Concerning the Christians’ treasure, which is Christ and the Holy Ghost, who practises them in various ways to come to perfection.

1. If a man is very rich in this world, and possesses a hidden treasure, out of that treasure and wealth that he has he purchases whatever he has a mind to purchase. Whatever rare articles in the world he fancies, he readily amasses them, relying upon the treasure, because by means of it he easily procures any piece of property he fancies. In like manner those who seek at God’s hand, and have found, and have the heavenly treasure of the Spirit, which is the Lord Himself shining in their hearts, accomplish every righteousness of virtues, and every acquisition of goodness commanded by the Lord, out of the treasure of Christ in them, and by means of it they amass a yet more abundant heavenly wealth. By means of that heavenly treasure they effect every virtue of righteousness, relying upon the multitude of the spiritual riches within them, and easily work every righteousness and commandment of the Lord by means of the invisible wealth of grace that is in them. The apostle says, Having this treasure in earthen vessels, that is, the treasure which it was granted to them in this life to possess within themselves, the sanctifying power of the Spirit; and again, Who was made to us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

2. So one who has found and has within him this heavenly treasure of the Spirit, effects thereby every righteousness of commandments and every accomplishment of virtues unblamably and purely, without forcing and with ease. Let us therefore beseech God, and seek and beg of Him, to bestow on us the treasure of His Spirit, and that thus we may be able to walk in all His commandments unblamably and purely, and to fulfil all the righteousness of the Spirit purely and perfectly, by means of the heavenly treasure, which is Christ. For he that is poor and naked and needy and famished in the world can acquire nothing; his poverty restrains him; but the possessor of treasure, as I said, easily acquires such articles as he fancies, without painful effort. Thus the soul that is naked and destitute of the fellowship of the Spirit, and lies under the horrible poverty of sin, cannot, if it would, produce any of the fruits of the Spirit of righteousness in truth, before partaking of the Spirit.

3. Nevertheless, every one should force himself to ask of the Lord to be permitted to receive and find the heavenly treasure of the Spirit, so as to be able without difficulty and with readiness to do all the commandments of the Lord unblamably and purely, which before he could not succeed in doing, whatever force he might use. Poor and naked of the fellowship of the Spirit, how could he acquire such heavenly possessions, without any spiritual treasure or wealth? But the soul which has found the Lord, the true treasure, by seeking of the Spirit and faith and much patience, works out the fruits of the Spirit, as I said before, with ease; and all righteousness and commandments of the Lord, which the Spirit has commanded, she does, in herself, and by herself, purely, and perfectly, and unblameably.

4. Let us use another illustration. If there is a rich man, and he makes a costly repast, he spends out of his wealth and the treasure that he has, and is under no fear that he will run short of anything, being so rich; and so he entertains the guests whom he has invited at cost and with splendour, setting before them many different dishes of the latest fashion. The poor man, who has no such wealth, if he wishes to provide a repast for a few friends, has all to borrow, the very dishes, the drapery, and everything else; and then, after the invited guests have dined on a poor man’s dinner, when it is over, he gives back to each person that he had borrowed of, a silver dish, a piece of drapery, or whatever else it was, and so, when all is
given back, he himself remains poor and naked, having no wealth of his own to entertain himself with.

5. In the same way, when those who are rich in the Holy Ghost, really having the heavenly wealth and the fellowship of the Spirit in themselves, speak to any the word of truth, when they impart spiritual discourses to any and desire to entertain souls, it is out of their own wealth and out of their own treasure, which they possess within themselves, that they speak, and out of this that they entertain the souls of the hearers of the spiritual discourse; and they have no fear lest they should run short, because they possess within themselves a heavenly treasure of goodness, upon which they draw to entertain those whom they are spiritually feasting. But one who is poor, and does not possess of the wealth of Christ, and has no spiritual wealth in his soul, yielding a stream of all goodness, both of words and of deeds, and of divine ideas, and of mysteries unspeakable, even if he wishes to speak a word of truth and to entertain some of his hearers, yet not possessing in himself the word of God in power and reality, but only repeating from memory, and borrowing words from various parts of the bible, or what he has heard from spiritual men, and relating and teaching this—see, he seems to entertain others, and others enjoy what he tells them, but after he has gone through it, each word goes back to the source from which it was taken, and he himself remains once more naked and poor, having no treasure of the Spirit for his own, upon which he draws to entertain others, not being himself first entertained, nor rejoicing in the Spirit.

6. For this reason we should first seek from God with labour of heart and in faith, that He would grant us to find His wealth, the true treasure of Christ, in our hearts, in the power and effectual working of the Spirit. In this way, first finding in ourselves the Lord to be our profit and salvation and eternal life, we may then profit others also, as is possible and attainable, drawing upon Christ, the treasure within, for all goodness of spiritual words, and setting forth mysteries of heaven. For thus it pleased the goodness of the Father to dwell in every one who believes and asks of Him. He that loveth Me, it says, shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him; and again, We will come, I and My Father, and will make Our abode with him. Thus the infinite kindness of the Father willed; thus the inconceivable love of Christ was pleased; thus the unspeakable goodness of the Spirit promised. Glory to the unspeakable compassion of the Holy Trinity.

7. For those to whom it has been given to become children of God, and to be born from above of the Spirit, who have within them Christ shining and refreshing them, are led in many different ways of the Spirit, and acted upon by grace invisibly in the heart, in spiritual rest. Let us employ figures of tangible enjoyments in the world, to signify in some measure the dealings of grace in the heart. There are times when they are as if entertained at a royal banquet, and rejoicing with joy and gladness inexpressible. At another moment they are like a bride reposing in communion with her bridegroom in a divine repose. Another time they become like angels without bodies, they are so light and unencumbered, body and all. Another time they are as if drunken with strong drink, being exhilarated and intoxicated with the Spirit, with the intoxication of divine and spiritual mysteries.

8. Another time they are as if in weeping and lamentation for the human race; and in supplication for the whole Adam they take up a mourning and a weeping, being consumed by the love of the Spirit towards mankind. At another they are fired by the Spirit with such rejoicing and love, that if it were possible they would take every man into their own hearts, without distinguishing between bad and good. Sometimes they are so humbled beneath all others in the humility of the Spirit, that they think themselves to be the last and least of all.
Sometimes the Spirit keeps them in such joy unspeakable that they are wearied out. Another time they are like a mighty man who has taken the king’s whole armour, and come down upon his enemies to battle, and fights against them powerfully, and has conquered; for, like him, the spiritual man takes the heavenly weapons of the Spirit, and comes down upon the enemies, and battles with them, and puts them under his feet.

9. At another time the soul reposes in a certain great quietness and calm and peace, with no sense of anything else but spiritual pleasure, and repose unspeakable, and well-being. At another, it is instructed by grace in a kind of unspeakable understanding and wisdom, and the knowledge of the unsearchable Spirit, in things which it is impossible to utter with tongue and speech. So various are the dealings of grace in them, and in so many ways does it lead the soul which it refreshes according to the will of God, and exercises it in different manners, in order to restore it to the heavenly Father perfect and faultless and pure.

10. But the operations of the Spirit of which I have spoken belong to the great measures which are near perfection. For these various refreshings of grace, though they are expressed in different manners, are constantly brought to bear upon such people, one operation succeeding another. For when the soul arrives at the perfection of the Spirit, perfectly cleansed from passion, and united and mingled with the Spirit Paraclete by that unspeakable communion, and is permitted to become spirit itself in mixture with the Spirit, then it is made all light, all eye, all spirit, all joy, all rest, all gladness, all love, all compassion, all goodness and loving-kindness. As in the bottom of the sea a stone is encompassed on every side by water, so these men, mingled in every way with the Spirit, are made like Christ, having in themselves the virtues of the power of the Spirit unalterably, being faultless and spotless and pure within and without.

11. Restored by the Spirit, how can they produce outwardly the fruit of evil? At all times and in all circumstances the fruits of the Spirit shine forth in them. Let us then beseech God, and believe in love and much hope, that He may give us the heavenly grace of the gift of the Spirit, that that Spirit Himself may govern us also, and guide us into all the will of God, and refresh us in all the variety of His refreshing, in order that through such governance and exercise of grace, and spiritual improvement, we may be allowed to attain the perfection of the fulness of Christ, as the apostle says, That ye may be filled with all the fulness of Christ, and again, Till we all come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. The Lord has promised to bestow on all that believe in Him and ask in truth the mysteries of the unspeakable communion of the Spirit. Let us therefore devote ourselves entirely to the Lord, and hasten to obtain the good things we have spoken of. Dedicated in soul and body, and nailed to the cross of Christ, let us become fit for the eternal kingdom, glorifying the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for ever. Amen.