

2 Timothy. III. 15^r

Hymn 363. [C.M.]

Hymn 361. [4 verses] [L.M.]

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Knowledge of Holy Scripture
the best wisdom.

Grace Ch. Stephensville Ky - July 3^d 1892 - [S.P.M.]

2 Timothy III. 15.

"From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

- What St. Paul here says of Timothy, may be said of the greater number of the men and women around us. - They from childhood have known, with their minds at least, the Holy Scriptures: - they have been taught to read them: - they have heard them read and explained: - they have, perhaps, stored their memories with texts. - But look at their common manner of life: - how little it comes up to what those Holy Scriptures require! - And why? - Because their knowledge

- It is remarkable that even the Prophets themselves, did not fully understand their own ^{sacred} oracles. - "The prophecy came not by the will of man - They spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. -" "They inquired & searched diligently, what, or what manner of time, The Spirit of Christ that was in them did signify." - Let this teach us humility, & stimulate us to diligence in the heavenly science.

- Be not content, - beloved friends, - with a mere casual reading of the chapters, or learning the texts: - but earnestly pray God to show you the heavenly wisdom beneath.

- Regard the Bible at all times as the written message of God to your soul: - and listen with earnest attention to what He

is speaking. - Never approach that book, never study it, - never speak of it, - as a common book. - Never suffer others in your presence to speak of it, or to reason upon it, as a common book. - Say to yourself, "This is the Word of my Heavenly Father. - It is full of mysteries, - but it is in its outward form suited to the weakness of His children; and I receive it humbly, reverently, affectionately. - I bow my mind before it. - I open my whole heart to its light. - I submit my whole life to its guidance." - Receiving it as God's Gift Book, or Souvenir, - how delightful to turn its pages filled with testimonies of His love, - odorous with His breath, - musical with His voice! -

- When the soul is filled with remorse, - and trembling with apprehension, - how sweet to know that there is "forgiveness with God," - that He "can be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus!" -
- When tossed, tempted, & afflicted, how calm & safe this anchorage! - What fortitude it imparts to the trusting soul: - what patience: - what moral strength: - what elevation: - what grandeur: - what happiness! -
- How it fills, satisfies, and blesses! -
- How adapted every way to the wants of man! -
- The evidence of its truth is within. -
- What horror in the bare thought of having this treasure withdrawn from us! - To imagine that the curtain thus lifted be-

- tween God & man might fall again, & this revelation of Divine mercy be shut out for ever! -
- How think you, then, - must He feel when He sees Atheistic men madly wishing & working for this very thing? - How melancholy to see the partial success which seems to attend their efforts! - How sad to see the eagerness with which so many of the youth of our land listen to infidel theories and assertions, and accept them as their rule of action, in preference to the only safe and divinely authorized guide into the way of truth & peace! -
- ~~In the~~ A few days before the death of Sir Walter Scott, - he asked his son-in-law, Mr. Lockhart, to read to him. - Mr.

Lockhart inquired what book he would like. -
 - 'Can you ask?' said Sir Walter; - "there is
 but One; The Bible:-" - and requested him to
 read a chapter of the Gospel of St. John. -

- One Sun, - one Bible. - The place
 which the first holds in the natural world,
 the last holds in the moral:- blot either
 from existence, and what were our state?

"O dark, dark, dark, - irrevocably dark,
 Total eclipse, - without all hope of day." -

- Although no power of malice can do this, -
 yet it can do that which resembles it. -

- Whoever robs me of my faith, - destroys the
 light that illuminated my soul, and plunges
 me into darkness:- makes me the "dungeon of
 myself," - and reserves me under chains of

darkness against the judgment of the great day." -

- Whenever you, - my friends, - sit down to study
 the Holy Scriptures, - as I earnestly trust you
 often will, - adopt the habit of first
 lifting up your soul to God in prayer. -

- Say but a few words:- such as, - "O
 Fountain of Wisdom, make me wise unto
 salvation through Thy Word!" - or, "O
 God, - prepare my mind and heart to hear
 Thy Word!" - Never read the Bible
 in a formal, listless way, as if the mere
 reading could act as a charm upon the
 soul, - or keep the mind in a religious
 frame. - On the contrary, such reading
 will prove most injurious to true religion:-
 it will harden the heart against the

influence of the Sun of Righteousness.—

— It has been well remarked, — "The Scriptures are a depth that few can wade far into, and none can wade through; — but yet all may come to the brook, and refresh themselves with drinking of the streams of its living waters, and go in a little way, according to their strength and stature".

"For 4000 years, as a part or a whole, ^{the Bible} ~~it~~ has been "a road through the abyss of time"; — upon which men have walked as if it were solid pavement. — It is the only bridge spanning the gulf, — buttressed and upheld by Divine Truth. — Faith goes up upon it singing; — rainbows of hope and promise hover over it; — everlasting joy

and blessedness beckon at the end. — There always is light, — when everywhere else is darkness; — God's smile continually breaking through; — death itself no longer dreadful — "Only a gray eve between two shining days." —

— Apart from Revelation, — futurity is a dark unknown. — That the soul should live beyond the grave, — how it shall live, — for what purpose, — and in what condition, — we should know but little beyond a dark conjecture.

— And as little should we know in reference to a state of reward and punishment. —

— Whether death be an eternal sleep, — or the soul at death migrate into the body of some animal or tree, the light of nature may conjecture; — ~~but~~ while by the light of Revelation

we know it shall "be well with the righteous," but it shall "not be well with the wicked."

- The righteous shall shine as the stars for ever and ever; - The wicked shall be cast into outer darkness. - Would you have your pathway through the dark valley illumined, - and a Guide to conduct you to the presence of the Eternal Glory? - Would you learn the language of Canaan, - and survey, before hand, the celestial fields, - & hear the songs of the angelic hosts, - and catch a glimpse of the ineffable glory of the Lamb? - - Unroll the Sacred Volume of God's revealed Word, - and in the spirit of heaven read its golden lines, - and you may exclaim with the sweet singer of Israel,

"How sweet are Thy words unto my taste! - yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth! - More to be desired are they than gold, - yea, than much fine gold: - sweeter also than honey and the honey-comb. - Moreover, by them is Thy servant warned; and in keeping of them there is great reward!" -

- In conclusion, dear friends, - let me urge you to make God's Holy Word the Lamp of your path through life. - Read it with more diligence and greater earnestness in the future than you have done in the past: - lay its sacred truths up in your hearts, and practice them in your lives. - Let us rejoice that this Lamp does not shed its light merely on a chosen few, but that its rays have penetrated many a land of darkened ignorance and fiendish cruelty, - scattering joy and happiness in habitations where sorrow and misery once had their abode. - Let us thank God, that leaves from this Tree of Life have been wafted by propitious breezes throughout the length and breadth of the world. - They are to be found in the hut of the Esquimaux, - the hovel of the African, the wigwam of the Indian;

in the cottage of the laborer, - in the palace of the
nobleman; - The blessed Word of God is not bound,
- but is joyfully tendered to all who will receive it,
without restriction of any kind. - The knowledge
of Holy Scripture is the best wisdom; and the Bible
may be justly considered as a precious treasure, -
worthy of our highest confidence and affection. -
- Turn to this blessed book, beloved, - in temptation,
difficulty, trouble, or sorrow; - turn to it in the pros-
-pect of death; - turn to it as the fountain of true
wisdom; - turn to it as the ground of your eternal hopes. -
