



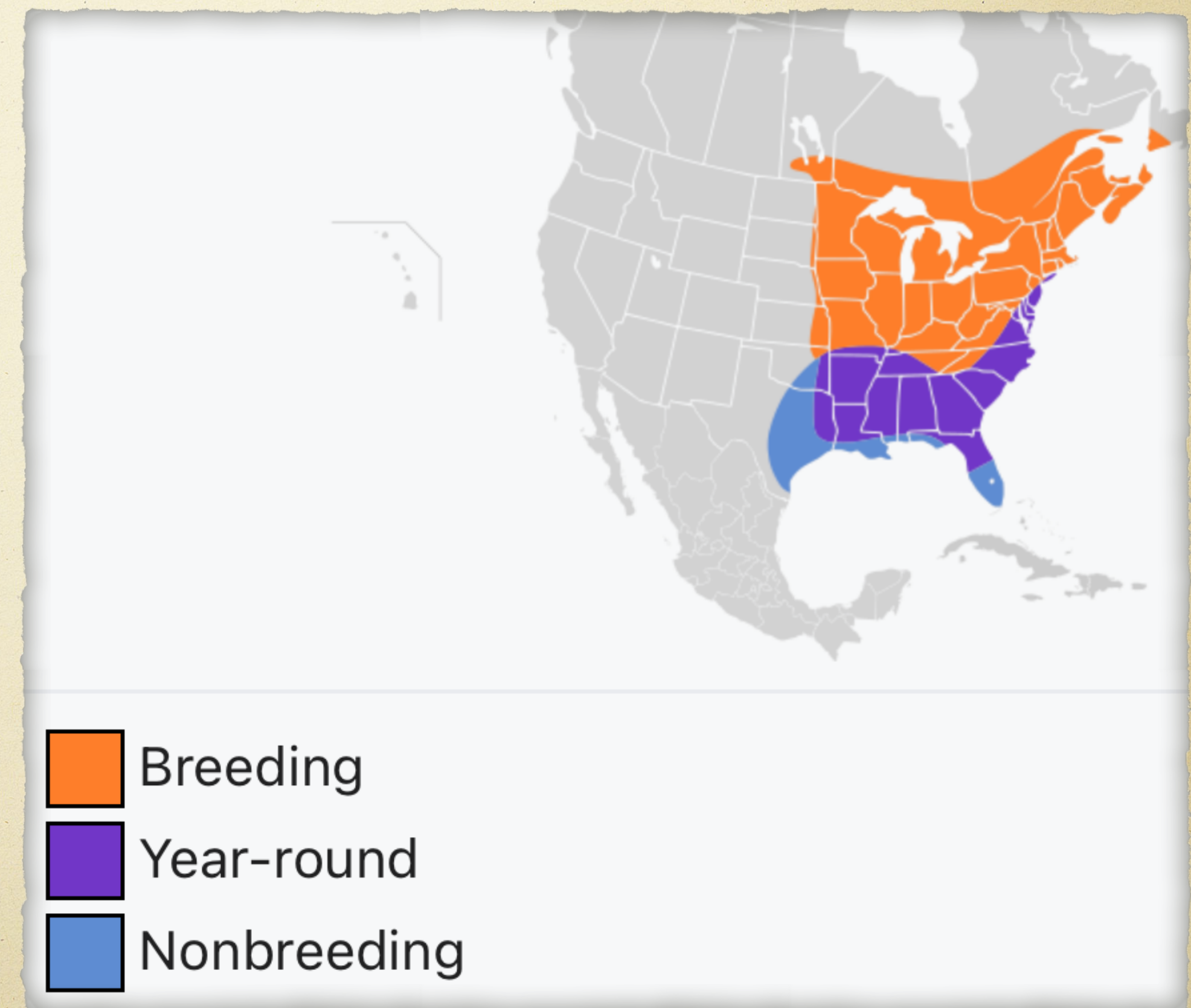
# The American Woodcock

*The slowest Bird*



# Locations

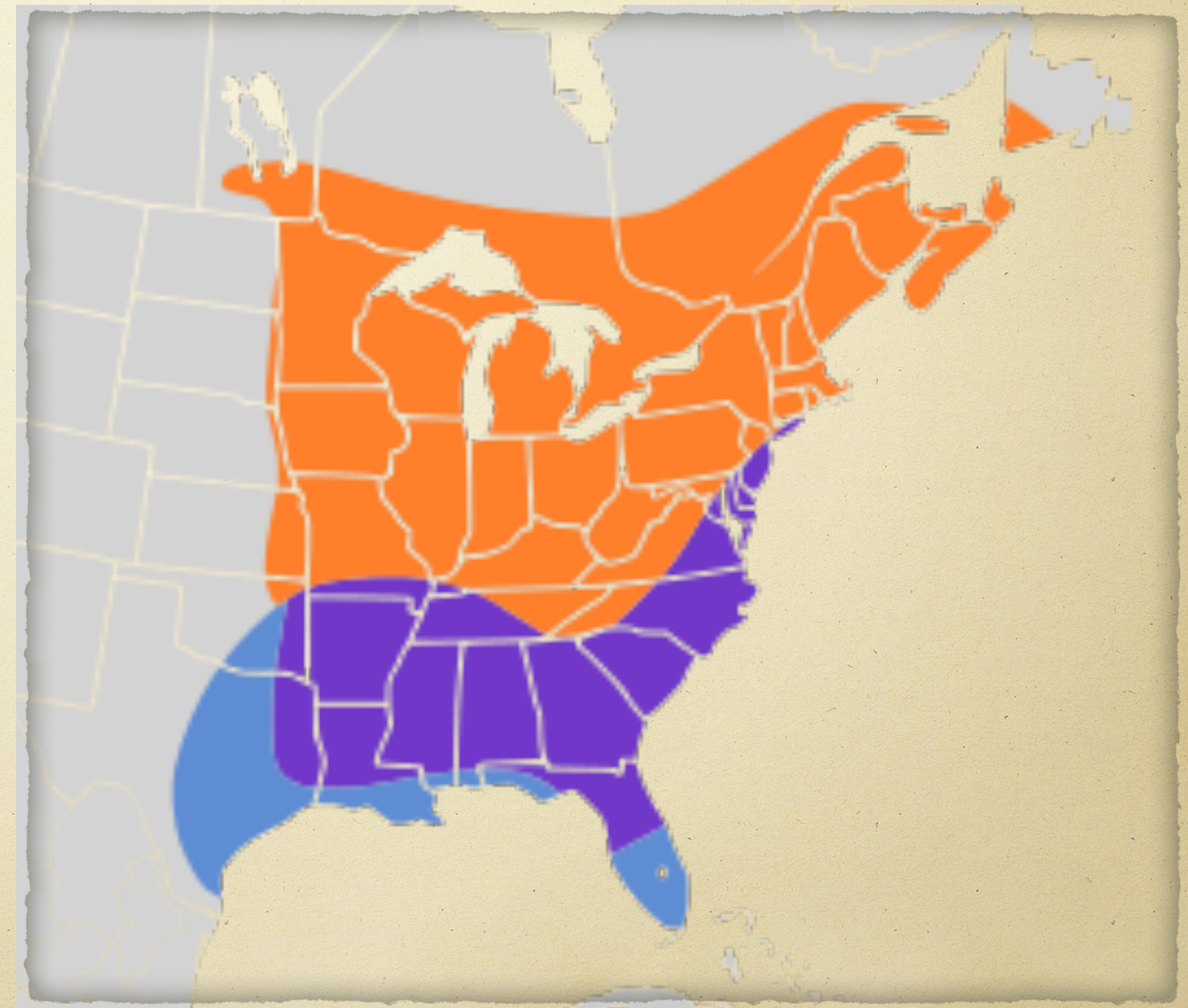
- Inhabit forested and mixed forested-agricultural-urban areas east of the 98th meridian.
- Primary breeding range extends from Atlantic Canada (Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick) west to southwestern Manitoba and south to Northern Virginia, western North Carolina, Kentucky, Northern Tennessee, northern Illinois, Missouri, and eastern Kansas. A limited number breed as far south as Florida and Texas.





# Locations

- After migrating south in autumn, most woodcocks spend the winter in the gulf coast and south eastern Atlantic Coast states. Some may remain as far north as southern Maryland, eastern Virginia, and southern New Jersey. The core of the wintering range centers on Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia.





# Locations

- American woodcocks live in wet thickets, moist woods, brushy swamps. Ideal habitats feature early successional habitat and abandoned farmland mixed with forest. In late summer, some woodcocks roost on the ground at night in large openings among sparse, patchy vegetation.





# Flight of The Woodcock

- Woodcocks migrate at night. They fly at low altitudes, individually or in small, loose flocks. Flight speeds of migrating birds have been clocked at 16 to 28 mph. However, the slowest flight speed ever recorded for a bird, 5 mph, was recorded for this species





- Both the autumn and spring migrations are leisurely compared with the swift, direct migrations of many passerine birds.
- In the north, woodcocks begin to shift southward before ice and snow seal off the ground based food supply. Cold fronts may prompt heavy southerly flights in autumn. Most woodcocks start to migrate in October, with a major push from mid October to early November.
- Most individuals arrive on the wintering range by mid December. The birds head north again in February. Most have returned to the northern breeding range by mid March to mid April.



# Feeding Habits

- Woodcocks eat mainly invertebrates, particularly earth worms. They do most of their feeding in places where the soil is moist. They forage by probing in soft soil in tickets, where they usually remain well hidden. Other items in their diet include insect larvae, snails, centipedes, millipedes, spiders, snipe flies, beetles, and ants. A small amount of plant food is eaten, mainly seeds.





# Breeding

- In spring, males occupy individual singing grounds, openings near brushy cover from which they call and perform display flights at dawn and dusk, and if the light levels are high enough, on moonlit nights.





# Breeding

- The males ground call is a short, buzzy *peent*. After sounding a series of ground calls, the male takes off and flies from 50 to 100 yards into the air. He descends, zigzagging and banking while singing a liquid, chirping song. This high spiraling flight produces a melodious twittering sound as air rushes through the male's outer primary wing feathers.





# Breeding

- Males may continue with their courtship flights for as many as four months running, sometimes continuing even after females have already hatched their broods and left the nest.
- The hen makes a shallow, rudimentary nest on the ground in the leaf and twig litter usually within 150 yards of a singing ground. Most hens lay four eggs, but sometimes less.
- The young develop quickly and can make short flights after two weeks. They are fully independent after about five weeks.





# Activity

- Woodcocks are a crepuscular animal, which is defined as a creature that is primarily active during twilight period. This is distinguished from diurnal (of or during the day) and nocturnal behavior. This means that woodcocks are most active at dawn and dusk.





[[A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.]] O God, thou art my God; **early will I seek thee:** my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;

-Psalms 63:1



My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the  
morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look  
up. -Psalms 5:3

-Psalms 5:3



The very first out-breathing of the soul in the morning should be for the presence of Jesus. "Without Me," He says, "ye can do nothing." It is Jesus that we need; His light, His life, His spirit, must be ours continually. We need Him every hour. And we should pray in the morning that as the sun illuminates the landscape, and fills the world with light, so the Sun of Righteousness may shine into the chambers of mind and heart, and make us all light in the Lord.



We cannot do without His presence one moment. The enemy knows when we undertake to do without our Lord, and he is there, ready to fill our minds with his evil suggestions that we may fall from our steadfastness; but it is the desire of the Lord that from moment to moment we should abide in Him, and thus be complete in Him.

—(My Life Today, 15.)