
"Draw me, we will run after Thee."

Longfellow 1. p. 3

These are the words of the Church praying to be drawn to the presence and vision of Christ. They express the love a faithful soul bears to Thee for Thy holiness and Thy passion, and a desire to be drawn more and more into fellowship with Thy sanctity and Thy cross—a desire, that is, to walk in the way of the imitation of Christ. But they express more than this desire; they confess also our spiritual impotence and our spiritual draw to follow Thee. "Draw me, for alone I cannot move a foot; I cannot begin my course; in me there is no power to originate; all comes from Thee, both to will and to do, to desire and to begin.

It is also to be noted that the Church here says, "Draw me, we will run," as implying both that a fervent affection and tendering heart it would
just forth all its Strength to do the will of Christ, revealed in His gift of preventing grace. "My soul hath cleaseth unto the Lord: I quench not my accord ing to thy word." This is first a cry of distress under the yoke and hindrances of an earthly and sluggish nature, and then a pure aspiration, mingled with intense desire to speed into His presence.

There is in it a tone like the words of St. Peter, when he first refused to suffer his Master to wash his feet, and then, lest he should lose his part and lot in sin, eagerly desired more: "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head," or as when he said, "Lord, why canst I follow Thee now? I will lay down my life for Thee." It is such a longing as the may deliver the beloved disciple had, when Peter turned and saw his following, and said, "Lord, what shall I do?" "Go to, follow me," said the Lord, "till I come, what is that to thee?" Such an aspiration as they all felt within when the Lord led them out as far as

1 John xvi. 25. 2 St. John xiii. 9. 3 xvi. 37. 4 St. John xxi. 23.
Bethany, and lifted up His hands, and blessed them, and... Whilst He blessed them, He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." 5 Each one, as he looked up steadfastly and worshipped, said, (in effect, in his heart,) "Lord, we are sore after Thee." And this has been the longing desire of the Church in every age from them till now. There has been in the midst of this rough world, and under the clouded sky of the visible Church, a deep and living pulse beating with love for Christ, yearning and praying as the thirst for the water-brooks.

This is the perfect and blessed life of a Christian upon earth; a state very high, far above our heads, though, God be praised, not out of our reach. If we were left to scale these ascents of love and peace in our own restless weaknesses, they would indeed be unattainable; but it is He that maketh our feet like harts' feet, and carrieth us up to walk with Him on high places. There is no measure of love, joy, peace, light, gladness, fellowship with Him, to which

It will not draw and pull those that seek after humility.

The spiritual life has three states through which all who attain to the love of Christ seem to pass, and these states are so marked that we may take them one by one. Although we may grow again by the Spirit of Christ, as may say the Lord of old, I have loved thee with an everlasting love. Therefore I will loving-kindness have I drawn nigh to thee. Although this loving attraction of the Spirit has been all through life, drawing each one of us to Himself, yet we, by our backward and reluctant hearts, have kept far away, or fallen with a slow and struggling will. We are between two objects of love, two attractive forces; as if two lodestones, the sea and our home, were playing upon us. Let us see how it has been with us.

I. First I suppose most can remember a time when we were drawn so strongly to the world.
that the drawing of Christ’s love and Spirit was
overbalanced by a more powerful attraction.
Happy are they who have no memory of actual sin,
and of its clinging hold, by which they were once
kept in bondage. The most dreadful part of
sin is its sweetness, by which it fascinates even	hose who know its harmfulness and shame. If
brothers and sisters, while it destroys them, it induces
all his resolutions, lessens his strictest inten-
tions, relapses his firmest purposes, and changes
him, with his eyes open, from a half paintent
to a fool. So pass by all other examples, take
such a sin as anger. Before the temptation it
is hateful; during the temptation, to indulge it
is positively sweet. It gratifies a strong
present impulse, as abundant food does a
hungry palate. An angry man goes on word
after word, reply after reply, lash after lash,
with a sensible and increasing elevation of
Spirit. He revels in it. For a time every thing
to lose in the swell and sway of his excitement. It adds strength, tenderness, and eloquence to his thoughts and words, which delight him. In a moment all the promises, relics, and prayers of years, it may be, are scattered and forgotten. In another moment he stands alone, shrewd to the quick at his own folly. No reproach can go beyond the rebukes he lays upon himself, no contempt exceed his own. Why did he not feel it a few minutes before? A little sooner would have saved him. But sin is sweet and it flows steadily and smoothly as the head-waters of a whirlpool, with an imperceptible and restless attraction. Our such sin will overbear the neat and gentle drawing of Christ. Such a man needs no more than this one band to keep him fast bound to this dying world. So it is with every sin. Take them one by one: change only the terms, and the same outline will serve for all. In such
heart the loss of Christ takes no root: for their
holiness has no beauty. His passion is sharp-
ness of compassion.
But we will pass to another kind of state. I mean,
the state of those who lose the pleasures, wealth, honor,
riches, refinement of the world. Their things, free
as they are from necessary evil, are among the
most subtle and luminous wares. Remembered
souls perish in their meshes. Thousands struggle
to bring to man to get beyond the sphere of their attraction.
But their power of allurement is surely less than
the power of the Spirit of God; far too great for
the inferiority of man. It is wonderful how fast
worldly people are held; how the world subdues
them, and makes its slaves about their whole
being. "The children of this world are," indeed,"in
their generation wiser than the children of
light," for except in a few, where do we ever
see such intense, concentrated, energetic, losing
devotion as in aspiring and ambitious men, the
The huntsman after popularity, and the traffickers in gold? The human character is in these exhibited in all its range, versatility, and variety of force. They lack but one thing: They are "without grace in this world." And the world has them for its own with a quiet and unchallenged possession. No drawings of Christ's truth or Spirit make them waver or vacillate for a moment. The game is up, and their April before them. They plunge deeper and deeper into the manifold and multiplying attractions of the world, until their freedom of action is stolen from them, and their will loses to be their own.

And, further than this, we may take an example which comes nearer to ourselves. It is not only the greater sins, or the worship of the world, which hold us back against the drawing of Christ; but the soft pure happiness of home, the easy sound of kindly offices, the calm rest

2 Cor. 11. 12
Handless told of a literary life, the quieter and more
peaceful influences of earthly cheerfulness;—all these
too, with the lights and shades, the anxieties and
joy which fall across life’s race path; heal away
the heart; and wound all its affections about a
thousand mornings. Happy men drop their anchor
into the quiet waters of life; the very smoothness
of its surface calms them, and a conscious innocence
makes them fearless. This world is very fair;
and the elements of peace and joy still hear the
marks of a dionic hand; so that we lose them
freely and with fortitude. A great part of such
a life rests on duty, and is blameless; it has
therefore nothing to awaken a suspicion that the
world is nearer to the soul than God. And many
homes, how many families, how many hearts, how
many parents and children, husbands and wives,
Sisters and friends, then pastors of Christ’s flock,
does this describe!

But these fascinations are dangerously strong; they
So fill the eye and heart, that little is desired more, and nothing is sought with earnestness anymore. Such people are often, indeed almost always, up to a certain measure, religious; but often not devout. They are pure, but not zealous; afraid of sin, but without compassion. They think they fear the world, while they lose its happiness, and so hope to escape the danger of its alliances; they fear to offend God's holiness rather than His love; and by this false fear acquire from themselves their want of power. They love God from conscience, not because it is their joy. His worship is a cool and satisfying duty; but Miller's sweetness was delight. The bliss of life is lovely and vivid, the outline of heaven bright, and clear; their enjoyment of life is present and possible; the thought of death bitter, as the end of happiness, and fearful as its entrance, upon a state unknown. To sum this up in one true word, such people lose the world more than
they fear it, and fear God more than they love Him. The attraction is greater on one side, and the repulsion is all on the other. What a searching point of reality and truth! There is in the words of the Son of Man: "I advise you to love your enemies (the remembrance of them) to a man that hath peace in his possessions, unto the man that hath nothing to lose, and that hath prosperity in all things."

I have been describing to such as irreligious character, but one which, to a great extent, is Christian. In all the audaces of the second table, they are strict and sincere; but towards God their conscience is clear and cold. The warmth, piety, and side of life is towards the visible objects of affection. This is a state in which it is hard to live. They are little prepared, either for so great a wrench, or for so high an awful a meeting with their Lord and Judge.

2. Let us take the next state: It may be that by sorrow, or chastisement, or by some other of

2 Thess. XI. 1.
His manifold strokes of love, it has pleased God to break or to relax these bonds, and to dispel the vain show in which they walked. Let us suppose that the world has lost its attractive power, and drawn them but feebly to its Centre. Little by little they get seared from their strong attachments. They see less fairness, and less stability in its best gifts; they have found its insecurity; and its sounds, once the most glad, ring hollow. They are not bowed or fretful, nor lose friends less, nor brood upon any disappointment, nor voice under. Any cross, but they have found out the emptiness of all that is not eternal and the poverty of all that will not satisfy the soul. In this state they break, one by one, through the old attractions of life; they withdraw themselves to the outer sphere of its influence, where it plays feebly upon them, but as yet wholly escaping, sometimes for a while falling under it more...
fully again, and retreating in their escape; but upon
the whole, the world draws them less; and the
presence of Christ attracts them more. Still, the
most that can be said is, that they begin to fear
the world more, and love it less; and to fear
the presence of Christ less, and to love Him more.
After all, it is but a mingled state, a sort of
mottled sky, patches the cold of winter, close the sun
of summer; a dubious, veering, unconstant
temperature between love and fear, life and death.
If life does not draw them, death affrighteth them;
though they have lost their fondness for earth,
they have not attained a yearning for heaven.
The fresh, calm repose of life is more soothing
to them than the thought of the heavenly court,
arecent with love, and arrayed in the glory of
God. From this they draw back, both with caution
incapacity of such exalted bliss and with a sense of
personal sin. They are intellectually convinced of
the blessedness of a life "hid with Christ in God," and
that there is no true happiness but to dwell in His love. Their whole life takes a new direction; they cast it upon the bosom of
the Church, and with a direct intention to enter only at a holy resurrection. This disentangles
them from a multitude of hindrances, and gives
something of unity and purpose to their life.
Their chief work, henceforth, becomes the search
and knowledge of their own state before God;
their chief study. This will, their chief rule
of life the practice of devotion. But there is yet
one thing sorely wanting: the love which
"casteth out fear." The deliberate choice of their
superior will, that is, of reason and conscience,
is fixed upon the kingdom of God; but this
feelings and affections of their hearts, that is, of
their passion and inferior will, are lively
and prone to relapse. Their whole religious
life is to be sustained against a force which
strongly keeps its hold; and the attractions of the
Unknown. World are faint. They are connections rather than affections; they work by reason rather than by love; and this accounts both for the slight and uncertain enjoyment they find in devotions, as in prayer and the holy Sacrament, and the continual resistance, both of body and spirit, which must be overcome before they can begin to pray. Perhaps nothing so certainly proves how we are related to the unseen world as our prayers. If they be insipid and tedious, cold and tasteless, it is a sure proof that our delight is not in God, and that we love Him chiefly, if not only, for the reason that we are living by not lives of sense, at least of intellect and imagination, rather than of the will. So long as we are in this state, however much this world may lose its hold upon us, the next has not as yet worn its heart. The thought of entering it must be appalling; and the expectation of death, full of fear. And does not this describe the state of many souls?
pass for absent, and believe themselves to be so, at least in desire? Such persons are in a balanced state between two attractions, of which, if the one be weaker, it is the nearer and more sensibly perceived. This condition is at times dreamy and uncertain, and cannot last long. It must incline one way or the other. Either the world, by almost imperceptible reactions, gets its hold again, or God in His mercy multiplies the power of His grace, and draws them, almost unwilling, to Himself. Whether it be by larger measures of His Spirit, shedding abroad His tender love, or by fresh visitations of merciful discipline, matters not. Whatsoever draws us out of the range of worldly desire, and within the sphere of His heavenly Kingdom, the issue is all one. It turns the scale, and we then after Him.

3. And this leads on into the third and last state, in which the balance is so turned against this world, that it can allure us longer; and the
hope of God and His Kingdom attracts above. It has numerous ways in which He thus draws us to Himself. Sometimes it is by a flow of blessings, saturating the whole heart to gratitude and praise. Sometimes by revelations of His truth, overwhelming the soul with light. Sometimes by a word read in silence, or spoken to us, which comes to us like a shaft of fire. Sometimes by the overflowing grace of the Holy Sacrament, or by such a spiritual perception of the Cross as fills the heart with love and sorrow. Besides all these, He has ministries, operations, and agents. Countless as the regex:
of light. In some of these special ways He is often pleased to break the bonds of this world, and to draw His servants once for all under the almighty attractions of the world to come. Perhaps nothing does this so surely as a realization of death. There is great reason to doubt whether we ever realize what death is till it comes home to our selves. We may see it in others, and stand daily
by dying beds; and yet it is with death as with bodily pain, we can all sympathize, but we cannot transfer it to ourselves. However familiar we are with the sights and sounds, the thoughts and fears of such a state, by seeing others die, it is only, as it were, by proxy. Such warnings are very wholesome, and dispose the mind to realize it, one day, for ourselves, but they can do us more. The conscience that our time is come, and that we personally are going out of this world, is wholly incommunicable. That which makes it our conscience, forbids its being shared by others. It is our own, because it is no other's. The conscience of our personality is our own life, which, though common in nature, is incommunicable. So the thought of our own death; of our own personal appearing before God; our own personal account, judgment, destiny—that which makes it different from all other perceptions is, that
it is no others but our own. When we have once realized this, a change passes upon all things: Sin becomes hateful, the world fearful, earthly happiness pale, and almost undesired. Our great reality absorbs all eternity; and in eternity the vision of God and of Christ, the kingdom of saints, the bliss of the soul, the glory of the body, the judgment, the resurrection, the armies of the just, and dead;—this one mighty vision draws the whole soul into itself, and we seem caught up out of the bonds of flesh and earth, free into the air. Perhaps no other words will fully express the feeling. It is as if our feet rested upon nothing but the spiritual world; as if we saw nothing but the presence of God.

This thought once realized may, indeed, be wholly lost again. It may taste the "powers of the world to come," and yet again fall away; but we are not now speaking of thatchange, but with its direct opposite: the blessedness of such
an awakening. It is as if our eyes were opened, or gifted with a two-fold power of sight, and a key were put into our hand “who leads a man,” to measure happiness and life, sin and death, hope and fear, time and eternity. The temple kept the altar, the shadows which fell both upon the world and from it— as if we were lifted into space beyond its path. How strangely do all things then change their magnitudes, and with them their force of attraction! What a new law of proportion and of power so seem to reveal itself on every side. Once the laws in earnest for all manner ofdents:
objects and schemes, we pant for this, there are all energy for that undertaking; all are fire, all abroad; and now all is stilled in one calm word: "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." But it is not the mere leaving of earthly and human things. A mere loosening from this world would do little. It might make us woe and wistful

\[Rev \, X \, 11\]  
\[Phil. \, III \, 11\]
Letter and complaining, or their hatred of mankind and success of God.

The true and blessed change wrought upon the heart is an awakened desire of God, by which the sinnerBasicVersion draws it to himself. After much trembling and fear, penitent self-accusation, and sincere trust in him, so far as they are able; after passing through the depths of repentance, those whom God so blest pass on, by faith in the blood of Christ, into a state of calm and cheerful desire, which collects all the affections of the soul into one longing hope. "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord." This shall be my rest for ever; here will I dwell; for I have a delight therein." If they could foresee the future, they would say, "I have a desire to depart, need to be with Christ, which is far better; or, "Then to, Lord Jesus, come quickly."
It seems as if they could never fall back into old channels, never go abroad again into this unreal world, never be in earnest for any thing of time, never believe an hour or a case by any thing which is not spiritual. The whole life of their heart seems brought to a focus in the desire of peace in heaven.

Let us now suppose that God in His mercy has brought any of you to this state; that He has borne with you when you loved the world and served Him only with fear, that He has drawn you out of this spiritual death into the second state where you hung in a delicious balance of attraction: let us suppose, I say, that He has, in love, broken your bonds around, and drawn you, by the full force of love and holy fear, unto Himself. How will you answer to this now? Suppose yourselves awakened by some of His gracious visitations: what should you do?

I. First it would be the plain will of God that you
Should strive with all your soul and strength 
to follow whether He is drawing you; and to 
prepare yourselves to dwell with Him for ever, 
and as a first step to this, to put off all that 
weights you down to earth. I need not say all 
this, for we have been speaking only of those 
who have long ago, by God's grace, been cleansed 
of a sinful live. But there remains the burden 
of the past, the conscience of our decaying lives, 
and much that is written in God's book against 
the judgment of the great day. Our first step 
must be to put this off, by our humble recog-
nition of ourselves before His presence, so long as 
the live any part in us, the world retains a hold. 
It can light up fears, and so withdraw the soul 
from God. But confession fairly casts out the 
lucifers and the ashes of death, so that the world 
has nothing on which to cast its fires.
The next thing is, to offer up to God all your 
afflictions, adversities, regrets, and all the bonds which
but us to home, hundred and friends, together
with all our works, purposes and labours. These
things, which are not only lawful, but need
because them the matter of thanksgiving anderald
when He calls us, they can do harm no
longer; He has rendered what He can, and
us must yield them up. If we would hold
them back, and dwell upon them, they would
only disturb the balance of action, and
make us draw backward to life again.
Memories, plans for the future, wishes intention;
works just begun, half done, all but completed,
emotions, sympathies, affections. All these things
wound tumultuously and dangerously in the
heart and will. The only way to master
them is, to offer them up to God, as once
first, under Adam, always His by right.
In fact, as we would restore, at our last
hour, all loans to their lawful owners, so
ought at all times to make restitution to God.
And after this we ought to awake in our soul the grace of faith, hope, and love, calling to mind all that He has done for us from childhood, the pledges of His love, goodness, and care to us. These things powerfully draw us to toward His unseen presence: faith by realizing His beauty, hope His mercy and love, His fatherly and pitiful compassion.

But when all this is done, there remains one thing still, the chiefest and best of all; which is, neither to go back in fear and mistrusting to the past, nor in anxiety and forecasting to the future, but to lie quiet under His hand, trusting in the Lord alone. And having so well kept His, this is the greatest speed we can make to His presence; for the that has so well kept God's will is not far from God's kingdom, for the kingdom of God is within him.

2. But must I suppose it to be God's will that you should be once more set free from the trial He
has sent for your instruction: what shall you do? It is plainly his will that you should give your whole heart and thought to perpetuate and to perfect what you have learned, to the very end of your life. This visitation was sent either to prepare you for his presence, or for a life which should be spent in an habitual and sincere study for departing. So it pleased him, as it were, to build up our bodily life in mercy, as once it obtained in displeasure, laying the founda-

ton in sorrow, and letting up the gates in sickness; teaching it story upon story, story upon story, until the teaching were done. This is what he would have you learn now. He said that you were still entangled in the world, dealing with others less than yourself with the belief that you were dead to it. He said that your heart must be struck sharply by the
old heart, before it could gain rest; and
kindled. He saw how much of lust being
suspended in vapour and imagination, and
needed a wide touch, as from the presence of
death to fit it to reality. He saw how much
devotion had no deeper springs than in the
reason, leaving the heart dry; how weak
an allurement would draw you from this king
alone, how much a love held you to his service.
And all this he would heal, and send you back
into life to prove you were more upon a deeper
law, and with a clearer insight into the realities
of death and judgment. This is what your trial:
To perpetuate your present spiritual perceptions;
To shelter them from the babble of common-place,
Which now call common sense, sobriety, and
the like; and to keep them as keen and un-
earthly as you feel them now. Nay, more:
Your trial is not only to prolong your present
convictions but to carry them but and to find

them by exercise and discipline, and the con- 
formity of habitual steadfastness. It will be a heavy, 
and sad account if, twenty or ten years hence, 
when sorrow, or fear, or death comes near 
Once more, you be taken unawares, or found 
us fitter than last times. Also for us, if 
these things cause us to the same low level 
where they found us at the first, — if sorrow 
us not prepare us for afflictions, and sickness 
us not make us ready to die; if, having 
Once your down mid-way into the cold waters, 
be learnt next time trembling upon the brink, 
new all over again with all the same 
afflictions and years!

How to keep alive and to refer the confusion 
and perplexities which God's mercy give us 
such afflictions, take these two resolutions: 
first, to submit to your minds the thoughts, 
and to perpetuate the prayers, rules, and 
practices you used while His hand was upon.
Dear [Name]

I hope this letter finds you well. It has been a while since we last spoke, and I wanted to catch up on how you are doing. I understand you have been busy with [INSERT REASON], but I would love to hear about your experiences and what you are up to these days.

I've been keeping myself busy as well. [INSERT PERSONAL ACTIVITIES]. I've noticed how much you enjoy [INSERT INTEREST:Hobby]. I've been thinking about picking that up myself. It would be great if we could connect over [INSERT INTEREST]

I understand how much [INSERT PERSONAL QUALITY] is valued in your life. I want you to know that I value it as well. I've been trying to improve [INSERT PERSONAL QUALITY] in my own life.

Let me know if you need anything. I'm always here to help. You can reach me at [INSERT CONTACT INFORMATION].

Thank you for taking the time to read this. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Best regards,

[Your Name]
at last.

What a wonderful copy of paternal love will be revealed at that day when from the kingdom of their Father, the Elect shall see the vessels which issued from the heart to draw each one of them unto itself. What a two-fold revelation of old unbelief, and of divine charity. "Thou hast with cords of iron, with bands of love." P. With the cords of Adam, with the Sacred Manhood of the Lord made flesh, with His tenderness, pity, mercy, sympathy, of the Crucified Lord and God. Truly there are cords of iron and bands of love; of love "which maketh bondage" whose fruits are from everlasting; whose virtues are infinite, whose patience is eternal. From every wound of His Divine Manhood issued forth, as it were, a radiance, gloom, drawing the hearts of His Elect into the fellowship of His passion. All through our life.

I Peter xi. 4.
This influence of grace has been shed abroad upon us; it has in our lives, in our unconsolined and turbulent worldliness, restraining, restraining, and at last converting us to itself. Ever since that day, bitter and holy inspirations have gone out of him, silently persuading and secretly attracting us nearer and nearer to the foot of the Cross. Even in our coloines, reluctances, relapses, He still held us fast. He knew us better than we knew ourselves, and the bands of love were still wound about us by His tender care. Little by little He has brought us where we stand now; between Him and us, if we believe, there is but a brief, imperious to sight, to faith, as open as the day. Happy they whom He has drawn to the horizon of His visible world, and there, best they wait in sustained and ripening preparation until their time shall come.

Let us, then, say unto Him, "Lord, Thy Cross
is high and lifted up; I cannot in my own strength ascend it, but Thou hast promised, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all mankind unto myself. Draw me, then, from my sins to repentance, from darkness to light, from the flesh to the spirit, from coldness to ardent devotion, from weak beginnings to a perfect end, from smooth and open ways, if it be Thy will, to higher and holier paths; from fear to love, from earth to heaven, from myself to Thee. And as Thou hast said, 'No man can come to Me, except the Father, who hath sent His Spirit,' give unto Me the Spirit whom the Father hath sent in Thy Name, that in Him and through Him, I being wholly drawn, may hasten unto Thee, and go no more out for Thee.'

1 St. John xii. 32. 2 St. John xvi. 44.