fleshly and sinful passions and desires (Rom. 6:6-6; Gal. 6:14), have consecrated their lives to God alone and follow Christ in truth uprightly and without pretense or hypocrisy. This every lover of truth can easily perceive if he will give himself the trouble to make himself acquainted with the doctrine of faith and the disciplinary order of these people. There he then will see that they have no other object or aim than to build the Church of God upon Jesus Christ (I Cor. 3:10-11), the Author and Finisher (Heb. 12:2) thereof in suitable discipline and unity of faith with all true confessors of the Christian religion, in order to bring an eternal act of praise to God. The Lord would grant this to me and to all upright souls. AMEN

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My Brethren,

I have shared with you the story of our blessed brother with no other intention than that you might honor the Almighty in discipleship to Jesus Christ in which we have our brother as a model; for you yourselves know how powerfully God was with him (I Cor. 2:1-5) among us so that I and many of you were through his ministry converted to God from our great sins. For this we must ever give thanks to God. But we must also with the greatest precaution stand on our guard that we might not once more lose such grace (Gal. 5:4) or have received it to no purpose. I too, and my brethren who work with me, have not worked in vain, but God was also powerful with us as He will also be with all of you if you obey, believe, and trust Him.

Therefore, my brethren, only be industrious in the work which has been started, which God has begun among us, that we may be found faithful stewards (I Cor. 4:1) according to the measure of the graces and gifts which God in accordance with His wisdom has purposed and imparted to each one among us for spreading the honor of His name, in disciplined order to walk according to the command of Christ and His Apostles (Matt. 28:16-20). Carry on then as you have begun, and increase in faith, love and hope, and be assured that all this is God's own work, and He will also victoriously carry it out with all those who obey, believe and trust Him (Phil. 2:12-13). Oh! Thus nevermore stray from the truth, neither through sloth, laziness or indifference in your duties, nor through faint-heartedness, unbelief or doubt or even through disobedience, rebellion or impulsive sins. Dear brethren! Do not err; God does not allow Himself to be mocked (Gal. 6:7) and He will leave no one unpunished who yields himself to sins.

Therefore stand fast and unmovable and constantly increase in the work of the Lord, for you know that your work is not in vain (I Cor. 15:58). If you have not always received a timely reward then bear in mind that a faithful laborer certainly receives his reward after the completion of the day's work when he has been hired by a good and wealthy lord (Matt. 20:1-16). And where indeed is there a more gracious and wealthier lord than the Lord our God? Happy is the one who serves Him.

Therefore be patient and eagerly wait upon the Lord (Rom. 8:25) in every cross, suffering, and in all persecution that you endure for the sake of the Lord (Matt. 5:11). For God will vindicate His people in due time (Rev. 6:9-11).

In no way allow yourselves to go astray on your journey; do not allow yourselves to be detained in the course which you have begun in the Lord; and walk in the path of the Lord with joy, heartiness, and love (Heb. 12:1-2), wherewith you may attain the goal of your eternal bliss.

Rely upon it, my brethren, that he who seeks to lead you astray in your course will have to bear his judgment, be he who he may. If you guard yourselves altogether from earthly secular-mindedness then you will not easily prefer the high, flattering words and artificial ways of speaking which are commonly welcomed by carnal ears (I Cor. 3:1-3). You will prefer rather childlike, powerful speech, since it generally goes as the proverb states, “Children and fools speak the truth.” So is it also with those who for Christ’s sake seek to make their souls free in obedience to the truth (John 8:32), that they renounce the hypocritical and flattering mind of the earthly-minded, not with words that please humans but their Heavenly Father. Through His powerful words they are enabled to drive all such evil spirits out of the hearts of their hearers providing they believe on them. Unbelievers are, however, generally offended by such childlike and powerful words. For their ambition regards them as feeble-minded, foolish, and unthinking. But it is an eternal truth that to be secular and earthly-minded is enmity against God, and whosoever wants to be a friend to the world becomes God’s enemy (Rom. 8:5-8). And it is certainly true that such a one, if he does not want to be eternally damned, must humble himself before God, feel sincere remorse, truly repent, and make the earnest decision to order his future life according to the prescriptions of the divine Word. Therefore guard yourselves against all pride and exaltation for God opposes the proud, and He gives grace to the humble (I Pet. 5:6). In the same way also, all of you, without exception, if you confidently wait with humble patience under His powerful hand, and if you join hands with one another in humble and sincere love, to assist one another in the working out of the salvation of your souls (Phil. 2:12-13), and if each one seeks to perform his duties just as our *Discipline*—which serves as an introduction into the Holy Scripture—prescribes, then the blessing of the Lord may rest upon you for the conversion of your fellowmen. A genuine Christian mode of life among those who preach the Gospel accomplishes more and bears more to awaken and to prompt conversion than do many words from Christianity’s fundamental doctrines if they are not connected to precise observance of its divine prescriptions. Thus altogether let us first do its most necessary works: above all in the sanctuary of our hearts, then in our homes and classes, then in our united congregations for the welfare of the whole of Christianity. Yes, if we do our duty, trust exclusively in the Lord and walk before Him in true humility, then He will give us grace so that we will do this with joy, and many more will be moved by our example to abandon the world and with us strive toward the kingdom of heaven.

Brothers and sisters, I wish for nothing else for me and you, in this life, than a persistent patience in everything that the Lord ordains for us in the promotion of His honor. Concerning this I pray to the Lord that not *my* but His gracious and good will may be done among us. —And I commend you to God and to the Word of His grace that is there mighty to edify you and to dispense the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.