



P R E F A C E .

THE history of this volume is briefly this: Allegheny College, which is under the patronage of the Pittsburgh and Erie Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, having been endowed upon a new and most efficient plan, the consequent prosperity of the Institution demanded an additional building for the accommodation of the numerous students thronging its halls. But how to obtain the means of erecting a suitable edifice, was a question that seemed difficult to answer. It was deemed inexpedient to make an effort to obtain by donations from the community at large the sum requisite, so soon after the extraordinary efforts made for the collection of the scholarship notes by which the endowment was secured. The citizens of Meadville, where the College is located, were disposed to do their part, and have subscribed with liberality; but a greater sum was still needed. Immediately after the Pittsburgh Conference of 1848, the propriety of publishing a volume of this character, the profits of which should be applied to the new building, was suggested by Rev. F. S. DE HASS, whose very effective agency in behalf of the College, deserves this permanent acknowledgment. The suggestion was made to the Erie Conference of 1848, which approved of the proposition, and requested the editor and publishing

committee at Pittsburgh to issue a volume of sermons by ministers of the two Conferences, as soon as practicable. Those to whom the matter was committed did not feel themselves justified in proceeding, until they had pledges for the sale of a sufficient number of copies of the book to make themselves safe. This was not obtained before the Pittsburgh Conference of 1849. That Conference took up the suggestion, and passed the following resolution :

“Resolved, That the Rev. W. HUNTER, editor of the Christian Advocate, be authorized to prepare and publish, with all convenient speed, an edition of 5,000 copies of a volume of original sermons, by living ministers of the Pittsburgh, Erie and Western Virginia Conferences, the proceeds of which publication shall be, and hereby are, set apart to aid in the erection of an additional edifice for the use of Allegheny College.”

Soon after the session of the Conference, the editor, having pondered upon the duty imposed upon him, announced his determination of proceeding immediately, and without waiting for any further pledges, to the execution of his task. The result is before the public.

Few persons are aware of the amount of careful labor involved in preparing such a volume for the press, and superintending its progress through it. Whether the editor shall be thought to have accomplished his part of the work well or ill, he has labored to discharge the duty assigned him with such care and pains as time and circumstances afforded.

Little arrangement of subjects was practicable, where every contributor selected such subject as suited himself, not knowing what would be selected by others. It was still more difficult from the fact that all the ser-

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For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust. As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more. But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him; and his righteousness unto children's children: To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.—Psalm CIII. 14—18.

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If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.—Job XIV. 14.

1st. "Mankind," says Pascal, "is divided into three classes of persons; those that have found out God and are serving him; those who are occupied in seeking after God, and have not yet found him: and those who have not only not found God, but are not seeking. The first are wise and happy, the last are foolish and unhappy: and the middle class are wise and yet unhappy." The happiness of man in the present life, is here made to depend on the knowledge and service of God. And this truth will be denied by those persons only, who are utterly ignorant of the nature of true piety. The effect of piety is a serenity and satisfaction of mind, unspeakably more valuable than any earthly possession. It gives a moral courage and strength, to combat and overcome difficulties that may lie in the path of duty, not to be obtained from any other source. It engenders a fortitude under misfortunes, and a moderation in prosperity, which in the one case removes the poignancy of suffering, and in the other, adds a higher and purer enjoyment to every blessing of Providence. It fills the mind with great and elevated objects, and renders it superior to the vicissitudes of life. "In her right hand is length of days; and in her left hand, riches and honor." Piety leads to a course of life, and to the formation of habits, highly favorable to health and worldly prosperity. It secures the most valuable social connections and enjoyments, and confers on character a weight and consideration with the world itself, which neither rank nor talents could do without it. And if this be the fruit of personal piety, it must be also of those institutions designed to promote piety and the knowledge of God. If there were no hereafter, if all finished with the present, the institutions of the sabbath would be an indispensable auxiliary to human happiness.

2d. The importance of these institutions to the welfare of society, must appear evident on the slightest reflection.

1. In the first place a religious belief is the foundation and cement of society. "No man perhaps is aware," says Mr. Channing, "how much our moral

and social sentiments are fed from this fountain: how powerless conscience would become without the belief of a God; how palsied would be human benevolence were there not the sense of a higher benevolence to quicken and sustain it; how suddenly the whole social fabric would quake, and with what a fearful crash it would sink into hopeless ruins, were the ideas of a Supreme Being, of accountableness, and of a future life, to be utterly erased from every mind." A nation of atheists never did, and never could long exist. Strip the human mind of a religious belief, and of those sentiments which it engenders, and you remove the foundation on which society rests. Napoleon, who will hardly be suspected of having been troubled with religious scruples, perceived this truth, and declared it to the French philosophers. And he added the remarkable declaration, justified by all history and experience, that if a people were destitute of a religion, it would be necessary to invent one for them. Did men believe that they had been brought into existence by mere accident, and were shortly to sink into annihilation; that they were distinguished from the brute only by the possession of a superior degree of intelligence, what is there in human nature to sustain social institutions? Would sympathy or a feeling of common interests prove a sufficient bond of union to preserve men in a state of society? With as much reason might we expect that artificial means would save from dissolution the corporeal system after the extinction of animal life. It is the religious belief of a community which gives to virtue its respectability and influence, which originates and cherishes that high tone of moral sentiment, at once the safeguard and the ornament of society. But if a religious belief be essential to the welfare of society, equally important must be the public institutions of religion, on which this belief mainly depends.

But men's minds may be possessed of religious ideas, and still they may exist so much in cold abstractions, or be so deficient in numbers and connection, as to exert but a feeble influence in sustaining either public

servicing a moral sense in community, may be further illustrated by reference to the domestic state. So important are the domestic virtues to the welfare of society that their decay is the certain precursor of a country's ruin. Let the fire of devotion go out upon the family altar; let the sanctity of the marriage covenant be treated with levity; let filial insubordination be tolerated; and no further evidence is needed that society is rapidly hastening to its dissolution, amid scenes of anarchy and blood. Such were the precursors of the French revolution—a scene never to be forgotten, forming one of the bloodiest pages in the annals of our race. Those disorganizers of society, who planned and acted this terrible tragedy, profoundly sagacious in regard to the principles of corrupt human nature, knew full well if they would unsettle the foundations of civil government, and overthrow social order, they must first destroy the purity and order of families. Unless this could be accomplished, the strength of the social ties, the love of order, and the elevated tone of moral feeling, pervading the mass of the people, would render their attempts not only abortive, but fatal to themselves. And to remove the restraints of domestic virtue, it was necessary to destroy in the mind of man a sense of religious obligations. This, again, was to be effected by destroying a reverence for the sabbath and its holy institutions. These must be profaned. Men must be taught to treat them with contempt. The Sabbath must be changed from its high original, into a heathen festival a carnival of pleasure; designed to drown all sense of religion and morality. They succeeded in their first step, to overturn the institutions of the sabbath; and it is not surprising they afterwards met with few obstructions in completing their diabolical schemes. Let, then, the friends of domestic purity and order, know that these virtues, so essential to the welfare of governments and society, are to be preserved only through the force of christian institutions.

3. Again: the value of social worship to society, may be seen in its influence on the passions. These are the fruitful source of the manifold evils in society;

of the discord in families, neighbourhoods, and civil governments. Whatever, therefore, exercises over the passions a purifying and controlling influence, must be an important auxiliary to society.

It will readily be conceded, that so far as public worship is a means of multiplying true Christians, it will have its effect on the passions in an eminent degree. Were all men true Christians, society would at once be raised to the summit of perfection attainable in the present state. Every one would be disposed voluntarily to obey the laws of justice and benevolence; to respect the rights and promote the happiness of all others. Society would be united by the bonds of a universal brotherhood; all would feel themselves members of the same great divine family. In such a state of society, the passions, so far from proving an injury, would be the greatest blessing. They would answer the design of the Creator in this part of our constitution, opening exhaustless fountains of innocent enjoyment, and setting in motion a thousand springs of virtuous action.

But in the actual condition of society, we are not to suppose the influence of the gospel is confined to the truly pious. It produces a powerful effect upon men generally. This may be seen from a comparison of the moral and social condition of those christian countries where the institutions of the sabbath are revered and generally observed, and those where they are neglected. The observations of travelers clearly show, that in the latter, there is less politeness, frankness and hospitality, in the treatment of strangers; and less sincerity, sympathy and humanity, among themselves—evincing a lower state of civilization; that the passions are less refined, and less under the restraints of reason and moral influence.

But even in those countries where Christianity has the greatest influence, causes are in constant activity to bring the passions of men into collision. The divisions and separate interests of society; the opposition of parties, of different professions and callings; the diversity of tastes, dispositions and opinions—these are the elements of an ever active moral volcano, existing in the

he could willingly suffer all things, "for his brethren and kinsmen according to the flesh." But the love of country is enforced by an example of yet higher authority. We have a striking and affecting instance of it in the life of our Saviour. How tender, how generous, how sublime, does this sentiment appear, as exhibited in the conduct of this blessed friend of man, when he beheld and wept over the approaching miseries of his country! "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem,—how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold your house is left unto you desolate!" What strong and tender affection, what disinterested love, does Jesus here manifest for his native country! The gospel, therefore, enjoins this virtue both by precept and example. It is thus rendered a positive religious duty, enforced by the sanctions of the divine law. And what advantage this must give to society in times of public danger, they will best judge, who know the support which religious motives afford to virtue in the hour of trial.

5. Finally, the gospel is peculiarly important to free civil institutions, such as our own. It teaches the essential equality of man. It maintains the law of reciprocity, the duty, under all circumstances, of doing unto others as we would that they should do unto us. It teaches men to respect the rights and interests of others; to feel the same quick and tender sense of injury when inflicted on others, as if done to themselves. It opposes with its whole strength those corrupt and aspiring principles, which to elevate a few to absolute irresponsible power, would trample in the dust, the rights and happiness of millions. Thus the gospel favors free governments, because the spirit which it inculcates, as has been justly remarked by an eminent writer, is the very spirit of liberty. Of course the public institutions of religion, the sabbath and its divine ordinances, must in this view be essentially important, as it is by these chiefly, the influence of the gospel in communities is promoted and sustained.

· II. If the public worship of God be then so impor-

tant to ensure the temporal prosperity of mankind, how infinitely is this importance increased when viewed in relation to the interests of eternity! If we estimate so highly what is designed to confer only a present benefit; if we are ready to make the greatest sacrifices to secure and increase the present happiness of our families and friends—in what language can we express the interest every one should feel and manifest in the institutions of the gospel which offers to all everlasting life, amid scenes of pure and unfading bliss! Whatever, therefore, may be the importance of social worship to the interests of this life, its principal value is derived from its influence on man's spiritual and eternal destinies.

1. The public and stated ministrations of God's word are necessary as a means of preserving the knowledge and purity of his worship. It was doubtless the principal design of the laws of Moses to perpetuate among a particular people, the knowledge and worship of the true God; and to impress them with a solemn conviction of the necessity of expiatory sacrifices for sin, until the advent of Messiah should bring life and immortality to light, and fully introduce that new and glorious dispensation, which its ceremonies but faintly shadowed forth. As this law was of divine appointment, it must have been admirably adapted to its object. That it was so, is abundantly established by the fact, that among the ancients, the highest examples of consummate virtue, and heroic piety, are to be found among this people. In the illustrious characters of its patriarchs and prophets, and its holy men of old, we behold the ennobling influence of its divine precepts. It is not questioned that this law contained moral precepts; but the characteristic feature of the Mosaic economy, was its positive institutions, its splendid ritual service, and numerous and splendid ceremonial observances. It was by the constant and stated recurrence of these, in connection with the sabbath, that the knowledge of the true God was kept alive, and the purity of his worship maintained. And can it be doubted, that the institutions of the christian sabbath are less necessary, or less efficacious, to perpetuate and spread

state. Christians, like others, are compassed about by many infirmities, which expose them to the temptations and unholy influences of the world. They must necessarily engage in its business, and will sometimes feel the weight of its cares. These circumstances render it necessary they should often renew and increase their spiritual strength; otherwise they would experience a rapid decay of their spiritual graces—would find themselves in the condition of the strong man shorn of his locks, and consequently fall an easy and defenceless prey into the hands of their enemies. Now the means of grace connected with the observance of the sabbath, are the strong hold of the Christian, to which he continually flies from the cares and business of life; and arms himself anew for his spiritual warfare. He is glad when he hears it said, “Let us go to the house of God.” He is there enabled to lay aside the world, to contemplate divine truth, to feel afresh the sweet drawings of the Holy Spirit, and enter into closer communion with God. Faith increases, hope brightens, and every grace is strengthened. He receives new life and power, and feels it to be a divine truth that “they who have ceased from sin, do enter into rest.”

He goes from the sanctuary prepared to exhibit before the world a more perfect example of the christian character; to let the light of holiness shine through all his actions, that men, seeing his good works, may glorify their heavenly Father. He is prepared to enter with fresh zeal and delight into the duties of the family circle, as the minister of God to offer up the morning and evening sacrifice, to impart the lessons of Christian instruction, and kindle anew the flame of piety in the members of the little church of which God has constituted him the natural head. In the relations of father, husband, and friend, neighbor and citizen, he is prepared to maintain a higher christian walk, and shew an example of whatsoever things are just, pure, lovely and of good report. Thus, by the use of the means of grace, the Christian is enabled to honor God by a life of holiness; and continually to approach that maturity in grace which is to precede his entrance on those

scenes of pure and unmingled blessedness, in the excellent glory, of which as yet, eye hath not seen, ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man but faintly to conceive. As in nature, so in grace, there is a growth, a gradual approach to perfection. We may be taken away in the infancy of spiritual as of natural life ; but if continued in the present state, we no more become perfect Christians in an hour or a day, than we become perfect men. Spiritual as well as natural growth, is dependent on a variety of means ; among the most important of which are the sabbath and the institutions of social worship. The true Christian, while engaged in the worship of God, becomes more dead to sin, and feels the quickening influence of the Holy Spirit, bestowing a higher degree of spiritual life ; by faith he has a lively foretaste of heaven, where all is perfect happiness, because of absolute moral purity. He feels that the house of God is the gate of heaven. The divine presence is sensibly manifested, and the glory of the Lord fills his earthly temple.

“Faith lends its realizing light,
The clouds disperse, the shadows fly ;
Th’ invisible appears in sight,
And God is seen by mortal eye.”

The Divine Being seems occasionally to withdraw from his worshipping children, the veil obscuring his immediate presence, and gives them such unutterably ravishing views of the glorious state of the righteous hereafter, that their happiness is little short of the reality of those blissful scenes. By such peculiar manifestations of the divine power and goodness, it cannot be doubted, that Christian experience is rapidly advanced, and the heart formed more fully to the love and practice of entire holiness. God becomes the object of supreme regard, and the desire to please, honor, and obey him, is paramount to all others. In such a state the child of God is ready to exclaim in the devout language of the poet,

“’T is worse than death my God to love,
And not my God alone.”

while there the pious sentiments of our hearts were invigorated, our passions subdued, our christian hopes animated, and our souls more filled with the love of God and man.

Worship, to be acceptable, must be scriptural. It must be accompanied with correct views of the character of God, of the gospel system, of the relations we sustain to him, and the inward dispositions answering to those relations. It must be performed in spirit and in truth. There must be a right exercise of the understanding, and a corresponding action of the heart. The reason and affections enlightened and sanctified by divine truth, must form harmonious concert with the outward acts of devotion. Forms and ceremonies, however dazzling to the eyes, or captivating to the imagination, are worth nothing, if unaccompanied by the spirit and the understanding. Exterior splendor may amuse the senses, attract the gaze of admiration, and spread a degree of awe and solemnity around the offices of religion. It may hold the thronged multitude in breathless silence, and produce the externals of piety; but with all this fair exterior, like the whited sepulchre, there is nothing corresponding within. It may be a statue of exquisite workmanship; but it wants the living, intelligent and active spirit, the warm and gushing sympathies of real nature. It has no power of the Holy Ghost, to send forth into the secularized heart of the devotee; to turn out the buyers and sellers, and purify the temple of the living God. It has no power to effect a moral change in the heart and life; to create him anew in Christ Jesus unto good works. A system of public worship which does not draw the understanding to the contemplation of divine truth, and attract the heart to God, as the object of supreme regard, is but sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. For neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith grounded on a knowledge of divine truth, and producing love to God.

The gospel addresses us as rational, moral beings; it offers blessings of unspeakable value, but it is to the good and obedient. It proposes means for our moral

improvement and comfort, but they must be actively employed by us. The benefits of salvation here and hereafter, are not to be obtained without our co-operation, without the most strenuous and persevering efforts. Our obedience is not to be confined to particular times and places, set apart for social and public worship. It must become the controlling and habitual temper of our minds, extending to the regulation of the affections and desires, bringing every thought and imagination of the heart into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

God grant that all who may here enjoy the public ministration of his word and its divine ordinances, may be of the number of his spiritual worshipers; and that he who shall minister in holy things, may himself be clothed with salvation, and ever come before the people in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

SERMON II.

Early Piety.

BY ROBERT BOYD.

“Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.”—
EccL. XII. 1.

IT is a well known fact, that even among the best and most experienced farmers, there is found to exist a difference of opinion, as it regards the best time for planting and sowing several of the products of agriculture. While some are in favor of what is called an early season, others, whose judgment and experience is entitled to equal respect, yield a preference to a later period. This is often the case, especially in regard to the great staple of our country—the wheat crop. Experience, the best teacher in general, is not

oning at present, is with such as die while young, and yet, after they have reached the period of accountability. Neither is it necessary to our design, to assign any specific age as the standard of accountability. This is beyond the power of man's wisdom, as the time no doubt will vary in different persons, according to their intellectual powers and opportunities. It is quite sufficient for our purpose, to know that there is a time in relation to each child, in which it is not accountable; and again, that there is a period at which each sane child becomes accountable. The God of wisdom, justice, and mercy, will see to and regulate this matter in application to each individual.

Presuming then, that most persons are accountable at the age of ten years, and some even earlier, we ask, how many die before that period? and still more, before they are fifteen; and yet more, before the age of twenty. And if we extend our reckoning to twenty-five years, the number will be much greater. And yet according to common reckoning, all under twenty-five years of age are ranked among the young. Is it not solemnly true then in regard to one-third, if not a greater proportion of our fellow-men, that if they do not seek and find the Lord in the days of youth, they cannot reach this work at all? For I presume none but the most infatuated Universalist will contend for such privilege beyond the grave. But the word of God assures us, that "there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave." If it be so then, that no one knows "what a day may bring forth," and that something like one half of our race will be removed during their accountable years to an early grave, this consideration, alone and independent of all others, is sufficient to evince the high importance of early piety. But we have other and weighty reasons. Hence, we add—

2. The consideration of *the constant danger of out-living our day of grace.*

I am fully aware that our assumption at this point is not admitted as correct by all, nor even by all Methodist preachers. And I believe we have nothing in our creed

or articles of religion by which to convict a man of heresy on either side of this question. Therefore every minister of our church may feel at perfect liberty to follow his own conscience, and the word of God in relation to this point. It is true, I could very well spare this as a motive to early piety, seeing there are so many others at hand. But believing the present to be as true as any other, I regard it as having a weighty bearing on this part of our subject. The longer I study the bible, and make my observations on passing events, I am more and more convinced of the truth of this doctrine. And I think the danger of procrastination cannot be *fully* and faithfully presented without this ingredient. I am aware that this is not the place to enter upon a labored defence of the possibility and danger of reaching a point on this side of the grave in which repentance and salvation is impossible, and damnation is inevitable. So far as the Bible is concerned, we learn clearly: 1. That all men have a day of grace—a time when they may successfully seek the Lord. 2. Beyond this, we have no assurance that offered mercy once slighted will afterwards be available—it may or may not. If God may, and certainly does cut off even very young persons by death, why not accomplish the same thing without the intervention of death? The *principle* is the same. The only difference is in the *mode* of effecting it.

And let it be carefully noted, that the bible not only fails to teach that every man's day of grace will run parallel with his mortal existence, but it teaches the doctrine of an unpardonable sin.—Mat. xii. 31, 32—Mark iii. 28, 29, 30. It also teaches that in consequence of the rejection of Heaven's overtures of mercy, God will afterwards refuse to yield to our most earnest entreaties for that mercy.—Prov. i. 24—28.

Though this is not the place to discuss this awful subject, it may be in place to glance at some facts which seem to stand intimately connected with this view. Do not the great mass of youth who have mingled with our congregations under faithful preaching, and through successive revivals, in most places exhibit

come down to the simplicity of the gospel, and exercise that faith, or *trust* in the alone merits of Christ, which brings a present salvation to the heart, accompanied by the direct witness of the Spirit. There is naturally a strong aversion to this in man; but the difficulty is much greater in the aged than in the young. The aged generally stop with reformation—such as forsaking sin, joining the church, saying their prayers, and supporting the gospel, &c. And besides, the fact that such will very seldom go so far as to present themselves as seekers of religion at an altar or mourner's bench, it is a notorious fact, that when they do consent to go thus far, the effort is rarely crowned with success, as among the young. There is a sad dreariness about the whole movement.

And judging from what has fallen under my own notice, if I now saw nineteen youthful penitents at the altar of prayer, accompanied by one aged person, and supposed all to be equally sincere, I should have more hope of the whole nineteen coming out clearly converted, than the one aged person. I only present *facts*, or that which is in agreement with facts. I do not make these things so, nor do I wish it thus. It is only here referred to as a natural and judicial consequence of procrastination.

I need scarcely add here that no mere reform, however thorough and extensive can substitute the new birth. Hence such as remain without this great moral change, whatever else may attach to them, cannot enter into the kingdom of God. As the natural advantages of the young, then, in regard to this important matter are so greatly superior to the aged, let all hear and act on the counsel of the wise man in our text:—"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth."

Thus far, the reader will perceive that we have urged the importance of early piety on the ground that delay may result in a final failure to secure a present and future salvation. But we think justice to our subject also requires that we examine its claims on another ground, that is, on the supposition of *final salvation*. We will therefore suppose all to have an assurance that they would live to be old—that their day of grace would

run parallel with their mortal existence, and that they could and would, in the evening of life, seek and find mercy, and ultimately get to heaven. This would be the very utmost that the most sanguine individual could possibly hope for, while the facts already adverted to, would utterly forbid the possibility of such a reckoning in application to the general mass of men. Yet, as each individual is prone to hope for the best in his *own case*, we will now briefly notice the advantages of early piety on the ground of *long life and final salvation*. And

1st. *The many evils escaped by those who engage early in the service of God—compared with those who defer their commencement till the evening of life.*

It is certainly a very unpleasant and painful reflection for a man to look back on the follies and crimes that have marked the history of the past, and especially their injurious bearings upon others. Solomon says "one sinner destroyeth much good," and this will always be in proportion to his rank and influence. I once heard a man who had lived in sin until his fortieth year, remark with tears, in a love-feast, that if sorrow and shame could enter the abodes of the blest, the recollection of the scenes of his early life would prove an eternal drawback upon the felicities of heaven. But those who dedicate themselves to God in early life, and prove faithful until death, happily escape these evils, as well as the painful recollections of them through life.

Another reason in this view of our subject, which develops the advantages of early piety, arises from the consideration,

2. *Of the great amount of good that is accomplished by those who serve God many years, compared with those who defer this matter to the closing period of their earthly existence.*

And here it should be carefully noted that the difference between the two cases is not to be estimated merely by the difference in *time*, great as this is; but we must not overlook the fact that early years stand connected with advantages for improvement which can never be recovered in after life. What is learned in youth will remain, but what we learn in advanced life not only costs more *time* and effort, but when acquired,

If, then, this reward is according to works, of course those who have labored the longest, and done the most, will receive the greatest reward. It will therefore follow in the nature of the case, that those who have only labored a few days cannot receive the reward of many years. And while it is true that none are rewarded just on the same *principle* that one man compensates another, (for in this sense we can never *merit* or earn any thing from God,) yet this does not affect the case in hand; so far as *receiving* in itself is concerned, the *benefit* will be just as certain, and just as proportionable to our works as though we had merited it. Who then can fully describe the happiness of an old pilgrim bordering on his heavenly inheritance? He can look far back on his early days when he commenced the christian race, thence over his future course—living through revivals and declensions, and all the while firmly standing in the ways of God. Now being about to receive an honorable discharge, he looks forward to a rich and incorruptible inheritance, and “longs to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.” “Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.” A few words of address and I am done.

And,

1. *To the young who are already in the way of life.* On the one hand, you have all the present and prospective advantages brought to view in the foregoing discourse. And on the other hand, you may yet have a long journey before you through this wilderness world. O, then remember that while many have fought a good fight, and kept the faith to the end, others have made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience. Therefore, pass the time of your sojourning here with fear. And ever remember that your happiness and safety will remain intimately connected, first, with a fixed purpose to perfect heart holiness in the fear of God. And secondly, with freely and vigorously helping forward all the enterprizes of the church. Always remembering that to be idle is dangerous, and to labor is intimately connected with a vast reward in heaven.

2. *I have a word to the aged, who commenced the heavenly race in the days of their youth.* Your condi-

tion is of all others the most desirable upon earth. Surely none can compare with it. Much labor and suffering is past; and very little before you. May the God you have so long served crown your end with the most signal triumph!

3. I would turn my attention *to the young, who have not yet hearkened to the injunction in the text.* It is truly a cause of gratulation that you may now avail yourselves of all the advantages set forth in the foregoing discourse. I need not here repeat them. O then! I ask you, dear youth, if you will, be influenced by these commanding and powerful motives to early piety, and remember now your Creator in the days of your youth? Surely these motives should constrain you at once to give God your hearts. Why then delay? The sooner the better; and the longer the worse.

Perhaps you fear the loss of youthful pleasure. But, remember these delights do not satisfy the cravings of an immortal soul: but leave a sting behind—while those pleasures connected with the favor of God, and a well grounded hope of heaven, are substantial. We assure you then, that even in this life, you will not make worse, but greatly better your condition by becoming religious. And in the world to come, you shall have eternal life. O choose life! And choose it now, “in the days of thy youth.”

4. And lastly: I cannot close this subject without a word *to the aged, who have not yet remembered their Creator.* It is true, your juvenile years have already passed away; and as we have seen in the foregoing discourse, your *best* season is gone. But if it be yet possible, O fly to the ark before the storm of Divine wrath overtake you. Perhaps you are ready to say that while I have held out so much encouragement to the young, I have at the same time greatly discouraged you. But if I have advanced the truth in the foregoing pages, I ask what harm I have really done you? Your case is just what it would have been if I had not advanced these sentiments. And if I am even wrong, your case cannot be made worse by all that I have said. The sermon has done you no real injury.

But as it regards the youth, all must admit, that it

declare the glory of God. The sun, moon and stars manifest his great power. Their order shows his wisdom; both united, keep them in perpetual motion. The earth, with all its variety, teaches us his power, wisdom, and goodness. Also man, made for his own glory, and in his image, possessing a body and a spirit. The body is a very curious compound, and is wonderfully made; and the spirit that dwells in the body we are not able to define; but we know that God often knocks by this sense of seeing. We are sometimes alarmed by a flash of lightning; or by looking into the bible or some other book, the eyes of our understanding are enlightened to see our danger.

2. The sense of *hearing* is united with the sense of seeing. He speaks to us through this sense. We see the lightning and hear the thunder. We see a friend on his death bed; we hear him say, turn to God and meet me in heaven. We hear the bible read, and our duty pointed out to us from its sacred pages. Also we hear the gospel preached by the ministers of Jesus Christ. We attend the prayer meeting—we hear the pious pray for us, and exhort us to repentance. I remember once, in my youth, I had a very loud call from God. As I stood on the edge of the grave of a friend, and heard the clods fall on the coffin, Jesus knocked at my door. I thought it was time I should prepare for death, repent, and turn to God with all my heart; but I had so many bars at my door, I did not take them down at that time, and he did not come in until he knocked through the sense of feeling.

3. *Feeling* is the third sense through which the Saviour knocks. After he has knocked by the door of seeing and hearing, and we will not open to him, he sends judgments upon us. He lays his afflicting rod upon us. We are laid low upon a bed of death. We feel his rod, and we acknowledge his goodness in sparing us. We promise to repent. It was on a bed of affliction I promised the Lord if he would spare me, and raise me up from that bed of affliction, I would serve him. He did raise me to health, and by his aid I took down all the bars at the door, and let him in. He afflicts families, by taking away a father

or mother—a son that we loved, or a daughter that we idolized. Our souls were pained; the stroke was heavy; we sunk almost into despair at our loss. Here is a loud call at the door of our heart to let Jesus in. He knocks by his providence. We are covetous; we are on the pursuit of wealth; we promise the Lord when we are in easy circumstances, we will serve him. Then he makes us feel, by taking away our substance, burning our house or barn, or killing our cattle. I was on a tour lately in the state of Ohio, and in my journey I passed a barn. I saw that it was lately burned, with all it contained. On my entry into the next village, I made inquiry concerning it, and was told the barn was struck by lightning—that the whole of the man's summer labor was burned, and also the best horse he had was killed. I was also told he was a very wicked man. All his friends in the neighborhood were pious. I thought it was a loud call to that man to repent and turn to God, lest the Lord would, by another thunderbolt, send him into eternity.

4. *Taste* is also a sense through which God may call his creatures to flee the wrath to come. We taste our food, our drink. Honey we say is sweet, and vinegar sour. Water is pleasant to a thirsty soul. The Psalmist says, "Come and taste how good the Lord is." The mind of man can taste pleasure in good company, and the man of science in contemplation. Jesus Christ can knock at his door when he is thus engaged in his studies. He may lay before him the science of his holy religion, and invite him to taste the pleasure held out to view in the gospel, a happiness that fills the soul with enjoyment that none but God can bestow. Such is the love of God in Christ. He pardoned all my sins; he loves me; I love him; he feeds his children with bread from heaven, and they drink of the living stream that makes glad the city of God.

5. *Smelling* is a sense through which God may convey a knowledge of himself to us. The high priest in the temple offered incense as a perfume to attract or draw. The smell of garments that were perfumed were pleasant. Isaac, when he blessed Jacob, said: "The smell of my son's garment is as the smell of

from our youth. We have kept the sabbath and gone to the house of God to hear his ministers preach. We also pay our proportion to support the gospel in our own neighborhood, and we aid in all the benevolent operations of the day. Under these considerations, we conclude that we are righteous; we think all is well with us; we will not be lost, although under a heart-searching ministry we are often brought to tremble like Felix, and we feel we are not what we ought to be. We know we are not holy in heart; we look around and see many professors of religion who are, we think, worse than ourselves, and we settle down in a belief that we are as good as our neighbors, and if they get to heaven we will not be cast out, although we love money and try to keep the world in one hand and religion in the other. We will find in the final day of decision that we have deceived ourselves, when it will be too late.

III. "*I stand at the door*"—*let me in.*

Jesus Christ is the person who knocks. Hear him say, "I come to restore you to my favor. I am your Creator. I am also your Redeemer. I come to make you happy, and save you from death and hell. Oh, take away the bars and let me in. I died for you that you might live for ever."

1. Jesus Christ will not *force* open your door; you must open it to him. You are free agents, and you are called on to act as such. You have heard his voice again and again; he calls on you through your senses to open unto him as your best friend; but you object, "I am not prepared to entertain such a guest; he is a King, a Judge, and Governor, and my house is not prepared to entertain him. It is polluted and so filthy that I am ashamed of it and of myself. I have lived many years in this house as it is, and may I not live the balance of my days in it without any change. I am told my house will become old; it will fall to the ground; and also I am as a tenant at will; the owner will come, to whom I am accountable. He has commanded me to set my house in order, and this I cannot do without help. Jesus Christ has come to help me, and stands at the door." Oh, let him in.

2. Man possesses a *will*. We must be *willing* to let him in; this is a self-determining principle. We must be willing to have our names cast out as evil—to suffer the loss of all things on his account. We must hear as a lost sinner and give ear to the voice of him that speaks. Our eternal salvation is now at our own disposal. All the means are within our reach, and if we do not awake to action all is lost. Our text says, “If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him.” Be no longer ignorant of your present state; take away this bar; he will give you the wisdom that comes down from heaven; the bar of unbelief must be removed; you must believe the truth; you must take God at his word and act on it. We must not delay any longer, for now is God’s time; let us now submit to him, and take away the bars. Prejudice and pride must come down; we must sink into the dust at his feet, and be willing to let him in, in his own way, and keep him out no longer.

IV. *We will consider the supper*:—“I will come in to him and will sup with him.”

1. Here is a promise given. If we let him in, he will prepare the house for his own residence, by removing all the filth of sin and cleansing the house, and repairing it. He will make it fit for his own residence. He will show me his goodness in calling at my door to save such a sinner as I am. I submit to his will in all things. What he commands I will do. I now view him as my best friend, and I am grieved that I kept him out so long. But he grants me a free pardon, and gives me an evidence of my acceptance before him. Oh, how good the Lord Jesus Christ is to my soul!

2. But he does not come in alone; he has a blessed company with him—his Father and the Holy Spirit are with him; a company of angels wait on him. He also brings the provisions I need with him; he prepares the table and furnishes it. There is nothing wanting to make me happy.

3. I now sup with him; I am willing to suffer in his service—to have my name cast out as evil; I give up all for him. I am determined to follow him through

religion now. Throw yourselves at his feet; commence praying to him. And rest not night nor day, till you obtain a pardon for all your sins; until Jesus hath come in to your soul, and made you happy in his love.

SERMON IV.

Salvation.

BY JAMES G. SANSOM.

“Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him; seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”—Heb. vii 25.

THE grand design of the apostle in writing this epistle was to prove that the gospel was superior to the Jewish dispensation, and to recommend christianity to the Hebrews. In reasoning on its superior excellence he clearly shows, and satisfactorily proves that our privileges far surpass those that were enjoyed under the former dispensation. He contrasts the priesthood of Christ with that which the Jews possessed, and argues from the acknowledged defects of the latter the necessity of something better.

Theirs was defective in its *extent*. Its direct benefits were limited to the precincts of the Jewish church. The priest, when officiating at the altar, offered sacrifices for the Jews and Jewish proselytes only. But Christ, our sacrifice and priest, offered himself up for all, both Jews and Gentiles.

Their sacrifices were defective as to their *efficacy*. Though often offered, owing to their imperfection, they could not take away sin. Our High Priest, by the once offering up of himself, did what all the legal sacrifices that were offered year by year continually could not do—he obtained eternal redemption for us, and in him alone we have a perfect sacrifice, a complete atonement.

But not only were their sacrifices limited in extent; and wanting in efficacy as an atonement for sin—the priests who offered them were men of like passions with their brethren, subject to human infirmities, and were under the necessity, as for the people, so also for themselves, to offer for sin. But the Mediator of the new covenant is “holy, harmless, and separate from sinners.” For him no altar smokes, no victim bleeds. Further, “they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death;” but our great high Priest sits eternally upon his throne; being made, “not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life,” and “because he continueth forever,” and “hath an unchangeable priesthood,” the apostle in our text argues, “Wherefore he is able to save to the uttermost, &c.”

In the further discussion of this subject we design to notice,

I. THE ABILITY OF CHRIST TO SAVE.

II. THE CONDITIONS UPON WHICH HE SAVES.

III. THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF THIS SALVATION.

I. *The ability of Christ to save.* In the affairs of this life, when important interests are at stake, the ability of those upon whom we depend is a question which concerns us greatly, and where doubt exists we spare no effort to satisfy our minds upon it. But the subject of the soul's salvation is of infinite importance; one that far exceeds in interest any question of earthly origin, and a well-grounded assurance of the power and willingness of Christ to confer this salvation lies at the foundation of all our hopes and all our comforts. We argue his ability to save,

1. From the fact that he possesses omnipotent power. The language of scripture is strong and unequivocal upon this point. In the old testament he is described as “the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace,” Isa. ix, 6. Again, as coming “from Edom,” the land of his enemies, “with dyed garments from Bozrah,” its capital; “traveling in the greatness of his strength; mighty to save,” Isa. lxiii, 1. In the new testament the same absolute perfection and

3. We argue his ability to save from what he is now doing. "He ever liveth to make intercession." He possesses the same ability now as when on earth, and if he ever lives to intercede, it evidences his willingness to exert that ability in our behalf. Having displayed his power in providing salvation for us, in doing all that law and justice could demand by once offering himself up a sacrifice for us all, he now lives to present his blood and sacrifice as the ground of our acceptance with the Father; and to dispense to his people all the blessings of the new and everlasting covenant. In consequence of this mediation, and continued intercession happy millions now live to enjoy the benefits of his salvation, to evidence that he still has power to forgive sins. The testimony of these witnesses is that, "whereas we were once blind now we see;" "for God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ;" "and having been made free from sin and become the servants of God, we have our fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life."

But not only in their own hearts do they enjoy an assurance of his power to save. Their daily walk in life affords to others most satisfactory proof of the same truth. We speak not of cold, formal, hypocritical professors of religion, but of the duly regenerated sons and daughters of God, who are found "walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." To these living "epistles, known and read of all men," we triumphantly appeal, as affording the strongest and most conclusive evidence of Christ's ability to save. We notice,

II. *The condition upon which he saves.* We are apprized that here we enter upon controverted ground. While some affect to deny conditional salvation, others are disposed to increase the conditions, and confine salvation to the priest, to the church, or to ordinances. We believe the truth lies between these extremes, and take the ground that salvation is conditional, and that the only condition required is living faith in the power and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. We argue its conditionality from man's free agency. However absolute the power of God is over his creatures, we have reason to believe that he always deals with them according to the particular nature he has given them. Now, man is a rational and intelligent creature, endowed by his Creator with liberty of will; and to save him unconditionally—to save him either without or against his will, or to influence his will otherwise than by motives and arguments, would be to destroy his agency, to degrade him from his present elevated rank in creation, and to deal with him not as an intelligent and accountable being, but as a mere machine. It is true God endeavors by his word and Spirit to restore man to holiness and happiness, but if man in the exercise of his free agency chooses to continue in sin, Omnipotence itself cannot save him without destroying his nature; and if by the exercise of absolute power his will is changed unconditionally, and his nature destroyed, he ceases to be accountable for his actions—and if so, then is the doctrine of rewards and punishments a figment, and God, being the agent in everything, becomes the author of sin.

Such, however, is not the doctrine of the text. It assures us that God's method is to save those who in the exercise of the powers bestowed upon them, choose "to come unto God" through the Mediator. Which leads us to remark that its conditionality is sustained

2. By the direct testimony of revelation. From this source we learn that God considers and deals with man as a being capable of receiving or rejecting his offers—of submitting to or resisting his Spirit—of obeying or disobeying his word; and as a subject of law, forming his own character, and responsible for his actions. The following texts sustain this point: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him," John iii, 36. "By him all that believe are justified," Acts xiii, 39. "By grace ye are saved, through faith," Eph. ii, 8. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ," Rom. v, 1. In these, and similar passages, we find that our present justification and final salvation is

III. *The nature and extent of this salvation.* Salvation, or to be saved, means the deliverance of man from sin and its effects, and the conferring upon him everlasting happiness. The plan by which this is accomplished, as revealed in the bible, bears upon it the seal and impress of divinity. The human family were involved in difficulty, and as guilty sinners, exposed to the punishment of death and hell, from which they possessed no power to deliver themselves. Long did suffering humanity bleed in sorrow, and seek relief in vain. The human mind, though actively employed in devising plans, erecting altars, offering sacrifices, and seeking rest, found in every direction nothing but sorrow, distress, and bitter disappointment. The religion of nature when tried to its utmost extent, was found inadequate to impart salvation, or release from suffering. Infidelity had been tried without success. Still the groans of the prisoner dying in despair, and the sighs of the distressed rode on the atmosphere, calling for relief, but finding none. The cries of the suffering and the wretched reached the ear of the Almighty. Moved with pity and compassion, he devised a plan, and sent his only Son, clothed with omnipotent power to open the prison doors, and let the oppressed go free, and proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. Heaven rejoiced at the development of God's design; angels bore the tidings to the listening shepherds, and directed them to go to Bethlehem with the glad announcement that there was a Saviour born, "able to save to the uttermost." We are not called upon to purchase his favor by our own sufferings, or by our works; to offer continual sacrifice at home, or perform some expensive pilgrimage to a distant shrine, but "the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart—for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." By a present, actually-existing, and exercised faith in Christ, we are saved in consideration of his obedience and his death—not that our faith merits this salvation, but is used only as the instrument whereby we make a personal appropriation of his merits and mediation.

As to its extent, this salvation is full and free. "He saves to the *uttermost*"—his will is the salvation of all, for "if any man sin we have an advocate with the Father." He saves from the guilt, from the power, and the punishment of sin; and his salvation is adapted to every possible situation and condition of suffering humanity. The lonely penitent afar in the desert may, when placed beyond the reach of human aid, there find him able and ready to save; the shipwrecked mariner, clinging to his plank, on the limitless ocean, dashed from wave to wave by the angry billows, which every moment threaten his destruction, amid the thunder's roar and the lightning's lurid flash, in nature's extremity, when heart and flesh faint and fail, may call upon God in the name of Christ, and experience his power to save. The thief upon the cross, trembling on the verge of eternal ruin, while all the combined powers of heaven and earth could not reach his case, in almost hopeless despair casts his languid eye on the face of the Redeemer, and cries, "Lord, remember me," and the hand of Omnipotence is instantly extended to snatch him as a brand plucked from the burning. The guilty and broken hearted penitent, though he feels his Maker's frown gathering in deepening, spreading darkness over his soul, and the pealing thunders of eternal justice demanding the sinner's death, yet he need not fear if he flies for refuge, and lays hold by faith upon the hope set before him in the gospel. Through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, he may find salvation, and his heart be filled with righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. The name of Jesus, like the music of heaven, charms the passions of his breast, his fears are hushed to silence, faith sustains and love inspires his soul, while hope, their sister, dips her pencil in the rainbow hues of heaven, and paints to his enraptured vision those joys immortal which, in their full perfection, "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived."

Such is the salvation which Christ provides, and which has been tested by hundreds and thousands of happy believers in days and years gone by. It has

does, innumerable scenes of wretchedness and woe, would become the abode of righteousness, peace and felicity. But no man has ever kept this law. All men are by nature corrupt, "inclined to evil, and that continually;" sinners in the sight of him who gave it, and exposed to all its terrible penalties. Its language is—"the soul that sinneth, it shall die," and "cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." This law is just as immutable as are the perfections of God. It never can be relaxed in the slightest degree, even if that measure of relaxation would save a world from hell. It opens up no way of mercy; it points to no refuge whatever, but while it shows the transgressor all his sins, it brings to his view, as the just penalty of every offense, everlasting pain and death in the world to come. In a word, the law worketh nothing but wrath, and wrath interminable.

II. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written," &c: Three things here claim attention.

1. *Christ has "redeemed us from the curse of the law."*

The English word, *to redeem*, signifies to "buy back, to rescue, to recover, to ransom from captivity by paying a price." In short, it is used to signify deliverance from danger, exile, prison, death, or any evil from which one may be freed. Now the curse of the law embraced all those evils which have flowed from Adam's sin, and which are summed up by Mr. Wesley in death temporal, spiritual, and eternal. It includes not only the death of the body, but also the loss of the image in which man was created, the deprivation of the Spirit, and consequently, a moral inability to do any thing acceptable to God, and eternal banishment from God in a future state. All these evils would have been instantly inflicted upon Adam, when he sinned, had not God, foreseeing his apostacy, mercifully made provision to save him. For, a government of strict justice admits of no delay in inflicting punishment, but justice in connection with a sufficient atonement for sin, allows a suspension of the sentence, and the multiplication of

means for the recovery of the offender. Under the curse of the law, Adam, by voluntary transgression, placed himself and all his posterity. But from all the evils included in this curse, Christ has redeemed us. His atonement has put us into a capacity of securing all the blessings lost by Adam's sin. It meets our judicial wants and our moral destitution. For the removal of guilt, we have the "remission of sins;" in opposition to moral pollution, we have the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit; the dominion of the grave will be terminated by a glorious resurrection; and instead of eternal wrath, we may secure life everlasting in heaven.

2. *Christ was made a curse or execration, for it is written, "cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."*

The passage quoted by the apostle is found in the 21st chapter of Deuteronomy.—"And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain all night upon a tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day (for he that is hanged is accursed of God.)" On the body of the criminal thus executed, the curse of God was considered as alighting, and the accursed thing was to be removed out of sight the same day. Crucifixion was deemed by both Jews and Romans the most ignominious death. This infamy was inflicted by the Jews only upon the most vile and flagrant offenders, and it was intended to show the light in which the person thus punished was viewed by the Almighty—he was a curse, an execration. Christ, then, was made accursed of God. His sufferings were penal. This is certainly the doctrine of our text, and it affords us the only rational explication of the depth and intensity of our Saviour's sufferings. Who among all the martyrs that suffered merely for righteousness' sake, experienced such overwhelming woe as did the Redeemer? Not one. They, when condemned, rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer. But Christ Jesus, when he entered upon that "dreadful period, in which, from the garden to the cross, he bore the burden of a world's atonement," ex-

To meet the claims of divine justice and save the sinner, a substitute was required, and a substitute, moreover, who was not naturally the subject of law. For, created beings, when they have done all they can, have no merit which can be transferred to others to meet the claims of the divine law. The amazing mercy of God procured for us just such a sacrifice for sin as his law required. The Lord of hosts, in due time, exclaimed—"awake, O sword against my shepherd, and against the man that is my Fellow." Christ Jesus, a divine person, put himself in our place. He allied himself to our sinful race, and by a voluntary act, laid down his life for our redemption. Thus, through the blood of Christ, who was both God and man, mercy is extended to *all*. God is "just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." *Now*, when stung by the scorpion, sin, and alarmed by the thunders of God's holy law, the penitent seeks for mercy, grace points him to the Lamb of God who has canceled all his iniquities with his own blood, and through faith in this atonement, his sins are all forgiven, and the child of wrath becomes an heir of salvation.

III. In the last place, we notice more fully the benefits procured by the death of Christ. He was made a curse for us that "the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles."

We have already noticed that the deprivation of the Holy Spirit was included in the "curse" which fell upon Adam. His spiritual life, even while he retained his innocence, was not a natural result of his creation, but the effect of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit's influence under the "curse" being withdrawn, spiritual death immediately ensued. But Christ having "redeemed us from the curse of the law," the Spirit's influence is restored. It is now bestowed in various degrees upon man, not because he is God's creature, but because he is redeemed. It is by the influence of the Spirit that the sinner is awakened and brought to exercise repentance towards God, and faith in Christ Jesus, and whatever may be his gifts, graces, or attainments in religion, after his adoption, they must all be ascribed to the same divine influence.

How the Spirit operates is not for man to explain. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Hence, many ridicule and deny its operations altogether, and some acute theologians contend, that it only operates in and by the *written word* of God. Is it not strange, that men who admit that Satan can tempt us without the use of language, should say that the Eternal One can have no access to our hearts and minds except through that medium? And to deny, or sneer at, the doctrine of spiritual influence, is as unphilosophical as it is unscriptural. Mere matter is essentially inert. If it ever moves matter, it only imparts what it has first received from something else, and what can that something be, but spiritual influence? The truth is, all life and motion are derived, either directly, or mediately, from the Spirit of God.

"Alone he works in all, yet he alone
Seems not to work."

"In him we live, and move, and have our being."
"Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled; thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth."* He renews also the moral world.† For ages before the coming of Christ, spiritual blessings were bestowed almost exclusively upon the Jews, the natural descendants of Abraham, who constituted the visible church of God. The Gentiles during all "that time, were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." But under the gospel, "the blessing of Abraham" has come upon the Gentiles. This blessing includes all the benefits of the gospel dispensation. It embraces those dispensations of providence by which the gospel is carried to pagan countries, a living christian ministry, and, in a word, all the instrumentalities by which infinite wis-

* Psal. civ. 29, 30.

† Titus iii. 5.

the mere buddings of christian benevolence. As the gospel gains ascendancy over the hearts and consciences of men, its efforts will be extended, until they shall be commensurate with the wants and woes, and pains and sorrows of our fallen race. Then shall "sorrow and sighing flee away," and "the desert shall blossom as the rose."

3. *The Gentiles were full of murder.* The destruction of human life was frequently carried to a most frightful extent, not only to glut their vengeance, or satiate their ambition, but also for mere recreation. Murders of the most diabolical character were the chief entertainments of their gala days, and were enjoyed with peculiar zest. Even their most refined females gazed with eager delight upon deeds of cruelty and scenes of carnage, horrible and repulsive. Yes, they were full, literally "full of murder." Infanticide was general; slaves were wantonly murdered for sport, and the gladiatorial combats cost Europe twenty thousand lives in one month. Even Titus, whom some of them styled "divine," murdered upwards of five thousand captive Jews, in honor of the birth days of his father and brother. One of their emperors, it is said, wished that the people had but one neck, that he might destroy them all at one blow; and certainly such a wish, though malignant enough for the foulest demon in hell, would well accord with the universal passion for blood. Now, contrast this blood-guiltiness and insecurity, with the quietude and safety which we are permitted to enjoy. It is true, violence and bloodshed still occur, but their aggregate is only "as a drop in the bucket," in comparison with the deeds at which we have just glanced; and when they do occur, though the victims be as infamous as were the gamblers of Vicksburgh, the moral feeling of the nation is shocked by such atrocity. Such a measure of security is now given us, as clearly demonstrates that "the blessing of Abraham" is upon us. Yet we enjoy, in this respect also, only the dim dawning of a bright and glorious day. The time is approaching when men shall "learn war no more" and cruelty and violence shall prevail no

longer. "Judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever." God will have "respect to the covenant" until every dark "habitation of cruelty" shall become a Bethesda, a house of piety; and every hut of ignorance and vice, shall be transformed into a Bethel, or house of God.

Having sufficiently noticed the general benefits of redemption, as enjoyed, to some extent, even by unbelievers, we will now hastily glance at some of the still richer blessings of grace conferred upon the "household of faith," those who are "Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

The Gentiles knew nothing of the providence of God. They were tormented with fearful omens, their lives hung in doubt, and alarming apprehensions reigned in every breast. The Christian knows that the "hairs" of his head "are numbered," and that "all things work together" for his good. The Gentiles when burdened with guilt and remorse could obtain no relief.

"Whatever their worship, gods, temples or creed,
Both the Romans and Greeks were in similar need;
No light, life, or peace, could their systems disclose,
Hence the world was all dark when the day-star arose."

They might call upon their gods "from morning till noon," leap upon their altars, and "cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets till the blood gushed out upon them," but their gods could not hear; "there was no voice, nor any that answered." But the children of Abraham "being justified by faith, have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ," and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

Destitute of natural affection, the family broils of the Gentiles were exceedingly bitter and relentless; paternal tenderness, and filial reverence, were hardly known; and their offspring were reared under a ritual of vice. But under the gospel, the "blessing of Abraham" has changed the moral aspect of families, and rendered do-

and among them some of our own dear kindred, have testified with their latest breath, that "the blessing of Abraham" is stronger than death.

Finally, the Gentiles, when they bore the remains of their kindred to the tomb, had "no hope." The doctrine of a resurrection was to them unknown. But "the blessing of Abraham" will undo all the mischief of death's iron rule. By the fiat of the Eternal One, death is permitted to wreak his petty vengeance on the body. "It is sown in corruption." This complex system, so "fearfully and wonderfully made," is doomed to be stripped by his desolating hand of its vitality, symmetry, unparalleled mechanism and loveliness, and to lie dishonored in the grave. But the eye of faith rests upon that glorious promise in "the blessing of Abraham"—"I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plagues! O grave, I will be thy destruction!" The loathsome grave, the dreary charnel-house, the very spot in which are seen the most degrading consequences of sin, will be made the theater of the Christian's last and most glorious triumph. It matters not in what sequestered spot his ashes may repose, "the voice of the Son of man" will awake him from the sleep of death. He shall be raised in power, in incorruption, and in glory; and he shall "be ever with the Lord." He "shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more"—he shall be faint, weary, perplexed, and dejected, no more—but he shall be ever, "*ever* with the Lord." Ever beholding his glory, ever enjoying his smile and protection, ever progressing in knowledge, wisdom, and love; his happiness will be full and interminable. A largess worthy of the Rock of Ages and the Prince of Peace—"a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory"—will be the "inheritance of the saints," when Christ shall come with all his mighty angels, to raise the dead and shout the harvest-home. And this glorious inheritance is conferred upon the Gentiles! "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

In conclusion—let us learn from this subject that none need despair of pardon and everlasting life. Our redemption is complete. Where sin hath abounded, grace doth “much more abound.” The last obstacle to the triumph of mercy has been swept away by the atonement. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” “The Spirit and the bride say, come. And let him that heareth say, come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

“Come, O my guilty brethren, come,
Groaning beneath your load of sin;
His bleeding heart shall make you room,
His open side shall take you in.
He calls you now—invites you home—
Come, O my guilty brethren, come.”

“For you the purple current flow'd
In pardons from his wounded side;
Languish'd for you the Son of God,
For you the Prince of Glory died.
Believe and all your sin 's forgiven—
Only believe, and yours is heaven!”

SERMON VI.

The Apostles' Ministry.

BY GEORGE W. CLARK.

“Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.”—II. Cor. 1—2.

THE word truth, in this passage, expresses summarily all those communications God has made to man; and it is assumed by the apostle that these discoveries, whether doctrines or precepts, are divinely adapted to the nature, condition, and necessities of the human race. If presented to the unbiased reason, so as to be

Paul was a worthy example of ministerial excellence; and in the further treatment of the subject, we will notice the ministry of which he speaks, remarking briefly on its nature, objects, difficulties, and the mercy that supported him in the arduous work.

“Therefore seeing we have this ministry.”—It is generally admitted by those who receive the bible as a divine revelation, that in the constitution and economy of his church, God has specially provided for and calls into requisition the services of a peculiar class of men, known as his ambassadors, messengers, and ministers. The ranting reformers of the present age may declaim against this arrangement if they will; but it is God's method for promoting the best interests of society, for increasing knowledge, and diffusing the benefits of religion. And this method of instructing, and influencing men for good commends itself as well worthy of him who has adopted it. To have left the work to unauthorized, irresponsible agents, would have periled the truth, and all the interests involved in its maintenance. Men not specially set apart to this service, might for a time have held and taught the pure gospel, but there could have been no sacredness in their office to challenge the attention and respect of the auditor. Such teachers could never have in truth declared to the rebellious, “we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us we pray you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled to God.”

Nor would the ministry of a higher order of beings have been more efficient in turning men to the obedience of the just. The wisdom which made choice of such feeble, and to us, at first view, such inadequate instrumentalities, is, on reflection, sufficiently apparent. It is in great mercy to our weakness, that we are only permitted to hear the echo of Jehovah's voice, and see his face through a glass darkly. Our feeble powers could not, by any means, endure the full manifestation of that glorious effulgence; and if an angel were to speak to us, we would fall at his feet as dead, overpowered at his presence, and wholly disqualified for the rational service to which our Maker calls us.

To the minister himself, who knows his heavenly calling, the honor conferred must be matter of humble, devout gratitude; for while it is a privilege to have others minister to us in the name, and by the appointment of God, it must be a still greater privilege that we are permitted to bear the messages of his grace to our perishing fellow-men. No man who has been truly called of God can lightly esteem so distinguished a privilege as this, but will from the heart most sincerely thank God for that he hath "counted him worthy, putting him into the ministry." Paul did so, though his sacrifices and sufferings were great, and his trials severe. In the midst of all his toils and conflicts, privations and sufferings, he greatly rejoiced, and gloried in his work. No worldly honors could have tempted him to descend from the noble elevation to which he had been raised by his appointment to the sacred office. The unholy intruder, who has brought strange fire to God's altars, may complain bitterly of his unpaid labors and sacrifices in the service of the church, but this is not the habit of him who cheerfully counts all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. To him the work of saving souls, with all the difficulties and trials that attend it, is desirable. He has a blessedness, divinely sweet and precious, in the Christ-like labor of seeking the lost, and leading the wretched wanderer to the refuge mercy has provided him. The privilege of even suffering for his master's sake, while thus engaged, is counted greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.

But while the true minister has very much for which to thank God in view of his heavenly calling, his views of the office and work secure him against the spirit of pride or self-exaltation. Though he claims the honor of being a worker together with God, "boasting is excluded;" for the treasure is so "committed to earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

Perhaps nothing would be gained by discussing, at any considerable length, the question of a special divine call to this sacred office and work. However infi-

ridiculous error. These distinguished divines of the English church have lately taken it on them to reassert the long since exploded dogmas of Romish superstition, and lend all their influence to countenance the very abuses of religion, in protesting against which their fathers of the Reformation were willing to sacrifice life itself. Nor have these anti-protestant assumptions and practices been confined to their trans-Atlantic birth-place; but the Oxford leaders, who have been marshaling for a return to Rome, have their subalterns on this side the waters. Their popish doctrines are cordially embraced, and their haughty exclusiveness imitated by not a few nominal Protestants in our own country. An arrogant ecclesiastic is occasionally met even here, who is forward to unchurch the great body of evangelical ministers, and assign the thousands that are annually converted through their instrumentality to "the uncovenanted mercies of God." The validity of our ordination is denied; and the sacraments, if administered by any other than high church Episcopalians, are pronounced a nullity.

It is not necessary to refute those idle conceits about apostolic succession to which this narrow-minded bigotry appeals for its justification. It is enough for my present purpose to state, what has been demonstrated a thousand times, that the doctrine has no sufficient authority either in the scriptures or the early history of the church, but depends mostly on bold assumptions, or uncertain traditions which cannot date beyond the days of darkness, when it was but too common to teach for doctrine the commandments of men. The ministry which Christ appointed and perpetuates neither needs nor acknowledges such doubtful authority. Divinely simple in its constitution; and all specific, prudential regulations for economy and government being left for a proper adaptation to circumstances, what is essential to its validity he can easily preserve. Appealing to the new testament as authority in the premises, we are confident in the statement, that so far as the men truly devoted to the great work of preaching the gospel are rightfully distinguished in authority or rank, the difference is not of special divine appointment, but wholly

adventitious, or incidental. The humblest servant of Christ who is called to this great work, has without doubt obtained the same ministry in which Paul rejoices. Whatever the form of ordination by which the church may see fit to recognize his appointment, he has all the essential marks of an apostle, and is as certainly a true ambassador of Christ, authorized to preach his word, and administer the ordinances of his house, as any of those who were first employed in the same service. He is commissioned by the same authority, sustained by the same promise, and accomplishes the same great work. In ardent zeal for the honor of God, and the salvation of souls—in the truth of his doctrine, and the purity of his life—in his conflicts and his comforts—self-abased, yet always glorying in the cross of Christ, by which he is crucified to the world, and the world crucified to him. In these, and such as these, every faithful minister is a successor of the apostles. Yet he has a higher honor than this, because his official lineage can be traced back, not only to Peter, or Paul, but to the Holy Ghost, by which both he and they were endued with power from on high. This is the true apostolic succession, and for it we should contend earnestly. This is the scriptural test of our calling; and, all thanks to God, that the church we love more than life, and at whose altars we are permitted to serve, has so many accredited apostles whose claims to the regular line of succession cannot be mistaken.

But when by the apostleship of which we hear so much there is any reference made to a supposed connection with the twelve disciples, or the inheritance of what was peculiar to their office, and distinguished them from other cotemporary pastors of Christ's flock, the doctrine is wholly fanciful. And it does seem idle, if not ridiculous in the last degree, for any man to weary himself with fruitless labor, in hope of threading out the dusky labyrinths of this imaginary succession. He seeks for what has no existence. Inasmuch as the apostles, in what was peculiar to them, such as the power of working miracles, and the direct inspiration of their doctrines, have not, and never had, a suc-

making this known was considered so great that he determined to know nothing among men but Jesus Christ, and him crucified. Thus he gloried in the cross, amidst the sneers and scoffs of enemies, still striving above all things to fix the eye of the awakened sinner on Calvary, and the sacrifice which there atoned for his guilt.

Nor can those now entrusted with the same ministry ever discharge the high responsibilities of their sacred office by anything short of a clear, and forcible, and frequent presentation of Christ, as our only and sufficient Saviour. It is ours to seek the wanderer afar off, and bring him nigh—to rouse him from the guilty dream of sin and death—to flash conviction on the conscience—and then to the trembling inquirer after the way of life, to reveal the reconciling Saviour—to state, explain, and bring, as far as possible, to his comprehension, the grounds and conditions on which God will be propitious to his prayer. If we would minister as did the great apostle in all things, and whether we pronounce his name or not, Christ must be the alpha and omega—the first and the last. The way of salvation through the merit of his death must be kept constantly in view, or the great end of preaching can not be accomplished. A sermon with no Christ in it must be defective; however powerful its argument, or polished its style, there is an incompleteness about it, for which no minor excellencies can make any adequate atonement.

That work, of which the text speaks, has been appropriately called the "*ministry* of the word." It is so called, not only because it proclaims, as we have seen, the divine Logos, or Word of God, but also because all the materials of our ministrations are treasured up in the precious volume containing the words of eternal life. It is the minister's chief concern to understand and exhibit the doctrines of God's holy word. While he labours to enforce and apply these doctrines with suitable arguments and illustrations, his preaching will not be remarkable for the novelty of the theories set forth. He rather calls his hearers to the old paths, that they may walk therein, well satisfied that in doing so

they will find rest to their souls—while other means to benefit and reform society, are eagerly sought, and many cry “lo here, or lo there,” he goes not after them, nor heeds any of all the thousand vagaries and crazy ultraisms with which pretended reformers have sought to subvert the truth. He cannot endorse their mockery of benevolence, or bid them God-speed in measures which tend to supplant the only agency that has power to remove or mitigate the evils which afflict mankind. The fidelity of Christ’s ministers has in this particular been severely tried within a few years past. Society has been agitated, and influences adverse to religion have swept over some portions of the country like a desolating flood. The enemy has approached us in a new guise, cloaking his malicious intentions with the mantle of charity, and affecting great commiseration for the unfortunate and oppressed. The attack has sometimes been artfully made, and when the watchmen have been off their guard, great mischief has been done, which it may take years of industrious toil to repair. While there is much occasion to rejoice that most of those appointed to guard and serve the church have, like men of God, contended earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and maintained old fashioned bible christianity as the only adequate means of effectually correcting the errors, and reforming the vices of men—some, it is feared, have been less true to the trust committed to them. Deceived by false pretences, they have come down from their appropriate work, shaken hands, and made covenant with the deadliest enemies of religion. Having received to their embrace those who blaspheme the worthy name by which they are called, they have either ignorantly or treacherously opened their folds, and permitted the wolf to enter and slay the flocks they were appointed to defend. While we censure, we at the same time pity those ministers, of whatever name, who have been persuaded to open their churches and give up their pulpits to notorious lecturers, male and female, whose infidelity has been so poorly disguised, and who have labored, with words of malicious falsehood, to destroy

But though a profound scholar and philosopher, he was not the minister of philosophy—was not set for the defense of any system of ethics. It was his to declare the truth and grace of God. A dispensation of the gospel was committed unto him, and he saw such a divine fullness in the subject of his mission—such depths of wisdom and goodness—that he gladly counted all things else but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. He can never be convicted of preaching himself, by an attempt to show off his learning, as some have since done. His whole manner is widely different from that of ministers who are content to read moral essays, and lecture their hearers on almost anything else, rather than the pressing claims of personal religion; too often making the pulpit, where eternal love should pour its ceaseless streams on the thirsting heart, a theater for scientific and rhetorical display. Oh! what cruel mockery it is, to present to souls hungering for the bread of life, only the unsubstantial flowers of rhetoric, or the cold abstractions of subtle philosophy. To preach thus, is the sure way to merit and meet the curse of God. And there is reason to fear that much of what passes current with some men for great and learned preaching, is a stench in the nostrils of Jehovah, because, with all its ornaments, it is wholly Christless, and spiritless.

The pious should not cease to pray that God may in mercy send his church pastors who rather cultivate simplicity, spirituality, and directness in their ministrations—especially that they may never lose the unction of the Holy One, which alone can make the humblest servant of Christ an efficient instrument in saving the souls of men. Yet there is no fear that any one can bring too extensive and varied acquirements to this great work. That is impossible. We want learned men—yes, we do *want* them. But we want them so learned that they can preach Jesus and the resurrection, in a manner intelligible to the humblest comprehension; nor will any be able to meet the present demands of the church but spiritually minded men—men full of faith and the Holy Ghost. Without this prima-

ry qualification, with all knowledge, our ministry can be no better than sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. Even if we could reason men out of their infidelity, and batter down their refuges of lies, which we must do, the great work would be but just begun. It has been well said, "men cannot be reasoned into the love of God, and the fellowship of the Spirit." We may by sound argument force them to see and acknowledge all the phenomena of nature and the facts of science to be in perfect harmony with the doctrines of revelation; but it is a cold assent that is thus wrung from the unbeliever. We have given him light, but no warmth—no vital energy to quicken and rouse him from the torpor of spiritual death. Nor can the heart be truly reached, but by the sword of the Lord. When its bright edges are burnished, free from the rust of error, and handled by faith, the Spirit's might will aid in thrusting it into the soul, until the thoughts and intents of the heart are discovered. In accomplishing this work, the true minister will have the great object of his mission steadily in view. He aims directly at the spiritual enlightenment and salvation of those that hear him, and must reject whatever is foreign to this purpose. But let no man under cover of a pretended spirituality and reliance on divine aid seek to justify his culpable and shameful neglect of preparation for the duties of the sanctuary. The listless visionary who spends much of his precious time in intellectual idleness, and thinks severe study of little importance, will never be able to show himself approved of God—a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. I fear it is far from safe to adopt, without material qualification, the sentiment, so often advanced, that a minister ought to be "a man of one book." It is not true. His shelves should be well furnished with the best productions of great and good men, and his mind richly stored with the accumulated wisdom of ages. He has indeed but one *work*; but, to accomplish that work aright, he must give attention to reading, and stir up the gift that is in him—must have his faculties quickened by intense application, and be accustomed to close and diligent

troubling fear that their implety may in some way be attributed to his want of qualifications for the important work to which he is called. There is something more terrible in this than can even be described. God commands his servants, saying, "receive the word at my mouth and warn them from me." If he fails to do this, or performs the work but partially, and the sword come and take one away; if death cuts off the impenitent hearer, he shall die in his sins, but his blood will be required at the watchman's hands. A soul of priceless value is lost; an heir of immortality doomed to eternal death; a costly jewel torn from the Redeemer's crown, and God robbed of praise; and if through negligence or fear, or unbelief, or any other cause, the timely warning was not given, the unfaithful shepherd must answer for the ruin that is done. Being held to such an account we need the mercy of God. Without this support the soul would sink beneath the burden of its load.

But, thanks be to God, the servant of Christ with all the peculiar difficulties of his calling, is not left comfortless. He may be troubled on every side, but is not forsaken; cast down, but not in despair. The support he needs is never withheld; and he securely rests in the promise, "as thy day is, so thy strength shall be." Paul has recorded his blessed experience in the text, "as we have received mercy we faint not." Yes, we have received it; and it makes even the night of sorrow radiant with immortal hope. While conscious of the divine favor, no trial is too great, no labor too severe. However sensible of his own weakness, and distrustful of himself, the humblest minister adopts the noble declaration, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." And at the end of his service, having fought the good fight, and kept the faith, he goes to his rest and his reward, like the dying Wesley, gratefully declaring, "The best of all is, God with us."

SERMON VII.

The Great Salvation.

BY SIMON LAUCK.

“For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him. God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders; and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost according to his own will.”—Heb. II. 3, 4.

THE apostle commences the chapter, out of which the text is selected, by calling attention to what is said in the foregoing chapter, especially on the character and godhead of Jesus Christ; as being superior to the angels, or the prophets; “for unto which of the angels said he at any time, thou art my Son this day have I begotten thee; and again, “I will be to him a father and he shall be to me a son;” making the Son an object of worship, saying, and let the angels of God worship him; thus making him equal with God, establishing his essential divinity; and that God who had before at sundry times spoken by the prophets hath in these last days spoken by his Son; who after having purged our sins by making an atonement for them, and introducing the gospel of our salvation, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. He shall remain when all that is created shall have passed away. Now to those things which have been thus spoken, the apostle exhorts to give the more earnest heed, lest at any time they should let them slip; and then introduces our text, saying, if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us

son takes so fast hold on the cloth or wool dyed that nothing can erase it without destroying the cloth; so sin takes such fast hold on the soul that nothing can remove it of human art, power, or skill, and of course destruction would be certain; but Christ can accomplish the work, for the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin; and for this very purpose there was the fountain opened in the house of David for sin and uncleanness; to which fountain we are invited to come, and wash and be clean. God directs this course, saying, by the prophet Isaiah, wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes. Seeing then this is our privilege, let us go on to perfection, never satisfied till we awake in his likeness—till we are saved from all sin, which will qualify us to find a place with the saved in heaven. This will complete our salvation.

The salvation spoken of is a great salvation.

1. It is great when compared with the law as said to be spoken by angels and delivered to Moses; making him the instrument to write and communicate, as one of the prophets by whom God spake at sundry times. But in these last days he hath spoken to us by his Son. Then as the Son is much greater than the angels, as stated in the first chapter, so is this salvation greater than the law. The law was confined to the Jews; the gospel offers this salvation to the world; to every man coming into the world; and the gospel is to be preached to every creature. It is therefore greater. The services of the law were in types and figures. In the gospel we have the great antetype which was prefigured by the lamb slain, the blood sprinkled, the sacrifices offered. Christ is the lamb: his blood was shed which cleanseth from all sin. He was the great sacrifice offered for the sin of the world; therefore this salvation is great. The law required outward ceremonies—the gospel requires truth in the inward parts—a law written on the fleshly tables of the heart—a new heart is to be given, and a right spirit renewed within us; and Christ is to be in us the hope of glory. It is a great salvation.

2. It is further great, inasmuch as it saves from such deep degradation, such pollution, such condemnation; from all sin and misery. So Paul considered it, when he declared to Timothy that Christ came into the world "to save sinners, of whom I am chief."

3. It is a great salvation, as it saves from the damnation of hell, and places those who once were children of wrath, and heirs of hell, among the sons of God. They shall shine like the sun in the kingdom of heaven, for ever and ever.

II. *We are to present some reasons why it is made so binding on us who live under the gospel.*

1. This salvation comes by the highest authority in earth or heaven. It is said it was first spoken or brought to us by the Lord. He is the Son of God, the first begotten, the brightness of the Father's glory, the express image of his person, whom the angels of God are to worship. Such is the high authority by which it comes to us; and it ought, yea must be regarded by us at our peril. It is God that speaks, not angels or prophets—he that has a name above every other name; before whom every knee shall bow in heaven and in earth. A messenger of a president, of a king, of an emperor, is to be regarded, heard and obeyed at our peril. But how much more the messenger from heaven—the Son of God, who proved his commission by the works he performed. He said, if ye believe not my word, believe for the work's sake. The miracles they saw, none but God could do; even to raise the dead, and reverse the laws of nature. Enough has been said to prove his authority; and is not this reason sufficient to influence every man to regard and seek this salvation?

2. This word was confirmed by those that heard him. Had not this confirmation been given, all might now have been lost; we might have some excuse for our neglect, and some ground for our infidelity; but we thank God this word has been confirmed to us by many witnesses, even the apostles, who saw the Lord with their own eyes, and heard him with their own ears, and of course were competent witnesses. So Christ himself judged; for he said to them, "ye are my witness-

rious, contrary to the expectations of all. See him again, before the emperor, kings and electors, when a large number of the great and the learned of the empire, with the pope's influence, were there. Yet against all this power, wit, and learning, his meekness, his wisdom, his eloquence makes him victorious, and gives strength to the reformation. Signs and wonders, it may be said, and divers miracles, were wrought. Others of his friends, no doubt, were also endued with power, such as Melancthon, Zuinglius, and others. Luther achieved a victory over the emperor, as Paul over Agrippa or Felix, and displays his wisdom and power before thousands, as Paul at Athens. But these are not all. The Wesleys, the Fletchers, the Whitefields, no doubt, were inspired men, in a lower degree than the apostles, having some of the gifts of the Holy Ghost. See how miraculously John Wesley was raised up as a reformer! What wisdom he was endued with—what power of interpretation and explanation—what wisdom in framing an ecclesiastical government! In “government” he was probably never excelled by any other man. What signs and wonders were done by him, and through his instrumentality! It may be said in some sense the world is filling with Wesley's doctrine and government. But we have also had an Asbury, who was not the least of all the princes of Israel. He, also, was endued with the Holy Ghost for his particular sphere; for special gifts were visible in him. He possessed much wisdom in expounding the scriptures, in government, and some supposed in discerning of spirits. One thing is certain, few men ever excelled him in his knowledge of men. He was likewise indefatigable in his labors and travels. Through his labors many signs and wonders appeared. God did indeed bear witness to his word by signs and wonders. But were not many of his preachers also endued with the Holy Spirit? Yes, many of them were weak, illiterate men, scarcely capable of giving out their hymns, or writing their own names; but in them appeared the power of God in an extraordinary manner. They preached the gospel in power and in the demonstration

of the Spirit. These men, in an early day, were much exposed, traveled hard, preached much, amid many disadvantages, in cabins, barns, stables, in the woods—the heavens their sounding board; a stump, a stone, or log, or block of wood, their pulpit. But they preached in power, and in the demonstration of the Spirit; and God bore them witness by signs following. They often saw a great part of their congregation prostrate on the floor or ground; their cries for mercy partly drowned their own voices. They had frequently to leave the stand, and go to encourage the penitent, and comfort the mourner—pray with and for him, till miracles were wrought—lions turned to lambs, sinners to saints, children of the devil to children of God. Surely God has borne witness by so many signs, and through so many ages, and still bears witness, that we must feel bound to believe and obey—be saved, and eat the good of the land.

But we have another reason to offer—

4. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?

If the word spoken by angels was steadfast, not any part of it to fail, not one jot or tittle of the law is to lose its strength; but all must be fulfilled. No disobedience to the law to be winked at—how can we escape who have been spoken to by so much higher authority, and the word so fully confirmed to us, and God bearing witness to the word by so many signs, and divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost? Surely we cannot think God will trifle with us, and let us escape! No, no, my friend, he will not, if we are living in this neglect, and continue so to do; we need not expect to escape. Where much is given, much will be required.

III. *Who they are that neglect this great salvation.*

The infidel or unbeliever who denies the Lord who bought his pardon on the tree. He certainly more than neglects, he despises, he persecutes and speaks evil of the very name by which he might be

We ask, how shall we escape? We have been spoken to by the Lord, clothed with the highest authority in heaven or earth; seeing the apostle declares the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression received a just recompense of reward, which was delivered by an authority so much inferior to that by which we have been spoken to; yet there was no escape under the old covenant, but every transgression and every disobedience was punished according to the demerit of the crime. How can we escape, who have transgressed the law delivered by the Lord, or lived in the neglect of that word, enforced by such authority, confirmed by the apostles, witnessed by God with so many signs and gifts of the Holy Ghost; impressed on our minds by the powerful influence of the Spirit of God, urged on us by the ministers of the gospel, with so much energy, so much eloquence, so much persuasion, and frequently with tears? They have argued, they have reasoned, they have thundered, they have threatened, without effect; how shall we escape? Add to this the admonitions of our pious friends, our parents, the examples of the saints, and their triumphant deaths. All these shedding such a flood of light upon our mind, that we must be fully convinced, and fully persuaded that we ought to attend to this great salvation. But, alas, alas! we still neglect; we ask again, how can we escape? We may mention, also, the faithful warnings we have had given us. We have been warned against every species of transgression, which is sin. (Sin is the transgression of the law.) We have been told of its heinous nature, and of its dreadful consequences. Hell has been displayed before us, that we might see it with its torments, and the society we must be confined to, if we persist to neglect this salvation. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation!"

2. We enforce the inquiry further. How shall we escape, seeing that God is just, as well as merciful, and must and will punish the guilty? He, it is true, hath proclaimed himself to be the Lord God, merciful and gracious, pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin;

yet will he by no means clear the guilty. Then how can we escape, if we neglect? God is omnipotent; therefore, we cannot flee from him. God is omniscient; therefore we cannot hide from him. God is omnipotent; therefore he will hold us, and exercise his justice upon us, though we may associate with the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman; hide ourselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains, and say to the mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. For the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand.—Rev. chapter 6th, verses 15, 16, and 17. Yet we ask again, how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?

And now, brethren, I exhort you who have believed in Jesus, and regard this salvation, to hold on your way perseveringly to the end, knowing that he alone that endureth to the end is to be saved. Have you been justified freely by grace through faith? Press forward to sanctification, seeing this is your privilege in Christ Jesus. Thus, as an apostle directs, add to your faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience and all the fruits of the Spirit, that you may neither be fruitless nor barren in the knowledge and love of God; and rise from likeness to greater likeness, from glory to glory, till in heaven you take your place, and enjoy in full this great salvation, with all the sanctified millions who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

To those who still live in the neglect of this salvation, we say, you may yet seek it. Your case is not yet desperate, though dangerous. There is yet mercy. Christ yet advocates your cause, yet pleads, saying, I have died for them—spare them yet another year, till I dig about them; it may be they will bring forth fruit, but if not, then thou shalt cut them down. O, then, sinner, begin now while it is called to-day, before the night cometh, in which no man can work. Heaven yet calls; his Spirit strives, ministers urge you, the pious

foundation of the church, it must be corroborated and made certain by other parts of the bible. There is only one text in all the scriptures where Peter is said to have any place in the foundation of the church, Eph. 2nd chapter, 19, 20, "now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of (now mark) the *apostles* and *prophets*, *Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.*" Here Jews and Christians are united in Christ, "the chief corner stone," and the apostles and prophets were in the ground plan of the building, as they were inspired to teach what he had committed to them. In this metaphor Peter has a place in the foundation plan of the church, but he was only a plain stone, and by no means superior to his brother apostles. To my mind, the supremacy of Peter is not sustained by this text; and I have no doubt it will be clear to every mind unclouded by the "infallible" dogmas of the church of Rome.

3. Let us see if the Protestant view of this text is sustained by other portions of the bible; and we will take Peter's own words: certainly he will be believed by all. 1st Peter ii. 3—6, "if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious; to whom coming as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." "Wherefore also it is contained in the scriptures, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious! and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded."

Here Christ is a living stone, and the chief corner stone on whom believers are built up a spiritual house. Certainly St. Peter did not suppose he was the foundation of the church, or he would have said so.

We will hear Peter again, Acts 4th chapter, 8—12, "then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, ye rulers of Israel, if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of

Jesus of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the *stone* which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the *head of the corner*; neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Christ is presented in this scripture as the head of the corner, and the only one by whom we can be saved.

St. Paul says in 1st Cor. 3—11, "for other foundation can no man lay than that is laid," (which is St. Peter—no! that is not the remainder of the text, but) "which is Jesus Christ."

I think it is clear that Christ is the only foundation of the church, and he could not have meant that Peter was the rock.

4. It is urged that other parts of the text establish the supremacy of Peter, as Christ gives to Peter the keys: "and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven."

None will deny that Peter stood up with the eleven on the day of Pentecost, and preached Jesus to the people, and opened the gospel kingdom so wide that it has never been closed since. Some say his successors have the keys, and can close up the kingdom at will; but Peter does not say so; nor does Jesus. Others suppose he took them up to heaven with him, to open and close at will the heavenly kingdom. We have no bible information on this point. The last mention made of the keys in the bible was about fifty-nine years after the Pentecost; and Jesus, the first and the last, had them: "I (said he) have the keys of hell and of death." Thus Christ has supreme authority over the spirit world, as well as over the kingdom of grace.

If the simple fact of opening the gospel kingdom is so important, why give all the praise to Peter, when all the apostles participated? It only proves them all equally commissioned to preach Christ to a perishing world.

5. Again: it is said Peter's great prerogatives are seen in the fact that Jesus gave him the power to bind

result of such a ministration of the gospel will be, and always has been, "the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

4. It has been arrogantly claimed by the church of Rome, that she is *the* church, the only one. If this be true, I should be pleased to know it. This, like the doctrines of religion, may be known by the plain word of God.

(1.) Romanists set up this claim because they are the *oldest* or *first* church. This boasted priority is not true in fact, as every one must know who will think for a moment. The church of the Jews was older. The christian church at Jerusalem was organized prior to that at Rome. And so was the Greek church. If there be any superiority from age, those churches have it.

(2.) Let us compare with the bible. An indispensable mark of Christ's church is, that it obeys him. "Ye are my disciples if ye do whatsoever I command you." We shall see who has claims on this ground. The ten commandments have never been repealed. They are so held by all churches. They contain the substance of our duty to God and man.

The first command is "thou shalt have no other Gods before me."

I ask, is not the prayer and praise in every Romish church offered up to the holy virgin Mary, and to all the canonized saints, thus paying divine homage to the creature, a plain violation of this command.

The second command is "thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:" thou shalt not bow thyself to them, nor serve them; for the Lord thy God is a jealous God!"

Do the Romanists have images? look into every church and be satisfied. But do they, as a church, sanction them? They do. In their confession of faith as published in Baltimore, we have these words, "I most firmly assert that the images of Christ, of the mother of God, ever virgin, and also of the saints, ought to be

had and retained, and that due *honor* and *veneration* is to be given to them."

How does this compare with the second commandment? And they have felt on this subject: so much so, that in the Philadelphia Manual of Piety, and that approved, too, by the Right Reverend Bishop Kendrick, they left the second commandment entirely out; and they divided the ninth, so as to keep up the sound of ten; but every body knows that two halves is only one whole. They felt the weakness of this subterfuge, and in some instances have restored it. How does this agree with infallibility—with the high claim of being the *only church*? Can there be any claim of belonging to Christ's people at all, while we thus violate God's commands? Let the bible decide. "He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." "He that committeth sin is of the devil." "And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city." Every one who reads can make the application.

Again, does not Jesus say, "Search the scriptures." but they say, no. The Pope commands it not to be read in the vulgar tongue. The common people are not permitted to have the bible. It is not, they say, to be understood by the people. How does this agree with Paul to Timothy, "from a *child* thou hast known the holy scriptures." And that knowledge "was able to make him wise unto salvation." Now who would wish to be wiser than unto salvation.

And we all know how many bibles they have burned in this country. They do not seem to agree with the bible, nor to have it about. Luther found the bible chained, as though it would be dangerous if free.

Again, the bible says, "marriage is honorable in all," and bishops, elders, and deacons shall be the husbands of one wife. But they say, no; it is better to obey the Pope. I ask is their course obeying the bible commands?

(3.) The Church is holy. "Be ye holy, for I am holy," is the divine command. Do they answer this descrip-

3. After this, infidelity rose in its power in France, and threatened to put down this system of religion, and overthrow the church. With learning and the power of state on its side,—did it prevail? Let the waves of the best blood of France that flowed red as the waves of hell, answer. Hell itself must have blushed at the scene. It did not prevail. Christianity still lives and triumphs.

4. Whatever power may be brought to bear in the future against Christ's religion, it must put him down first, before it shall prevail against the church.

Christianity has done all she ever promised to do. When she is enjoyed, she changes the heart and purifies it, and regulates the life. She sanctifies all earthly afflictions to our good. She spreads her promised blessings on the dying Christian, and she will go on till the earth is filled with the glory of God. Amen.

SERMON IX.

Adopting Love.

BY DAVID TRUEMAN.

“Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!”—I John, III. 1.

IT is written in the volume of inspiration; “*God is love!*” The heavens declare it, and it is deeply graven on the earth's broad bosom. Who doubts this oft repeated, this cheering truth? Not those celestial beings which hover near his throne on pliant wing, ever obedient to his holy will. Nor they who gently lengthen out on heavenly harp, beneath the tree of life, sweet, melting, strains of adoration. Nor seraph, nor cherub, can doubt. Nor white-robed saints redeemed from earth, to paradise upborne, who wait in blissful groups, the eventful morn, when HE who purified their souls,

shall raise their captive dust from death's stern grasp, and make their triumph all complete. These cannot doubt. Nor even they, "which kept not their first estate, reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day." "The devils also believe and tremble."

God is love! Throughout the universe this glorious truth obtains, exciting wonder and increasing admiration in heaven, envy, hatred, and deepening anguish in hell, "and on earth peace, good will toward men." Look wheresoever we may, above, beneath, around, bright manifestations of the Father's love ever meet our wandering gaze. We behold it in the undulating ocean, whose dashing waves obey his voice. On the cloud-crowned mountain, whose granite pillars tremble at his breath—in the fertile vale where lowing herds rich pasturage find—in the swift-winged seasons as they pass, in seed time and in harvest—in nature's vast and complicate machinery, as also in a wise and gracious providence. "The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works." "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Proper and praiseworthy though it be, to dwell at length, in contemplative mood, on the divine benevolence, as recognized in all these common mercies—to trace his wisdom in the ordinary course of nature, his goodness in nature's universal subserviency to man's essential wants—his love in the unalterable order of things, which obviously anticipates the present and everlasting happiness of all his intelligent creatures; yet, we must not stop here, nor weary in our ascent. Pleasant it is, and profitable, to search out the God of nature in his works—to thread the yielding labyrinths of science—to occupy imaginary ground, by the learned and adventurous spirits of former years; by Newton as he philosophises on a bubble, revolving in his mighty mind the phenomenon of light and colors—by Herschel as he peers through his gigantic telescope far into the fathomless depths of space—by Columbus as he braves the dangers of the deep in search of the western world—by

tude of his Maker, endowed with wonderful faculties, and pronounced very good, man was at once the counterpart of Deity, and the distinguished representative of an entire new order of intelligences. His actions were the reflected rays of infinite exactitude—his thoughts the extension of spotless purity—his smile the emblem of unsullied bliss—his words the harmonious echo of perfection! Angels, surely, hailed with wonder and delight this burnished link in being's chain, when first he stood before them in sinless majesty. Nor is the same invisible to us, though six thousand years have intervened. Through fancy's telescope, we behold this star, when thrown out on the galaxy of intellect, beauteous within and without, and revolving in his original orbit, within the lustrous halo of the divine approbation. True, he shone, or dim, or brilliant, with a borrowed light; yet, that light revealed God's image, and secured his love. He can but love his likeness, though men or angels bear it. This manner of love is easily comprehended. It exists in the eternal fitness of things, and, in a modified sense, extends through every order of intelligence. When exhibited by finite creatures, it involves one of the noblest principles of our nature. It is not a bartered affection, based on self-interest, and prompting its possessor to love only those by whom he is beloved. It asks not, who is my neighbor? Nor is it enkindled, merely, by congeniality, much less dependent on reciprocated favors. It is an affinity, or mutual transfusion of quality, a chaplet, inseparably wreathed with virtue, that cannot brook one vicious breath. In that natural allegiance to loveliness, common to all men, we behold its budding. Thus, the wise love wisdom, the noble love sublimity, peacemakers love peace, the "pure in heart" love purity, angels love good men, good men love each other, and the Supreme Being loves holiness. Man was created holy, and perfect in his kind; consequently, we can but conceive of him while in this state, as the legitimate object of the Father's affectionate regard.

But, what shall we say of him now, seeing this original tie is sundered by transgression—our race involved

in universal ruin—corrupt in heart, in action wrong—alienated from, and altogether unlike God—what claims have we on his love! How very indigent is fallen, unregenerated man; how destitute and helpless, despite his haughty mien! Alas! he cannot now look up in conscious innocence, nor boast inherent loveliness. He cannot unlock the hidden stores of virtue, nor proffer an equivalent for the mercies of even one fleet moment. He cannot plead in his own defense, nor ransom the soul of his neighbor. We may repeat, with much propriety; the language of Job: “what is man, that thou shouldst magnify him? and that thou shouldst set thy heart upon him?” A good man will abhor sin, and the intensity of his abhorrence will ever be found proportionate to his moral excellence. How much greater the extent of similar feelings, in the minds of holy angels: how then shall God regard iniquity with anything less than infinite abhorrence? Is this correct reasoning? If so, what claim can sinful man present, whose heart is compared by the prophet to a cage of unclean birds, and by him who spake as never man spake, to an impure fountain which sendeth forth all manner of iniquity. What is impenitent man, that God should love him? A daring rebel! whose heinous crimes would make an angel weep; would cloud with grief the bliss of heaven. A ruthless robber! whose sacrilegious hand would snatch the diadem of glory from the Godhead, to deck his own poor, fading mortality. Whoso refuses to co-operate in the advancement of the heavenly kingdom, must be regarded as a rebel. Whoso withholds from God what he demands, is guilty of robbery. “Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.” The world exhibits degrees of wickedness. Though all are morally tainted, all are not equally sunken in actual crime. Yet, let not the moralist deceive himself, and fondly base his hope of heaven on negative goodness. Rather let him turn from the boasted rectitude of his external deportment, to the correction of “an evil heart of unbelief.”

around and beneath us, his love embraces all mankind, promising—"glory, honor, and peace to every man that worketh good; to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile;—there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all, is rich unto all that call upon him."

We apprehend no serious difficulty in admitting the sovereignty of God in the exercise of his mercy—entire freedom and ability to bless whomsoever he will. We would not call in question the divine prerogative, or limit Omnipotence. Could election be separated from its odious twin-sister—reprobation, it would seem less repulsive. God's ability and freedom to save many or few, is admitted, but could he damn, *unconditionally*, any creature he has made? Certain it is, he is above the power of foreign influence, nor can he be laid under any obligation, or turned aside from his eternal purpose, "which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." What, then, was his eternal purpose? To save a chosen few and damn the rest of the human family? This is not the manner of his love, for in this, as in the dispensation of his judgments, he is no respecter of persons. Love seeks the happiness of its object. God is love, and desires the happiness of all men—has redeemed all, and designs the salvation of all, so far as the honor of his attributes, and the great principles of his moral government are concerned. The Father's "eternal purpose" is satisfactorily set forth, in the glorious mission of his Son, which was, "that he by the grace of God should taste death for *every man*." This is further evidenced by the Redeemer's language when commissioning the ministers of reconciliation to spread the joyful tidings—"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to *every creature*." From these, and similar declarations, the conclusion is obvious; the gospel, or "good tidings of great joy," was to be preached "to all people." To say that God designed the gospel to be preached to any who were not the objects of his love, or for whom Christ did not die, is, really to impugn his wisdom, or his goodness, or both. Surely 'twere folly to offer salvation to the eternally reprobated, and un-

kind in the extreme, to mock them with promises which might never be realized, or threaten with horrible suffering to which they were hopelessly decreed even before they had a being. Unquestionably, God wills that the gospel should be preached to all. To assert, on this admission, his unwillingness to save all, looks like sanctified absurdity. Ample provision is made for the salvation of all! Unto infants, is sent the "free gift"—"unto justification of life." All who die in infancy shall be eternally saved in heaven! The heathen who "are a law unto themselves," shall be rewarded or punished according to the improvement or abuse of the light they have enjoyed. "For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law:" from which we clearly infer, that they will not be judged by the law, of which they had no knowledge; hence, millions of heathens will be saved. Their dark and deplorable condition, is rather their punishment than their sin. Adults, who have the gospel, may be saved on the conditions of repentance and faith. If they *will* be damned, with the gospel in their hands, they deserve to be; "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." Bless the Lord, oh my soul, for this manner of love! He so loved the world—the whole world—all mankind! Not a chosen few; this thought would freeze our piety, and circumscribe our views of his character. God's love surrounds, with equal intensity, the beggar and the prince; overleaps the distinctive lines so proudly drawn by titled humanity to divide society—respects not caste or color. He loved the world. Our conceptions of the Father's love are enlarged, when we remember that while he approves of righteous kings, he smiles on the manacled captive, and proffers to staunch his tears. That while the Shekinah is visible in Zion, his love is devising the happiness of the Hotentot. While he environs Jerusalem with a wall of fire, his love is wafting the gospel to the

divine character, a prominent trait in the manner of the Father's love; sufficient in itself to win the unbounded confidence of all his creatures. Paul speaks of him as the God of patience, and our own experience assures us the appellation is appropriate. From day to day his wrath delays; from year to year he endures the repeated provocations of sinners. For the space of one hundred and twenty years, he ceased not to warn the antediluvians to forsake their abominations. Long was his gathering vengeance suspended over the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. Four hundred years did he wait with the Ammonites, until their cup of iniquity was running over. Forty years long was he grieved with rebellious Israel in the wilderness. How long did he wink at those times of ignorance, which marked and marred the Gentile world? But we need not dwell on instances so remote; our own history will furnish ample ground. Look backward, brethren; let us retrace the past: has he not long borne with us, as fruitless trees that cumbered the ground. Have we not trampled his mercies beneath our feet, neglected obvious duties, and threw in the scales of final retribution, full many a broken vow, full many a murdered moment? The judgments of God are always preceded by affectionate and repeated warnings, and when his love can no longer withhold the avenging arm of justice, he throws the mantle of mercy over the offender, thus partially averting the long suspended stroke.

“Oh! that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men”—“a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness.” Why does the Father of our spirits thus bear with sinners? It is not because he would connive at sin—he abhors it. It is not ignorance—he understands the innmost thoughts of the soul, every action, every motive. It is not because he has not power to punish—he holds the thunders in his mighty hand, and directs the lightning's path; earth owns his sway, and hell trembles at his tread. Why then have we been spared to tread his courts once more? Why have we not been crushed

with the half-finished sentence of insult on our polluted lips? Because the manner of his love is *patient!*

4. Behold *efficient love!* One of the first, and a fearful consequence, of the violation of the original covenant, was the immediate withdrawal of the divine presence from the soul of man: "for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" That hitherto uninterrupted intercourse which had existed between man and his Maker, was now broken off. He is no longer what Deity made him. Despoiled of the divine image, shorn of his native strength, stripped of his primitive glory, crest-fallen, and smitten with remorse, he would fain secrete himself from the Being he has offended. Oh! sin, what hast thou done? Robbed man of the Creator's impress, of righteousness and true holiness, of that principle of spiritual power, without which we cannot render to God acceptable worship.

Behold what condescension, what manner of love! When offending man would flee the divine presence, infinite love pursues, softening with mercy the penalty he had incurred; the Father compassionates his weak and desolate condition, and appoints a medium of access, through which he will be approached, at once the substance of salvation, through faith, and the shadow of better things to come. By the shedding of blood, remission of sins may be obtained. Man is not left hopeless. Though driven from the tree of life, his faith takes hold on the blood that shall quench the flaming sword that guards it. Behold what manner of love; mark its gradual advancement, seeking with a vigilance that never sleeps the accomplishment of his purpose—man's salvation. The Deliverer is promised—the bonds are loosed from the Egyptian captive—the Paschal lamb is slain, and his blood sprinkled on the lintels—the tabernacle is reared—the fiery pillar moves—the promised land is possessed. And still it advances—Zion is inhabited—darkness gradually recedes—streaks of light betoken the approaching day-star: Omnipotence is at work, and the prophet cries

Love, considered as a principle, must be consistent in itself, and with every attribute of the mind to which it exists, finite or infinite. When it ceases to be consistent, it degenerates into a blind passion. Love is a pure and cloudless light—passion but a flickering flame. Consistency in love, has reference to the happiness of its object, by the application of the best possible means, to the best possible end; hence, it must be controlled, to a greater or less extent, by wisdom, justice, goodness, and holiness. Even thus the Father's love is manifested toward us: though it burns with a certain, unextinguishable blaze, it is nevertheless with an undeviating reference to the widest possible diffusion of happiness, in strict accordance with the great principles of his government. Thus are we confident that every act of Deity toward his creatures emanates from infinite love, and can but design the good of its object. Speaking comparatively, in this we behold a marked inferiority in the gods of the heathen. The favorable regard of these imaginary beings of dark and perverted minds, was ever fluctuating and uncertain. Historians speak of them as being alternately benevolent and parsimonious, felicitated and angry, tossed and disturbed with contrary passions. "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed."

The manner of the Father's love is emphatically an exhibition of his excellent nature, a personification of Deity. Love is one of his essential perfections, embodying, as we have seen, many important properties. He is not man, that he should love unwisely, indiscreetly, or unjustly. If his love encircles the inhabitants of this stricken planet, it must be with reference to the present and ultimate happiness of all his creatures. If it would remove every physical obstacle out of the way of man's salvation, it will not irresistibly exalt the unconverted sinner to heaven. If it extendeth mercy to all, and proffers to "abundantly pardon" whosoever turneth from wickedness, it also wieldeth the sword of justice,

and will punish, with "everlasting destruction," the finally incorrigible. If it gathereth the wheat into the garner, it will also burn up the chaff with "unquenchable fire."

Infinite in holiness, God would surround his throne with an innumerable company, from every kindred, tribe, and tongue, clad in "the beauty of holiness," without spot or blemish. To this end, Christ was made unto us, "wisdom, righteousness and sanctification." The whole economy of human redemption tends to this common center—*holiness*. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself;" and on this effected reconciliation we are to build the perfection of our nature, God working in us to will and to do. "Created" anew "in Christ Jesus unto good works," we must therefore be perfect, "even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." In truth, holiness seems to adorn and distinguish every attribute of Jehovah. Without this, in the strong language of Dr. Burder, "he who sways the sceptre of the universe, might be an object of dread, but not of love or confidence. Such a being might become the scourge and terror of creation." As God is holy, his love contemplates man's re-creation, "in righteousness and holiness;" and in order to this, man must be a willing co-worker—must follow after holiness, "without which no man shall see (enjoy) the Lord."

The manner of the Father's love is partially self-revealed in the bestowal, in every part of the stupendous plan of salvation. The nature of the sacrifice is strikingly adapted to human susceptibility, and calculated to impress us most deeply with his tender compassion and awful majesty—with the odiousness of sin, and our dereliction from righteousness. Behold in the voluntary sufferings of man's substitute, the Father's adherence to justice—his abhorrence of sin. What a striking demonstration does this also afford of the extent and reality of our danger; nor could the divine compassion, as herein expressed, be heightened by any means. What stronger motive to cheerful obedience could have been presented? What better incentive to the cultivation of every christian virtue?

medium—his taste is purified, his mind elevated, and possessed of an association of ideas which lead the soul, through nature up to nature's God. The exercise is at once pleasing and profitable, as it infolds the soul in the attractive robes of humility. We sink in our own estimation to a proper level, as the mind expands in its contemplations, grasping yet higher and clearer conceptions of Deity. "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers; the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him!"

In the human countenance we behold the most complex beauty, commingling tints of the rose and the lily, delicate lights and shades, together with those symmetrical curves and lines which constitute the different features of the face. In attempting to assign the principal quality of beauty, many hypotheses have been framed by ingenious minds, varied opinions have obtained, and books have been written on the subject. One thing is certain, mere external beauty is unsatisfying and soon ceases to please. We are charmed with a finely executed portrait; we gaze with admiration on the finished statue; yet are we not satisfied: the one is but painted canvas, the other lifeless marble. And what is a lump of painted clay, however exquisitely formed, if worse than soulless—tenanted with corruption—a whited sepulchre? God has constituted the face the index of the soul; and its distinguishing beauty is that mysterious expression, or reflection of the mind. Internal emotions will manifest themselves on the countenance, on the cheek, in the eye, over the whole face; guilt will crimson, fear will pale, sorrow becloud, joy illuminate, and sympathy be legibly recorded. Thus it is, the Father's love beautifies, by correcting the heart: this spreads over the human face a beauty all divine. Rend the shroud of darkness and ignorance from the soul, and the Father's love will be reflected in the light of hope, and joy, and every kindred virtue. Nor guilt, nor fear, shall scorch or freeze the convert's cheek; for "there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus;" and

“perfect love casteth out fear.” Religion is a glorious ornament—it throws a pleasing luster over every excellency, and gives to every grace a potent charm—it wreaths the dawn of glory around grey-hairs and furrowed cheeks, and mingles with the bloom of youth—it flings perfection over defects, and renders beauty exquisitely attractive. If you would be beautiful, seek to know the manner of the Father’s love.

2. It is *ennobling in its operations!* What constitutes nobility? Modern lexicographers would answer, dignity, grandeur, greatness. The titled aristocrat would answer, illustrious descent. Who then are truly noble? The Jew responds for his countrymen, jealous of the Gentile, lest he should be found on the same platform with himself; “Abraham is our father;” thus would he hide his sensualities under the virtues of an illustrious ancestry. Who are truly noble? The fostered child of feudalism would turn from his toiling tenants, and answer, by pointing to dukedoms, earldoms, and all the glittering insignia of office—too often the blot of favoritism—the wages of fawning sycophancy—the plague-spot of freedom. Who is the nobleman? He that is born to a few broad acres—a few glittering bubbles, and a bankrupt baronetcy? He that boasts an illustrious pedigree, and would regard the espousal of Christianity as a blot on his *good name*?

“If angels tremble, ’t is at such a sight!”

Alas! that so few who would conform to the world’s notions of *exclusive aristocracy*, can trace their pedigree many generations, without passing through a workshop, or halting in the hut of penury! The Psalmist answers the interrogation—“he that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart: in whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoreth them that fear the Lord.” It is answered also by Isaiah—“he that despiseth the gain of oppression, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil.” Nor is it less explicitly answered by the Redeemer—“he that is

mount Parnassus ; in the whirlpool of fashionable gayety ; in the intoxicating bowl. Vanity of vanities ! This great desideratum is to be found only in the "cross of Christ," known only to those who rejoice in the Father's love ; who "spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all ; how shall he not with him also freely give us all things ?" He will "give grace and glory ; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly ;" that "we might have a *strong consolation*, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us."

How consoling in the midst of sorrow to know there is *one* that loves us, one bosom upon which we may pillow our aching head, one heart that throbs in unison with our own, one soul that can sympathize ! How must our consolation increase to know that that being is able and willing to redress each wrong, to satisfy each desire, to comfort the soul ! Thank God, earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." The heart that feels the warming influences of the Father's love, may bid defiance to earth's chilling tide of woes, and smile at every stormy blast. If we pass through fiery trials, he hath said, "thou shall not be burned ;" if afflictions betide us, he hath said it shall work for us "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." If earthly friends prove treacherous, he hath said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." What can heal a mind diseased, and pluck a rooted sorrow from the soul ? What is it dries the orphan's tears, and cheers the widowed heart, whose love and earthly hopes are crushed ? It is the Father's love, "shed abroad in our hearts." Possessed of this, nor earth, nor hell can fill our cup with hopeless grief. Behold what manner of love, what abundant consolation ! In the knowledge of pardoned sins ; in the communion of saints ; in the friendship of God. It is the Father's love that sweetens life, that kindles the hope of reunion, as we kiss for the last time the bloodless lips of those we loved ; that turns our eye undaunted to the ghastly ruins of the grave ; that spreads out before us the

glittering fields of glory. Child of God rejoice! The King is coming to receive thee to himself.

“Yea, and before we rise
To that immortal state,
The thought of such amazing bliss
Should constant joys create.”

4. It is *enriching in its operations!* True riches do not always consist in the abundance that a man hath. We may be rich on a moderate income, or poor in the midst of plenty. The sordid soul will deprecate utter want, even while he counts his hoarded gold; will grudge his faithful dog a meatless bone, and die of starvation, to be damned in the world to come. Surely, “the love of money is the root of all evil; but godliness with contentment is great gain.” Striking contrast! Who would not prefer the latter? which is “profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.” What are the glittering bubbles of earth; its gaudy gems and cankered gold; that man should stake his soul’s eternal destiny on their accumulation? “Behold, there are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches.” These are they whom David envied, well nigh to backsliding. Was he alone in misjudging “the prosperity of the wicked?” Have we never repined at our humble lot, when dazzled by the magnificence of wealth? Happy are we if we have not, for appearances are often deceitful, and thousands there are who, to *keep up appearances*, will endure splendid poverty! Many a superb edifice is but the home of tearless anguish; and many a gorgeous robe conceals a bleeding, breaking heart! Child of God, “flee these things, and follow after righteousness:” seek to be “rich in faith,” which being “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen,” will make thee rich in “the inheritance of the saints in light.” The true philosophy of riches is to consider them in connection with time and with eternity, with reference to body and soul. Herein lies the danger of riches—they blind man’s spiritual vision. A small object, held immediately before

pleasant walk is cold and stiff—the lips that pressed love's signet on thy cheek are pale and bloodless—the tongue that was wont to counsel thee in love's own language, lies silent in the grave. Yet, is God's love everlasting—it changeth not, nor can it change. The earth may be changed, while wrapped in its winding sheet of flame—the elements may melt with fervent heat—the heavens be rolled together as a parchment scroll—the universe may change—unintelligent creation be uncreated—man may change, his moral powers, his love may change—angels may change—the Father cannot—his love endureth ever. God will not, cannot cease to love his children, whose steps are ordered by his holy word. Go to him, stricken one whom troubles press, go sue for grace, go crave his love, and he will shed it richly in thy soul, bind up thy wounded heart, wipe out each lingering trace of woe, and clothe again thy cheek with smiles, though furrowed deep with grief. Nor shalt thou again be friendless, though death should smite all human kin. "For I am persuaded, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Through all the sorrows and bereavements of life—through the gathering shades of death—shall the Father's love encircle and sustain us. And far beyond this vale of tears—beyond the darkening waves of Jordan—beyond the gloomy precincts of the grave, his love shall still endure—increasingly endure—forever unfolding to our expanding powers. Yes, when time shall have been swallowed up in eternity—when multiplied millions of ages shall have rolled onward—his love shall still endure—ever leading his glorified children, through untrodden fields of light and glory!

"Mysterious, infinite, exhaustless love!
Enduring all, eternal, ever growing—
On earth mysterious, and mysterious still
In heaven,"

SERMON X.

Predestination.

BY JOHN SPENCER.

“In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, that we should be to the praise of his glory who first trusted in Christ.”—EPHESIANS I. 11, 12.

WE are here directed to the subject of *predestination*—a subject which we would do well earnestly to examine. No aid afforded us in our examination should be lightly esteemed. Truth must be pursued wherever it may lead. The truth will make us free.

These views have prompted me to prepare this discourse for publication. Its design is, to render assistance to those who desire definite and rational conceptions of scriptural predestination. However, much that is really new need not be expected. Still, it is believed, comparatively few sermons, or essays, possess higher claims to originality, both as to matter and manner.

The subject, though one of frequent polemical discussion, it is hoped, may be introduced and examined by ministers of the gospel, without giving reasonable cause of offense to pious minds. Not only every church, but in fact every individual, has a right “to speak his thoughts” on proper occasions, in regard to all doctrinal questions. Consequently, the present undertaking can be no invasion of the rights or privileges of such christian people as hold opinions differing from those herein advocated. None can deny that opinions respecting predestination do materially differ; but that fact ought by no means to disturb the harmony of religious feeling. If a baseless theory, or an erroneous sentiment, is held up before the public in its own proper light, no person ought to complain. If those who tell us our

that is, its final results; as to individuals, are conditional.

As the same matter is referred to by the use of various terms and phrases, it may be proper to notice election, reprobation, divine decrees, and sovereignty of God. These are essentially connected with predestination.

By a reference to the answer to the thirteenth question of the Larger Catechism, we may see how Calvinists hold decrees of God, election and reprobation. "God by an eternal and immutable decree, out of his mere love, for the praise of his glorious grace, hath elected some angels to glory, and, in Christ, hath chosen some men to eternal life, and the means thereof: and also, according to his sovereign power, and the unsearchable counsel of his own will, hath passed by, and foreordained the rest to dishonor and wrath."

In Watson's Dictionary, we have the following: "Of a divine election, a choosing and separating, from others, we have three kinds mentioned in the scriptures. The first is the election of *individuals* to perform some particular and special service. Cyrus was elected to rebuild the temple; the twelve apostles were 'chosen,' elected to their office by Christ; St. Paul was a 'chosen' or elected 'vessel,' to be the apostle of the Gentiles.

"The *second* kind of *election* which we find in the scripture, is the election of nations, or bodies of people, to eminent religious privileges, and in order to accomplish, by their superior illumination, the merciful purposes of God, in benefiting other nations, or bodies of people. Thus the descendants of Abraham, the Jews, were chosen to receive special revelations of truth, and to be 'the people of God;' that is, his visible church, publicly to observe and uphold his worship.

"The *third* kind of election is personal election, or the election of individuals to be the children of God, and the heirs of eternal life. * * * The individuals properly called the 'elect,' are they who have been made partakers of the grace and saving efficacy of the gospel. 'Many,' says our Lord, 'are *called*, but few chosen.'" Such are our views.

Reprobation, with us, as it relates to the final destiny of individuals, is conditional: it is "the rejecting of men from the divine mercy, because of their impenitence, or their refusal of salvation."

The unchangeable decree of God, as we ought carefully to note, in regard both to election and reprobation, is contained in these solemn words: "he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

"The decrees of God," according to the Shorter Catechism, "are his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his own will, whereby, for his own glory, he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass." We have the Arminian conception of the subject thus expressed in Watson's Theological Institutes: "The decrees of God, if the phrase must then be continued, can only scripturally signify the determinations of his will in his government of the world; and those determinations are plainly in scripture referred to two classes, what he had himself *determined to do*, and what he had determined to permit to be done by free and accountable creatures."

"God's sovereignty consists in his doing many things by virtue of his own supreme right and dominion; but this right is under the direction of his counsel and wisdom." Justice and goodness control the sovereignty of God in all his works of creation, providence and grace. There is a marked distinction between sovereignty and tyranny. The former does nothing but what is proper for promoting the interests of government: the latter does anything that passion or caprice may dictate, whatever may be the disorder and misery brought upon the helpless and dependent. The one is compatible with infinite goodness—the other is suited to the embodiment of evils. God is a sovereign—the devil a tyrant.

We now turn more particularly to the subject of predestination. Our Calvinistic friends go for unconditional predestination, we for conditional. Let us not be misunderstood. When we affirm that, as far as the ultimate fate of souls is concerned, it is conditional; we mean that its results are such as to place all in a state

cal Dictionary, uses these words—"how can an action that is really to come to pass be foreseen, if it is not determined? God knew everything from the beginning, but this he could not have known, if he had not so determined it." Hence it would seem that the all-wise God knows nothing but what he has decreed!

As to this matter, three views are supposable. First, that God by a glance of his foreknowledge looked through all coming time, and saw how, and when, and where, and by whom everything would take place, and then decreed that everything should come to pass just as he foresaw it would. Then his decree made certain what was certain before. Of course God by decreeing accomplished just nothing at all. To say he acted thus would be to ascribe folly to the Most High. We smile at the simplicity of the slave, who, when he found his master's cow mired in a swamp, and unable to move, carefully bound her fast, upon the plea of "sure bind, sure find."

Secondly. That foreknowledge and foreordination are the same in fact, or so near the same, that in admitting the former, we admit the latter. Rev. John Paul, of Carrickfergus, Ireland, some years since wrote a book, in which he animadverts with great severity upon the writings of Samuel Drew and Dr. Clarke, and repeats several times when speaking of his opponents, "let them reconcile the free-agency of man with the foreknowledge of God, and we will reconcile it with the decrees of God." From which we must infer that he considered them to be essentially the same. But this is a great error. Foreknowledge is one direction of omniscience, the attribute by which all things past, present, and to come are known. To ordain, or decree, is to perform an act, and there is a palpable difference between an attribute and the performance of an act. To class the decrees of God with his attributes, would, in effect, be to deny that he ever made his decrees, seeing it would involve as great an absurdity to affirm that God *made* his attributes, as to affirm that he made himself, or that he commenced his operations before he had a being.

Thirdly. That God knows everything, because he decreed it. This is Rev. C. Buck's opinion. Perhaps it prevails generally among Calvinists. They say—“yet hath he (God) not decreed anything, because he foresaw it as future.”

A few remarks may be in place. If God knows nothing but what he has decreed, there must have been a time when he knew nothing at all, for every action implies a time when performed, and a time prior to its performance. Again: if the Most High, in order to know all things, had to decree them, he, while in a state of perfect ignorance, must have proceeded in his great work of decreeing, like a blind man groping forward amid dangers and uncertainties, until, by the completion of his potent decree, he rolled primeval darkness from the universe, and let the knowledge of all things burst upon his own astonished omniscience! What must we think of a tenet, which in order to find room for existence, not only dethrones, but annihilates the Deity? The Lord pity human weakness!

But we are told these decrees were made “from all eternity.” If we are to regard them as really eternal; that is, without beginning or ending, it will follow that they are attributes of God, not his acts, which would be absurd; or that there is a plurality of eternals, which would be Polytheism, and consequently, an absurdity. To speak of doing a thing from all eternity, is an abuse of language that hardly finds a parallel in the whole range of solecism.

This confounding of foreknowledge and decreeing, doubtless, proceeds from mistaken conceptions. Merely to know a thing, does not affect it. Simple knowledge, when possessed by the Divine Being, can no more affect the objects of knowledge than when possessed by his creatures. My knowing that the wind blows, or that the sun shines, affects neither the one nor the other. So of all knowledge abstractly considered. And *fore*-knowledge is as perfectly inefficient as *after*-knowledge. The knowledge of a future event must depend upon the fact that such an event will take place; therefore the former must depend upon the latter, not

upon condition that the Son should do and suffer thus and so ; and as for the other part, they were consigned to the devil without compensation.

Rev. John Flavel, in his book called "The Fountain of Life," has a chapter with the title, "The Covenant of Redemption between the Father and the Redeemer." It contains several passages precisely in point. Two must suffice at present. "The business of man's salvation was transacted upon covenant terms, between the Father and the Son, from all eternity," "The Father agrees and promises to give the effect to the Son, if he will undertake their redemption by pouring out his soul unto death." This great transaction is frequently alluded to in the same book, and generally in terms implying the universal agreement of Christians. A greater mistake could not be imagined. That is the very point to be proved. We must be more consistent than were the philosophers who undertook to tell why a fish of considerable size might be put into a vessel nicely filled with water, without causing any of it to overflow. They became the sport of after years, by forgetting first to ascertain a fact, and afterwards to assign reasons for its existence. Therefore we must learn to have proof of the alleged fact, whatever it may be, before we spend time in reasoning as to its nature or tendency.

Now, if there ever was such a transaction as Mr. Flavel names, and which is presumed to be the same as that referred to in the proposition before us, which says, "God from all eternity did ordain whatsoever comes to pass," it must form an item of vast importance in the history of the universe. And we must conclude that a matter having so tremendous a bearing upon human destiny would be clearly revealed. And further, if revealed, it must be made known to us just as any other historical fact. For, admitting it to be true, it is as much a historical fact as the creation of the world, or the general deluge, or the overthrow of the cities of the plain. The knowledge of such facts must rest upon the evidence of testimony. Testimony, in order to be competent, must be borne by witnesses ac-

quainted with the facts, having lived at the time of their occurrence. Now, bearing these things in mind, we must note particularly that the alleged fact under consideration is stated to have occurred prior to the existence of either angels or men. Only God was present. He was then alone, in the awful solitudes of his own existence. He is, therefore, the only competent witness. His testimony must be unequivocal, and of a character suited to matters of history. Such as we have in regard to the exodus of the Israelites, the Babylonian captivity, or the crucifixion of our Saviour. A historical fact is alleged, and historical proof is required.

But where shall we look for the testimony of God? Certainly in the bible. Observe: It is said "God from all eternity, did by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, ordain whatsoever comes to pass." Now for the proof. Let us look at the passages cited in connection with this solemn assertion. "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath." "For he saith unto Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Here we have all that is given as proof. And we ask, with solemn emphasis, does a single line or expression say that "God from all eternity did ordain whatsoever comes to pass?" Surely no man of intelligence can affirm that one of these passages says any such thing. If these quotations mean what the friends of the proposition desire, they do not say so. Therefore those who have the affirmative of the question, affirm more than do the scriptures. They say what God does not say.

clude there is an allusion to a fact when not distinctly expressed in a passage of scripture, until we know by some other means the existence of such fact. An allusion does not prove the existence of a fact, but the fact must precede the allusion; and we must have a knowledge of the fact prior to believing in the allusion.

To make the case plain. It is asserted that many passages in the bible allude to the period when the Godhead was in council, and to the fact that decrees were made by which some men and angels were elected to everlasting life, and "the rest predestinated to everlasting death." Now, before we are at liberty to maintain that there is an allusion to such transaction, or to such fact, we must somehow become certain of its existence. To contend for an allusion to a thing, without knowing such a thing ever had an existence, would be the wildest absurdity. That, it is likely, is the error of those who go for the doctrine of foreordination, when they claim to have found allusions to prove they know not what, because holy writ no where else tells them any thing about it; that is, to prove an empty creature of imagination.

The principle that the existence of a thing must be proved before we admit allusions to it, may be further illustrated. A few examples will be sufficient. "God spared not the old world, but saved Noah, the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly." Now, I affirm that at a certain time God, on account of the enormous wickedness of mankind, sent a flood which destroyed the whole human family, excepting Noah and his household, and that here is an allusion to that awful event. You ask, allusion to what? I am at no loss for an answer. I simply turn back to the book of Genesis, and read you a circumstantial history of the amazing catastrophe. You at once see the allusion. So soon as I give the original facts, no doubt can remain. Again, God "turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample to those who after should live ungodly." Here, I hold, is an allusion to a very tragic

event, in which several cities were destroyed by fire from heaven. Those cities were situated in the neighborhood of Canaan. Their destruction occurred in consequence of the unnatural criminality of their inhabitants. You inquire for my authority, to speak of such transactions. I direct you to the 19th chapter of the book of Genesis, where you have a narrative of the particulars. Once more. "Seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." I maintain that here is an allusion to the ancient games, in which was the running of races. The reason I assign is, that the language employed is such as would be naturally suggested to one acquainted with the modes of procedure in those games. But you require me to give you evidence that there ever were such games, because if there never was any such thing, there would be no ground for an allusion. I refer you to ancient history, where you find proof in abundance. Thus the allusion is justified by a previous knowledge of the fact.

It is hoped the principle is understood. To be understood is enough. It recommends itself to every candid mind. As the result of the preceding statement, it is believed, all inquirers after truth must see that we are not at liberty to allow allusions to counseling or decreeing, until we have previous evidence in proof of such transactions.

Let us now examine some of the passages of scripture supposed to contain allusions to the tremendous events asserted by those who affirm that "God foreordained whatsoever comes to pass." "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Because the word "counsel" occurs in this passage, it seems to be at once concluded that there is an allusion to a counsel held, and a covenant made, between the Father and the Son, far back in eternity. Because something "determinate" is spoken of, it is thought reference is had to an "eternal decree,"

beginning. In our translation of the bible, eternal is often used when everlasting would be more appropriate. Eternal relates to eternity, and eternity is duration without beginning or end. But everlasting points only one way from the present, and that is, to the future, and refers to that which shall never end. So understood, "eternal life" signifies life that shall never end; "eternal fire," "the fire that never shall be quenched;" and "eternal judgment," judgment the results of which shall never terminate. Understood in the same way, "eternal purpose" in the text refers not to things past, but to come; and in its results it may have respect to all coming ages. From these considerations, we arrive at the conclusion that this passage does not furnish any ground for the Calvinistic doctrine of an "eternal decree."

The true character of the principle assumed, in regard to scripture allusions, by the supporters of the proposition before us, may be clearly seen by adverting to a supposed case. We shall suppose a certain erratic genius to announce a wonderful discovery. He has, according to his showing, discovered an animal of huge dimensions inhabiting the planet Jupiter. It assumes almost as many appearances as the chameleon. At one time it resembles the leopard, being spotted, as is supposed. At another it appears as a fierce wild beast, and has feet like those of a bear. Now it seems to be a docile and harmless beast of burden, upon which a woman may ride. Then we behold it claiming kindred with both horned cattle and monsters of the deep, and coming "up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns." But the most formidable appearance is yet to be named. Then we have this frightful creature in the form of a great red dragon, with an enormous tail; so that, as Jupiter is performing his revolutions among the celestial luminaries, the hideous brute sweeps the stars of the sky from their places, and sends them trembling down to the earth. Such is his account of the animal which his discoveries are about to add to the department of natural history. He is somewhat at

a loss for a name for so singular a beast, but he thinks it must be the real hydra of ancient mythology.

Our utopian discoverer imagines he has found a key to some items of ancient history, but especially to many abstruse passages of holy writ. He descants eloquently upon the inefficiency of those ministers of the gospel who do not possess his key, and bewails in piteous strains, the mournful destitution of all persons confined to such ministrations.

He has no doubt of the existence of the strange creature he describes. He says learned men have an eye to it when they speak of hydras, minotaurs, and centaurs. Divines, too, have spoken of some such things. Reason favors his views. Variety everywhere prevails. Jupiter is very large. Just such a creature seems needed to fill up what would otherwise be a vacuum in nature. But above all the bible is his strong hold. True, it does not just say there is such a beast on the planet Jupiter, but it abounds with allusions so striking as to remove all doubt. Hear his quotations. "Behold a great red dragon having seven heads, and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth." "I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns." "And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion." "And I saw a woman sit upon the scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns."

We would be amused at the simplicity of a person credulous enough to suppose this case to be sober history, and yet, many of our christian friends believe, upon less conclusive evidence, what they are told as to "God's eternal decree." Therefore, let all who desire to know the truth, seriously examine the claims of the doctrines founded upon the proposition—"God, from all eternity, did, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatso-

SERMON XI.

On having access to God.

BY JOHN M'LEAN.

“For through him, we both have access by one spirit unto the Father; now therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God: and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone: in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth into an holy temple in the Lord, in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”—Eph. ii. 18, 22:

THE great apostle, in this epistle, as also in that to the Galatians, and in the letter to the Hebrews, is carrying on an important controversy with some of the people of the Jews, on the question of the admittance of the Gentiles to fellow-heirship in the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Many of the Jews had established themselves in the opinion that because they were the descendents of Abraham, and of the circumcision, that therefore they were the exclusive claimants to all the blessings of the new covenant; and that therefore the Gentiles were far off, having no hope, and no right to have access to God.

The apostle shews that this exclusive claim, on the part of the Jews, was unwarranted. First, by an appeal to the natural condition of all men, both Jews and Gentiles; that when placed on the ground of their natural depravity there was no difference between the Jew and the Greek, for all had sinned and come short of the glory of God, and that the Jews were therefore children of wrath, even as others. Thus every mouth might be stopped and all the world become guilty before God. The apostle's plea, therefore, goes to say, that as there is in this regard no difference between the Jew and the Greek, the Jew may not get up a claim

to the blessings of the new covenant from which the the Gentile must stand proscribed.

2. By an appeal to the nature of the Abrahamic covenant, the apostle makes it appear that the exclusive claim of the Jew to it is unwarranted; shewing that the covenant made with Abraham granted its immunities to all kindreds of the earth; saying unto Abraham, "and in thy seed"—alluding to Isaac, the type, and through him to Christ the antetype—"in thy seed, shall all nations be blessed." The covenant, therefore, was not made to *seeds*, as unto many, but unto one,—*thy seed*—and that embracing believing penitents, of every kindred, and tongue and people; thereye Gentiles as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a habitation of God through the Spirit. For he is our peace who hath made both one, i. e. both Jew and Gentile one in Christ; and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make in himself of twain, one new man, or church, so making peace. See also the text. For through him, (Christ,) we, (both Jew and Gentile) have access by one spirit unto the Father; now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, &c.

We shall now attend to the item of doctrine contained in the grand or leading proposition of the text, to wit.

I. THAT THROUGH CHRIST, BY ONE SPIRIT, WE BOTH, (JEW AND GENTILE,) HAVE ACCESS TO THE FATHER.

1. And what does this *access* to God imply? First, access to the Father in sacrifice.

It will be remembered, that in the Jewish economy certain nations, and certain individuals, were proscribed from their altars, and from the congregations of Israel. And even those who were not thus proscribed were so terrified by certain prerequisites of the law, that when they dared to approach the holy place, the *sanctum sanctorum*, they came with much fear and trembling, lest some preliminary had been omitted and they be thus unqualified for access to God. But

the apostle declares that it is impossible for the blood of bulls and of goats, to take away sins," as therefore all are sinners (and guilty); and as the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer cannot take away sin, it is important to know by what offering our consciences may be purged to serve the living God. The apostle speaks of this sacrifice, or atonement, in the following language: Heb. x. 5—10.—“Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, sacrifice and offerings thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me. In burnt-offerings, and offerings for sins, thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, lo, I come, to do thy will, oh God! Above when he said, sacrifice and offerings, and offerings for sins, thou wouldst not, neither hast pleasure therein, which are offered by the law. Then said he, lo, I come to do thy will, oh God! He taketh away the first that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified by the offering of Christ once for all!” It will not have been forgotten, that according to a former statement, the Jewish law proscribed certain nations, and certain individuals from their altars, and congregations, &c. Now, if the first law, or covenant, had been faultless, then there had been no need of a second. But “he taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.” Having come, therefore, to do the will of God, he gave himself a ransom for all, both Jews and Gentiles. He is therefore the one atonement, and the all-sufficient atonement for the sins of the whole world. “He is our peace, who hath reconciled us to God in one body by the cross; having slain the enmity thereby, and came and preached peace to those who were far off, and to them who were nigh.” It is important that the doctrine of atonement should be carefully examined, and candidly reviewed. It should be investigated in the sight of scripture, which represents atonement as a covering, see Psalm xxxii. 4—“Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is *covered*: blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity.” In the offering of the blood of Christ once for all is the covering for our transgressions. And verily this is more

than the offering of the blood of bulls or goats, or the ashes of an heifer. It is the blood of the Son of God, who, without spot (or defect) offered himself to God for us. "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious (or costly) blood of Christ." "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

2. Our access to the Father is through Christ, as our mediator. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for us.

Now a mediator is not a mediator for one party only, but a mediator between two, the offended and the offending; and an acceptable mediator must be allied to the party with whom he mediates, and also to the party for whom he mediates. In the Godhead and manhood of Jesus Christ, these two qualities admirably meet and center; whereof are constituted one perfect and complete Christ, who ever liveth to make intercession for us.

But it is well to observe, that our access to the Father is through Christ, as mediator for man, in a particular sense—a sense which lieth at the very foundation of the scheme of human redemption. See 2d Cor. v. 18—21—"All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath committed unto us (or put in us) the word of reconciliation," &c.

Now the world was in a state of rebellion against God, and the government of God, nor could he receive to favor with himself any part, or the whole of mankind, without a reconciliation, which should be alike honorable to God, and effectual in the recovery of fallen man. He hath made him (Christ) to be sin (or a sin offering) for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. This message of reconciliation the apostle has said God hath put in them; i. e., in them and their evangelical successors. They are therefore to beseech men to be reconciled to God. To illustrate this doctrine of mediation, permit us to introduce the following incident, yet in the re-

by this one Spirit: the same agency upon the Jew as upon the Greek. And of the Gentiles it may be said, "you who were dead in trespasses and sins hath he quickened together with Christ; for by grace are ye saved," &c.

2. Our access to the Father through Christ, is by one justifying and renewing Spirit.

Sinners unjustified and unrenewed cannot walk in fellowship with God. The sinner must be pardoned before God can accept him to his favor, and send forth into his heart the Spirit of his Son, crying, Abba, Father. It is the province of this one Spirit to apply the pardon, which shall absolve him from all transgressions; and then, because he is a son by adoption, to witness with his Spirit that he is born of God. Whether, therefore, we contemplate the believing penitent in the ordeal of forgiveness, whereby his sins are remitted, or as being renewed in his moral nature, whether of a child of wrath, and an heir of hell, he is constituted a child of grace, and an heir of glory; it is accomplished by this one renewing Spirit.

3. Our access to the Father is by one comforting and sustaining Spirit. Our Lord emphatically denominates him the *Comforter*, saying, "when the Comforter is come, he shall bring all things to your remembrance, and he shall abide with you forever," &c. Are any, therefore, in communion with God, and in fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, it is by this one Spirit. It is his province to assure my conscience of her part in the blood of the Redeemer, and witness with my spirit that I am born of God. And it should be remembered that the enjoyment of this grace is not a privilege peculiar to the Jew, nor to the Gentile, as such; but to any one, and every one, who will walk worthy of the vocation wherewith he is called, whether he be Jew, or Greek, Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free; for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. But we know that we are of God, saith the apostle John, by the Spirit which is freely given to us of God.

IV. IT ONLY REMAINS TO CONTEMPLATE THE PECULIAR RELATIONS AND PRIVILEGES TO WHICH THEY ARE EXALTED, WHO HAVE ACCESS BY ONE SPIRIT THROUGH CHRIST UNTO THE FATHER. See the text ; “ now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints,” &c.

Are no more strangers, &c. A stranger may be one who is passing through the city, or commonwealth, or corporation, and may receive the attentions which are due to a stranger, but may not be recognized as a citizen, or as eligible to any of the offices or immunities which belong to citizens. Ye are not strangers in this respect, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, &c. The church, or family of God, is here represented under the double figure of a city and a house. A city has its laws, its officers, and its citizens. Its citizens are eligible to its honors, and entitled to its supplies. To these a stranger or a foreigner may not set up a claim, and of them he may not partake ; and though the foreigner may settle within the corporation, for a time, and may carry on branches of commerce with the citizens, still he is not known as a citizen, but as an ally to a foreign government, or authority. But ye who have access to the Father through Christ, are brought to the relation of citizens in the corporation, the church, and hence eligible to all the privileges and immunities of the city, or church. And if we cleave to the other figure of speech, (the house of God) ye are members of the household ; and according to chapter 3d, verse 15th, the whole family of God, in heaven and on earth, constitute his household—so that, whether we speak of saints on earth, or saints in heaven, they are one family, and are brethren ; of whom God is the one and only Lord or head—to whom praise and glory are due.

“They sing the Lamb in hymns above,
And we in hymns below.”

“Thee in thy glorious realm they praise,
And bow before thy throne:
We in the kingdom of thy grace;
The kingdoms are but one.”

as instruments of righteousness unto holiness. For it is written, "if any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." As therefore ye are

"Vessels of mercy, sons of grace,
Be purged from every sinful stain;
Be like your Lord, his word embrace,
Nor bear his hallowed name in vain."

"Now to him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

SERMON XII.

Imitation of God.

BY HIRAM KINSLEY.

"Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children."—
EPHESIANS V. 1.

AMONG the various modes of instruction with which God has favored us, is that of instruction by example. This mode is very impressive and efficient. Good example presents before us the rule of our duty, and at the same time shows us that we can comply with its demands. By its attractions, it inclines our wills, and animates our affections to a virtuous and pious emulation. We can scarcely read the life of a truly pious person without feeling strongly inclined to lead a similar life. The living example of decidedly pious people has the same effect. It strongly inclines the candid beholder to the path of piety. Pious example is frequently referred to by the inspired writers, to encourage their readers to persevere in the faithful discharge of their duty. However, among all the good examples to which reference might be made, there is but one

which is presented to us as that which, in all respects, we are to follow. Others are valuable as objects of imitation, so far only as they correspond to this. This is the example of God. Revealing himself to us in his providence and grace, he presents the standard of moral excellence, according to which he designs that our characters shall be formed. In doing this, he presents us with an example which should certainly call forth our highest admiration, and to form our characters according to it, should excite in us intense desire, and produce continual effort. In the context, the apostle refers to God thus manifested, and in the text directs us to be followers of him. From this it will be perceived that the term followers in the text means imitators. With this understanding of the apostle's meaning, I shall consider—

I. THE DUTY ENJOINED IN THE TEXT.

II. THE MANNER IN WHICH WE ARE DIRECTED TO PERFORM THIS DUTY.

III. OFFER SOME INDUCEMENTS TO ITS PERFORMANCE.

I. *I am to consider the duty enjoined in the text.* In doing this, it will be necessary to consider both the example which we are directed to follow, and the course of conduct to which we are bound, as followers of this example. The example which we are directed to follow is that of God, a high and holy example. But we are not required to follow, or attempt to copy, every manifestation of the divine character. Those attributes which are usually denominated natural, as his eternity, omnipotence, and others of the same character, are not revealed for our imitation. They are far above us, and by us inimitable and incomprehensible, but a correct view of them may lead us to adore their possessor, and trust in him. His moral perfections are those which are revealed for our imitation. He is essentially holy. Before him the seraphim cry "holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts." His various moral attributes may be regarded as the different modes in which he manifests his holiness to the children of men, and by which, accompanied by the power of his Spirit, he seeks to im-

we may be the children of our heavenly Father. "For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good; and sendeth his rain on the just, and the unjust," giving us daily a visible example of his universal benevolence. If our enemy hunger, we are to give him bread to eat, and if he thirst, water to drink. We are not to wait in order to do this till he solicits our favor. Had God thus waited for us, we never should have received his favors at all. We are to seek for opportunities to do him good, and when we find them, we are to improve them in the best possible manner. The spirit in which we should do these things should be such as to manifest the most tender regard for his welfare. It should be such as to heap coals of fire, melting love, upon his head. If we are bound thus to do good to our enemies, much more are we bound to do good to such as love God, and are striving to serve him. These are peculiarly dear to God. They are as the apple of his eye, and should be very dear to us.

The last of the divine perfections which I shall mention at present, is mercy. God has declared himself to be "the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin." The mercy of God existed in principle before it was exhibited in action. Though the province of the divine mercy may be to forgive sin, yet in connection with the divine benevolence, it precedes the sinner's repentance, and prepares the way for his repentance. It is seen in ten thousand acts of kindness, and heard in many expressions of tenderness and pity; all of which are designed to lead the sinner to repentance, and a proper trust in God. God waits a proper opportunity to exercise it fully, and when such an opportunity is presented, by the repentance and faith of the sinner, he immediately pardons his sins, and receives him to favor. Now we are required to be merciful, even as our "Father is merciful." If any have sinned against us, we may not then indulge a spirit of hardness or ill will toward them. We may not secretly delight in the belief that evil will come upon them. Much less may

we suffer these feelings to manifest themselves in words or actions, or return evil for evil, or railing for railing. We may by no means indulge any such tempers, or be guilty of any such words or actions. We are bound to regard such offending persons with tender pity, and with deep solicitude for their welfare. Though we may not be bound formally to forgive them till there is repentance, yet we must be continually actuated by the spirit of forgiveness. If a man intentionally injures us, he jeopardizes his own soul. The consideration of this fact should melt us into tenderness towards him, and our solicitude for his welfare should move us to pursue such a course towards him, as would if possible, save him from the threatened danger. Without this merciful, forgiving spirit, our approaches to the throne of grace to obtain mercy, would result rather in our condemnation, than in procuring the mercy which we solicited. Our Saviour teaches us this doctrine. He says, "and when ye stand praying, forgive if ye have aught against any : that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses." We are to see to it then, that in our *hearts* we forgive our brother his trespasses. Thus I have endeavored to set forth our duty as followers of God. Let us now consider

II. *The manner in which we are directed to perform this duty.*

The apostle tells us that we are to do it "as dear children." As a dear child copies the example of the parent, so we, as God's dear children, are to copy the example of our heavenly Father. As the child observes attentively the conduct of the parent, and if it is agreeable, views it with interest and delight, so we should view attentively, with interest and delight, the example of our heavenly Father. It should be ever present to our minds. Our eye of faith should constantly rest upon it.

As the child strives to imitate the example of the parent, so we should strive to imitate the example of our heavenly Father. See the child. It strives to

comfort, amidst surrounding wastes. In such a neighborhood, those numerous petty vices, such as tattling, tale-bearing and back-biting, which occasion so many neighborhood broils, could not exist. Here each would regard his neighbor's rights as sacred as his own. Each would seek the other's welfare and mutual emulation in love, and good works animate the whole. In such a neighborhood, the good man would delight to live, and from it take his flight to the regions of peace and love on high.

In the family circle, the smallest civil society, if following God is practised, its good effects are clearly seen. It makes good husbands and wives, good fathers and mothers. It makes dutiful, obedient children, and kind and affectionate brothers and sisters. In such a family, the family altar would be erected, and properly attended. The several members would mutually serve to promote each other's advancement in piety, virtue, prosperity and respectability in the world, and when any of the members were called to the invisible world, the blessing of the dying would be left with the living; and those who went before might meet with those who should follow after, on the confines of eternity, to welcome them to holy habitations, in the city of the great King.

2. If all who profess religion, were earnestly engaged in following God, it would be a great advantage to the cause of God in the world. It would divest the infidel of the principal weapons with which he wages war against Christianity. These are the irregular walk, and improper conduct of professors of religion. Though Christianity is not responsible for conduct which is condemned by its principles, yet the infidel lays hold of the irregularities exhibited among professors, and with these strikes at and wounds Christianity. This could not be done, but for the fact that many are either unable or unwilling to distinguish between these irregularities and the pure principles of religion. But as this is the case, the infidel takes advantage of these irregularities, and makes them the occasion of raising a sneer at Christianity, and of hardening many in sin.

Now, if all professors of religion were earnestly engaged in copying the glorious example which God has set before them, and this by the grace of God they may do, and exhibit lives corresponding to the example, the infidel could not use these weapons; for they could not exist. I do not say that he would cease to find fault. He might continue his fault finding, but if he did, in order to bring anything against Christianity on this ground, he would be obliged either to misrepresent it, or manufacture absolute falsehood. If he did either, the fruits of Christianity, as exhibited in the lives of its professors might be continually referred to, in refutation of his slanderous assertions. In general, the falsity of such representations could be easily detected and exposed. If this were done, as it probably would be, the injurious effects would soon pass from the public mind. The minds of men being thus divested of prejudice, would be open to receive the impressions of truth. Moreover, if all professors of religion were earnestly engaged in following God, the churches would be blessed with such an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, as has seldom been witnessed, since the day of pentecost. At least, we have good scriptural authority for believing, this would be the case. The lukewarmness, carelessness, neglect of duty, and other sins existing among professors of religion, grieve the Holy Spirit, and cause him to withhold his sanctifying and reviving influences from the churches. He cannot consistently abide with any but those who are striving to be like God. Although these will always enjoy his abiding presence, yet their influence is greatly circumscribed by that of careless sinful professors. If these occasionally become quickened a little, in time of revival, their halting is confidently expected by the world, and this expectation is, alas, too often realized. Their reformation is of short duration. They soon relapse into their former state of lukewarmness and sin; grieve the Holy Spirit, and cause him to depart from them. Their religious duties, if they attend to them at all, become a mere round of forms, cold and powerless, and without spirit or life. If wicked people attend their

the world. Other reputed conquerors have not in reality conquered the world, but have been conquered by the world. Their thirst for the world has been insatiable, and they have lived and died, slaves to this appetite. Through the medium of this appetite, the world has conquered them, and bound them in chains, willing captives. But the real follower of God conquers the world, triumphs over it, puts it beneath his feet, and compels it to do him service, in the accomplishment of his great design to gain an everlasting crown.

In this condition, with the Holy Spirit ruling in his heart, with the divine protection around him, and triumphing over his foes, the follower of God is prepared to meet, without fear, all the vicissitudes of life. He feels confident that all things shall work together for his good, for he loves God. Knowing that he is a follower of that which is good, he may confidently ask, who is he that shall harm me? If prosperity attend him, and he is blest with wealth, honor and friends, he seeks not his happiness in them. Though thankful for temporal blessings, he sets not his heart upon them, but with a meek and chastened spirit refers them all to God. If his lot is adversity, he rests in his God with cheerful resignation to his will. If reduced to poverty in this world, he feels that he has a treasure in heaven that cannot be taken from him. If calumny blast his character, he looks forward to that day when the "Judge of all the earth," in open court, will do him justice, and restore to him all his lost rights. If friends forsake him, he has a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. In all the vicissitudes of life, whether sickness or health, pain or ease, poverty or riches, disgrace or honor, he hears the voice of this friend declaring to him, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Having committed his all to God, "as unto a faithful Creator," he is anxiously "careful for nothing," but to do his will and be found of him in peace.

The advantages of following God, though great in life, are greater in death. How important it is when the world is receding from view, and the spirit is pass-

ing into the presence of God, to be fully prepared for the event. Such as fully follow God in life, realize in death such a preparation. The poison of sin, which is the sting of death, has been extracted from their souls by the balm of the Saviour's blood. Death for them has no sting. To them he comes as God's messenger, to unlock the earthly prison and set them free. They desire to depart and be with Christ. The rod and staff of Jehovah comfort them, and they fear no evil. They triumph over death, and in the outlet of life, and the openings of eternity, find the blessed Jesus a sufficient support. Their bodies falling asleep in Christ, rest in hope, awaiting the resurrection morn, when they shall come forth from the tomb, spiritual, powerful, glorious, like unto Christ's glorious body, vigorous with life, and blooming with immortality. Thus "they rest from their labors and their works follow them."

But the personal advantages which they realize from following God, cease not at death; they go with them into eternity. At the bar of God they will receive a happy acquittal, and be joyously conducted to the kingdom prepared for them "from the foundation of the world." Beyond this they will realize an eternity of bliss. What an idea! An *eternity* of bliss! How it overpowers the mind!

As the personal advantages realized by the follower of God are great and glorious, so his influence is great and salutary. Occasionally he may be instrumental in leading a soul to Christ. This may be a companion or a son, or a daughter, a brother or sister, or a neighbor. If not blessed with such visible fruits of his labors, he is continually shedding a benign influence around him, and unconsciously promoting the cause of God, and the salvation of souls. These may be brought into the fold of Christ, by the apparent instrumentality of others, but he shares in the good work. This influence does not die with the follower of God, but remains, and is frequently greater after his death than during his life. Children, or acquaintances could scarcely pass the grave of such a person without thinking while they

And every one can easily perceive the influence that such instruction has upon the minds of men. It renders truth familiar, and brings down the lofty and sublime subjects of divine revelation to the capacity and understanding of the human race.

The natural sun was given by the great Creator to "rule the day," and act as the general agent for imparting light to the inhabitants of our globe. And as this is the most sublime object in nature, and so necessary to man's being, and well being, it has been selected as a representation, or emblem, of the Eternal One, "in whom there is no darkness at all."

Thus David exclaims—"the Lord God is a *sun* and shield;" while it is written by the prophet Malachi—"unto you that fear my name, shall the *Sun* of righteousness arise, with healing in his wings." And as Jesus Christ assumes to be that sun, he proclaims himself "the light of the world."

In contemplating these words of him who "spake as never man spake," we arrive at the conclusion, by plain inference, or implication, that the world is in darkness; and by the positive declaration of Christ, that he is the light designed to remove this darkness.

These are subjects which have called forth the attention and feeling of the heavenly hosts, and involve the eternal interests of every human being.

In the elucidation of this momentous subject, it may be proper to observe the following order—

I. CONSIDER THE DARK CONDITION OF THE MORAL WORLD, WITHOUT CHRIST.

II. SHOW IN WHAT RESPECTS JESUS CHRIST IS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

III. ENDEAVOR TO MAKE IT APPEAR THAT THIS LIGHT IS DIFFUSIVE, THROUGH VARIOUS MEANS AND INSTRUMENTALITIES.

I. *First, then, consider the dark condition of the moral world, without Christ.*

1. The picture drawn by the pencil of inspired truth, of man's moral condition, since the fall, is a dark, dismal one, especially when viewed in the absence of divine interposition and influence.

Notwithstanding light was once the native element of the human mind, it is no longer such. A great moral change has taken place. The shades and darkness of spiritual death have spread themselves along the moral heavens, and hid the grandeur and beauty of "the sun's broad light" from the view of all mankind.

To deny the existence of this darkness in our sin-disordered world, is to deny facts, cast reflections upon the author of our being, and contradict his written word.

"Universal crime and misery, among all nations," for which infidelity cannot account, and the world has no remedy; "the imbecility of reason and conscience, as opposed by appetite; the greater facility of forming and retaining bad habits than good ones," as seen in children and confirmed in adults; "the greater number of false opinions than true ones; the deprivation which soon steals into the best institutions," infidels themselves being judges, all go to confirm and illustrate the scriptural declaration that mankind are far gone from original righteousness. "Darkness hath covered their minds, and gross darkness the people."

Every denial of the doctrine of man's moral depravity, only gives additional evidence of its truth. And exemplifications of what the bible declares on this subject, are seen and felt throughout this wretched world.

2. The world, under the influence of this moral darkness, has involved itself in unbelief.

This unbelief, in some form, is found in all countries; and extends to every branch of divine truth. Hence, while the page of history hath faithfully delineated the true character of the different nations of the earth, it has not failed to apprise us of the fact that unbelievers are among them.

God's existence has been denied; his word contradicted; his wisdom vilified; his goodness rendered partial; his justice annihilated; and his correspondence with mankind denied and ridiculed.

And such is the deep depravity of the unbelieving heart, in order to shun responsibility, it has been declared, that death winds up the history of our being, and one universal tomb shall engulf us all, where no

We must look, therefore to some other source for the production of this great evil. As

“No evil can from God proceed,
 ’Tis only suffered, not decreed—
 As darkness is not from the sun,
 Nor mounts the shades till he is gone.”

We must turn attention to another agent, and place the responsibility where the word of God places it, and that certainly is not upon our Creator. “And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise; she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and gave also to her husband, and he did eat.” Here is the secret of the whole matter. Darkness of mind followed this act of disobedience, which has diffused itself throughout our world. Man, in view of God’s prohibition, expressed will and command—in view of the death that was to be the penalty of disobedience—voluntarily and willfully took and ate the interdicted fruit. Then God, in justice, for man’s punishment and the honor of his word, withdrew the light of his countenance, and left the offender to grope in the darkness caused by himself. Man’s disobedience intercepted the divine light, and darkness was the dreadful result.

II. *Show in what respects Jesus Christ is the light of the world.*

1. Christ is the light of the world, in reference to the subject of responsibility.

The scriptures represent mankind as being responsible to God, for their conduct in this life. This he claims by right of creation, and bountiful provision. But this responsibility cannot be understood without intelligence from heaven.

Man, without revelation, may have a sense of moral imbecility and wretchedness; but a sense of responsibility fixed in the mind is the work of God himself.

Light from heaven brings with it to the sinner’s heart—first, a sense of responsibility—secondly, a consciousness of guilt—and thirdly, an evidence of par-

don, when sin is repented of, and faith exercised in Christ.

And without this light and consciousness that God will call men to an account, they are above all moral restraint; and no laws adopted by human wisdom can keep them within reasonable bounds.

The passions and appetites will get the advantage of the judgment, while anarchy and selfishness control the world. The court of justice being demolished, the distinctions between vice and virtue are lost; crime will go unpunished, and infidelity and licentiousness prevail throughout the world; for the highest tribunal in all the land is established by the self-interested culprit himself.

Let infidelity prevail, and man will never feel or acknowledge his amenability at the bar of divine justice. For it has ever been the pride and highest ambition of its abettors to keep out of the human mind a sense of its responsibility.

But as high relations, and numerous favors conferred upon man, obligate him to render an account to God, Jesus Christ, as the light of the world, informs him of this obligation, and the exercise of retributive justice toward all men, in dealing with them "according to their works." Thus, on this subject, as well as many others, Jesus Christ is "that light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

2. Christ is the light of the world on the subject of pardon.

How God could be just, and yet grant pardon to the offender, is a question in theology for which no satisfactory answer has ever been found, separate from revealed truth. And the world has been perplexed no little upon this subject. Appropriate remedies have been sought for the removal of the evils of the human heart, but all in vain. No satisfactory remedy is seen, until the "light of the knowledge of the glory of God shines forth in the face of Jesus Christ." And while human nature is writhing and groaning under the influence of indescribable anguish—amid smitten hearts and blasted prospects—the voice of Emanuel is heard

What means all this pomp and show? These tinsel decorations? These unscriptural rites and ceremonies? This crossing, and sprinkling of holy water? These nunneries, convents and monasteries? What mean these confessionals, and countings of beads? And all the superstition, relics and flummery of this priest-ridden and apostate church? Were all these concomitants of their worship transmitted to them by the apostle Peter? who says, "if any man speak, let him speak as the oracle of God." Or by Paul? who writes, "I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Surely a holy and righteous God, who demands a reasonable service, never ordained that men should be burdened, and taxed, and cursed, with all the fasts and confessions, all the penance and processions, of the church of Rome! No, no! It cannot be!

"We have not so learned Christ." He, as the light of the world, teaches us—first, that there is but one God—secondly, that this God is a Spirit—thirdly, that he seeks men to worship him—and fourthly, that he is to be worshiped in spirit, in truth, and in the beauty of holiness.

And as to modes, and forms, and ceremonies, a wise and merciful Providence hath left it optional with the worshipers to adopt such as are suited to their various localities and circumstances.

And oh! how the burdens of men are lessened in every land, on the subject of divine worship, where Jesus Christ sheds a heavenly light, and mankind will follow the same, according to his direction.

4. Jesus Christ is the light of the world on the subject of the resurrection.

Notwithstanding man might desire a resurrection from the dead, neither reason nor philosophy can assure him that it will ever take place. These can never throw light beyond the confines of the tomb. In it the brightest prospects of man are buried; and all is impenetrable darkness, until he, who is "the resurrection and the life," pours a sacred light upon its dark and dismal vault.

And while "man goeth to his long home, and mourners go about the streets," and in lamentable tones ask, "if a man die, shall he live again?" we hear, with more than angelic sweetness, the Saviour of the world exclaim, "marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." And Paul, inspired by Jesus Christ, interrogating Agrippa thus, upon this point—"Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" And says he to the Corinthians, "if in this life only, we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Then shall every dark, gloomy cell of this enemy of God and man be penetrated, and illumed by the voice of him who is "the light of the world."

Oh how precious is this light to the dying saint! His path-way across the dismal vale is lighted up by its refulgent beams; and his song of triumph is heard, as he bids adieu to the world, "O death, where is thy sting; O grave, where is thy victory?" The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

5. Jesus Christ is the "light of the world" upon the subject of immortality.

He who denies the truth of this doctrine, obligates himself to prove a negative; and to account for many phenomena in the human mind, perfectly beyond his comprehension. And how will any man undertake to prove that the soul is not immortal? Where will their course of reasoning commence? Are there any facts in physiology, or mental philosophy, that will go to prove that mind is the result of physical organization? and that, consequently, mind will cease to exist when the body dies?

forth upon the seven churches of Asia—"I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars; and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword; and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength."

And thus passages might be multiplied, in order to show that he shines upon his people, and that they are commanded to reflect that light upon others, and diffuse it wherever they go. This they are to do by their faithful prayers, their godly living, and their benevolent and devotional acts. It is thus they become, in holy compact, a secondary planet, to give light to the world.

2. A second medium of diffusing this glorious light, is the holy bible.

Laden with doctrinal, experimental, and practical truths, this sacred volume goes forth upon messages of salvation, conveying light to the dark habitations and minds of men. Infidels may deny its truth, and sneer at its claims to inspiration; and Catholicism may endeavor to suppress its circulation, but the author of this sacred treasure will continue to watch over it, until it shall have visited all nations, kindreds, tongues and people with its heavenly light, and millions of our sinful race be "brought from darkness to light, and from Satan's power to God," through its blessed influence.

Already numerous nations have hailed with rapture this beacon light, sent by divine mercy to guide them on their stormy way; and thousands of individuals have been made wise unto salvation, through its instrumentality, and conducted safely, and triumphantly, to the haven of eternal bliss.

Scepticism, superstition and idolatry must yield to the influence of bible instruction.

When God says, "let there be light," the light will

shine whether men receive and improve it or not. And when it is received, it uniformly produces

“The soul’s calm sunshine,
And the heart-felt joy.”

But let the bible be yielded, and all the moral darkness, wretchedness and ruin that cursed infidel France, will be the result.

And let Protestant christendom proscribe this sacred volume, and veto its circulation, and soon it will be as deeply fallen and superstitious as the church of Rome.

But while one portion of the world opposes the spread of the bible, others will give it speed. And through the agency of the British and Foreign, and American Bible Societies, with their auxiliaries, God is pouring a flood of light upon a benighted world.

Go, then, thou blessed book—transcript of the eternal mind—with thy blessed doctrines, and precepts, and promises! Go, thou “only star,

By which the barque of man could navigate
The sea of life, and gain the coast of bliss securely.”

Go upon the wings of light! and chase the demon of darkness from the moral world! Go, and reflect the divine effulgence upon every dwelling, and upon every heart! Go, and pour a beam of divine light into every dismal vale—every deep, dark dungeon—every horrible pit—occupied by wretched man! Go, and tell the blind to see, the lame to walk, the deaf to hear, and the dumb to sing! Let the word of the Lord “run and be glorified,” and mankind rejoice, and walk in the light, while it is yet with them. Yea, “let all nations see it together.”

3. A third medium of diffusing the light of the world, is the gospel, faithfully preached.

“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature,” was the commission given to the first missionaries of the cross. And the same commission is given to every one called of God to preach the gospel.

By this means the doctrines of the bible are to be expounded, its precepts enforced, and its promises ap-

eclipsed to them; and the things that belong to their peace, are hid from their eyes. Whom can they blame but themselves, should

“Their morning sun go down at noon,
And leave them ever in the dark?”

Oh, what infatuation, on the part of man to “choose darkness rather than light.” But this will be the case as long as his “deeds are evil.” And he “will not come to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest.”

Better lose our natural sight, and all our other senses, with all the gifts of nature and providence, than to be deprived forever of the “Light of the World.” Then “let us take heed thereunto, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place.”

3. Jesus Christ is the light of the *heavenly city*, and will be forever.

St. John, when speaking of this city upon the Isle of Patmos, says, “Her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.” And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it. And there shall be no night there, and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.”

The providential “clouds and darkness,” that were “round about the throne,” are now forever fled. No momentary, no artificial light, throws its radiations upon the walls of the eternal city. The true light, without interception, illumines that blest abode. There none go astray, on account of mists, and clouds, and midnight darkness. The glory of God shining forth in all its native splendor, enlightens and delights both saint and angel, both seraphim and cherubim. No earthly city was ever illuminated like this! No citizens ever enjoyed such privileges! No earthly potentate ever received such applause as the “king of kings!” seated upon the throne. No assembly ever listened to such

music! No beings ever felt such joy, or perpetuity of bliss! From the smallest infant of days, up to the tallest archangel before the throne, rises the song of triumph.

“After this” says John, “I beheld, and lo a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood around about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen: Blessing and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever. Amen.”

“Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face.”

May he who writes, and they who read, be brought by grace divine, to behold that light, and share in the everlasting benedictions of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

SERMON XIV.

Salvation of Infants.

BY SAMUEL GREGG,

“For the Son of Man is come to save that which was lost.”—
Matt. xviii. 11.

THE present relation of “little children,” to God, and his government; together with their future and eternal destiny; is a subject in Christian theology, which has been thoroughly canvassed by men of profound wisdom, and of deep piety; without, however, arriving at the same conclusions; although there evi-

but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it." This law could only apply to an active agent, such as Adam was, not to his seminal posterity, until they, like Adam, had become active agents. And so with its penalty in these words: "For in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." This penalty, whatever may be its import could only lie against a living and active being who had broken the preceding law, a law which none of Adam's posterity ever broke except as seminally in Adam; consequently the penalty could only be received in the same seminal relation. This will aid us in ascertaining

2. In what sense they were "lost."

We will not stop here to consider the meaning of the word "die," as used in the Adamic law, but will take the meaning most generally given to it; which is the death of the body. It reads, "For in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen. ii, 17. There are two ways in which the above penalty, supposing it only to embrace temporal death, could be applied. 1. By producing immediate death upon the transgressors the very day the sin was committed. And, 2d, by planting the seeds of disease and of death in their bodies the day the sin was committed, which would necessarily produce death at some future period, though years, and even hundreds of years might intervene.

Now it must be admitted, that the last is the sense in which the above penalty has been applied under the gracious system established through the atonement of Jesus Christ; under which, both Adam and his posterity were placed immediately after the fall, by the promise made to Eve; and by which the original penalty was evidently modified in its application to man. But to me, it is equally certain, that had no Saviour been provided, and no atonement made, the first was the only way in which it could, consistently with the principles of immutable justice, have been applied. In that case Adam and Eve would both have died the same day the sin was committed, before Cain, Abel, or any of their future progeny were brought into existence.

And thus the only persons actually engaged in committing the sin, and who alone were responsible, and guilty, would have suffered. And their innocent posterity yet unborn, would have been left forever out of an actual personal existence, to receive the penalty of the law in that same relation in which they existed when the sin was committed. They only existed seminally in Adam when he fell, and justice required that they should receive the penalty in that same relation. Then God's ways would have appeared right and equitable, in the sight of all his innocent and intelligent subjects throughout his universe, who were spectators of this important transaction.

And if the above penalty embraced spiritual, as well as temporal death, its immediate application could only have been made to Adam and Eve. 'The living spiritual principle, called "spiritual life," could only have been taken from their hearts. And depravity, with its consequent suffering could only have attached themselves to those that had committed the sin which had produced them. No one of their numerous offspring, could have been affected by either without an actual existence: which existence was cut off by the action of the penalty of the divine law. And although depravity does attach itself to all Adam's offspring, in all their generations, it is because, by the promise of a Redeemer, the immediate action of the penalty was suspended, or modified, so as to give them an actual personal existence, which existence they derive from a corrupt parentage from Adam down. see Psal. LI, 5. "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." But by the action of the original penalty they could only have been deprived of *spiritual*, as well as *natural* life. And if we also attach to the same penalty, the death called in scripture "the second death," the perpetual separation of the whole man from God's heavenly presence and glory, to be tormented forever, with "the devil and his angels," this could apply to Adam and Eve only, until their offspring were brought into existence, which could not have been effected if both Adam and Eve had died the same day

resurrection, has sent into the world for that purpose. Hence, a Redeemer was necessary to bring Adam to repentance, and to secure the very reformation which infidels admit was necessary to render it safe and proper for God to pardon him, and to restore life to his offspring. The second mistake is in supposing that there was provision made in advance, in the government of God, as instituted in the garden of Eden, for the forgiveness of sins, with or without conditions; or that God has the inherent right to forgive sins without such provisions. All provisions for a pardon, in any government, human or divine, are called *extra judicial*, it being the primary province of law to define what is just and right between the governor and his subjects. The exercise of mercy in any form requires *extra* provisions made for particular cases and circumstances. No living man can point out any such extra judicial legislation in the government of God, until the plan of human redemption was devised, and intimated to Eve in the promise that the "seed" of the woman should "bruise the serpent's head."—Gen. III. 15. To suppose that God had an inherent right to pardon, without any such provisions being legally made, is to suppose God has an inherent right to make laws, and then trample upon them—to institute governments, and then abolish them; or that God has no immutable principles by which he is governed in the administration of law to others. But the immutable justice of God, and the safety of his universal government, require that he should invariably refrain from the exercise of mercy until it can be done according to *extra judicial* provisions, made in harmony with the requirements of justice and good government. To depart from this rule of action in the pardon of sin, would not only annihilate the government already established, defeat the demands of justice in every such case, but it would virtually declare to the remaining innocent universe of God, that sin was but a trifle in the estimation of God, and might be committed without endangering either their existence or happiness. Thus a wide door would have been opened for revolt, and inducements held out to

innocent subjects of God's government to exchange the joys of holiness for the momentary pleasures of sin.

Now the extra judicial legislation which necessarily preceded the pardon of Adam's sin, was, that God's own "beloved Son," being above law, and without sin, should voluntarily assume the very nature in which sin was committed: and in that assumed body, by suffering and dying in man's stead, make such an expression of God's displeasure towards sin, as would meet the demands of divine justice, show his innocent universe that sin was exceedingly displeasing to God, and would necessarily put in jeopardy their endless felicity, and secure to the sinner the softening and illuminating Spirit, by which he might be led to repentance—and thus enable "God to be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth." These extra judicial proceedings were nevertheless in perfect harmony with divine justice, as understood and expounded by God himself; and in harmony with all previous judicial legislation for man. And thus the coming of the Son of Man was necessary to carry out and perfect the system of mercy adopted to rescue man from oblivion.

2. His coming was voluntarily undertaken, and all the sufferings it involved were voluntarily endured. Deists object to the doctrine of the atonement, because, they say, "it was unjust to transfer the punishment of a guilty world to an innocent Saviour." If that Saviour had been a created being, like ourselves, and if the suffering he endured had been imposed upon him without his consent, the above objection would be valid. For then it would involve the same principle which we have been opposing, to wit: the transfer of Adam's guilt and punishment to his innocent offspring. But Christ claims to be "one with the Father"—John x. 30—"one in substance, power and eternity"—a subject of no government save that by which Deity regulates his own acts. And he voluntarily offered himself for that purpose. He says (John x. 17, 18)—"therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I may take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay

Those numerous promises and prophecies, &c. delivered by a large number of persons, in different ages of the world, and in different and far distant parts of the earth—some describing the time, place or circumstances attending his birth—others portraying his eventful life, his wondrous works, his betrayal, suffering and death, his triumphant resurrection, and ascension—and no one knowing scarcely anything about what others had written—furnished an admirable opportunity for the Saviour to demonstrate to the world, to the end of time, the truth of his claims to the Messiahship. For not one “jot nor tittle” of all that had been written in the law or the prophets concerning him, was allowed to pass without being fulfilled. To this fact St. Peter refers, with happy effect, while addressing the unbelieving Jews in the temple, as follows—“but those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.”—Acts III. 18.

III. *The salvation the “Son of Man” came to procure for the “lost,”*

We shall not here speak of the salvation of adults in general, but of the salvation of infants in particular. Their salvation is

1. A temporal salvation. Christ procured by his coming a restoration of the forfeited existence of the whole of Adam’s infant race. To this fact I understand St. Paul to refer, Rom. v. 18—“therefore, as by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the *free gift* came upon all men unto justification of life.” The “condemnation” here spoken of, is that which fell upon the world by the sin of Adam—which “condemnation” we have shown to embrace an endless deprivation of life, to all the race of Adam. And so Christ, by his “righteousness,” procured a pardon, which was a “free gift,” and by which “justification” was extended to “all men,” even a “justification of life,” or which secured “life” to “all men.” I cannot deny myself the pleasure at this point of examining an old doctrine, which, though plausible, is so very erroneous as to de-

serve exploding, whenever met. The doctrine referred to is usually stated as follows—

(1.) “God beheld all mankind fallen, guilty and deserving to be eternally damned.”

(2.) “In sending his Son into the world, to redeem a part of mankind, and leaving the rest in their guilt, to be damned, he has done them no injustice.”

The principle error lies in the first proposition. God, to be sure, beheld all mankind fallen into sin, after Adam fell; but in our opinion he never saw them deserving eternal damnation for the sin of Adam. And in sending his Son into the world to redeem a part of mankind, and in leaving the remainder as they were, God would show no injustice to the latter class, providing they were left to suffer in Adam, as they were when they sinned in him. But the above passage of scripture shows that even this was not done—for the “all men” that received “justification of life,” are the same “all men” who by Adam’s sin were placed under “condemnation.”

2. Their salvation is a spiritual salvation. We claim no affinity to those who believe that infants are perfectly pure, and need no spiritual work of grace upon their hearts, to prepare them for heaven.

Under the first head of this discourse, we asserted that all infants derive from their parentage a corrupt nature, which gives vent to unholy passions, as soon as they are capable of doing so, and before they are capable of imitating the bad example of others, and which exhibits itself in the choice they universally make in favor of evil, instead of good, as soon as they are competent to make such a choice. And consequently they need, and must receive, a special work of grace, through Christ, to fit them for heaven. To deny this, would be to deny them the privilege of joining the redeemed in ascribing “glory, honor and power to him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever”—“for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.” But infants being both redeemed by the death, and purified by the blood of Christ, they will be able to touch with their little fin-

3. How diligent should we be, who are left behind, and whose salvation is yet in jeopardy, to make our "calling and election sure," lest by our inattention to the interests of our own souls, we shall deprive ourselves of their society in the eternal world of glory to which they have fled!

Oh! happy will it be for us, who have been bereft of our children, if when "the master shall come," and call for us, he shall find us "also ready," and "waiting for the coming of our Lord," who shall permit us, in company with ours, to enter into his presence, and so be with him forever, where,

"Glory to God! the highest angel cries,
And hallelujah's echo through the skies:
Ten thousand voices still prolong the sound,
And glory! glory! bursts from all around."

SERMON XV.

Patience.

BY MOSES TITCHENELL.

"Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the Judge standeth before the door. Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."—JAMES V. 7—11.

ST. JAMES wrote his epistle a short time before the end of the Jewish polity, and doubtless had the suffering condition of the poor saints at Jerusalem particularly in his mind. Their poverty was such, that they

were objects of charity, as may be seen by the collections made among the Gentiles for their support. We generally suppose that when people become so very poor, that they are famishing for want, that they have been improvident, and consequently are more to be blamed than pitied. But this charge cannot be made against the poor Christians at Jerusalem, for they labored, and expected their pay, but their wages "were kept back by fraud," and they were reduced to all the horrors of famine, for want of that which was justly their own. Truly it must be trying to see an impoverished wife and children fainting under exhausted nature, while the rich land-lords are hoarding up an abundance of corn, wine, oil, clothing, gold and silver, simply because they have it in their power. But this was not all—for they "condemned and killed the just." That is, they persecuted and put to death the righteous, without any resistance. The rich Jews had both the power and the disposition not only to rob their poor hirelings of their wages, but to murder them by "dragging them before the judgment seat." (See 2d chapter, 6th verse.) The Christians having no influence, and none to plead their cause, were unjustly condemned and put to death.

There is not a law in our nature that would prompt us to submit to such wanton cruelty; but the holy apostle, looking unto the meek Redeemer for an example, and pattern of Christian fortitude, says unto us, as he did unto the poor saints at Jerusalem, "be patient," for the "coming of the Lord draweth nigh." In accordance with the genius of our holy religion, our cause is in the hand of God. We are taught to look to him, and to him alone, for wisdom, power, holiness and every virtue that adorns the Christian character; and surely with equal prudence we should look to him to redress our wrongs, correct our errors, and deal with our adversaries, persecutors, or even our murderers. The apostle was fully assured that the wrongs and cruel oppression that the Christians were suffering should speedily have an end—for the Lord had heard their cry, had seen their grief, and had already deter-

tion. Joseph knew not how, nor in what manner it should be brought about; but as an example for all true Christians, he patiently waited for the change, trusting in God. God's time had now come. Little Joseph had been a slave full fourteen years, and a part of that time a prisoner in prison. Some of the prisoners dreamed, and Joseph interpreted their dreams, just as it afterwards came to pass, and this, though he was a prisoner, brought him into notice. The king dreamed a dream that troubled him, and Joseph was brought before him to interpret his dream also. Joseph then told the king that God had revealed unto him that there should be seven years of plenty, and then seven years of famine, that should devour the seven years of plenty. The king rightly judged that Joseph was the man for the times, and from the condition of a slave and a prisoner, he raised him to be less only in name than the king of a powerful people. Joseph showed no less wisdom now that an empire was under his command, than he did when in an humble condition of life. Under his administration, during the seven years that the earth produced abundantly he gathered provisions, and stored them up in Egypt, sufficient to sustain an innumerable multitude during seven years of famine. The famine commenced, and soon all the provisions in the land of Canaan were exhausted, and Joseph's brethren went down to Egypt to buy corn; and on their second trip, when Benjamin was about to be retained—(read Judah's address to Joseph, in the 44th chapter of Genesis. How inimitably fine! It beggars art. Like a mighty avalanche, it overpowers our feelings, and that too by one who said, "shalt thou indeed reign over us?" This was said in derision, for "they hated him," and again said, "come, and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites")—Judah indeed bowed to him; his brethren bowed; the father bowed to his son. The story of Joseph was not written for the gratification of curiosity, nor yet to be admired as a wonderful production, but to show the power and the goodness of the Christian's God, with whom there is no respect of persons, and to teach the Christian world the great duty of submission

to God, and the superlative wisdom of so doing. True, we may not be hated by our brethren, nor sold as slaves, nor yet be promoted to the honors of empire; but we will have trials of various kinds—trials as hard for us to bear as Joseph's were for him.

But the grace of God is sufficient for us in any form that we may be tried, and, like him, if we are faithful to God, and patiently wait for the appointed time, we shall see an end of all our trials. Our enemies shall bow beneath our feet, and heaven, with all its glory, shall be ours through an endless succession of ages. Amen, and amen.

We might call the reader's attention to Daniel, who was seventeen or eighteen years old when the Jews were taken captive to Babylon, and appears to be among the very few prophets that shared a great degree of worldly prosperity. He was raised to great honor and power, both in Babylon and Persia; and in the midst of a licentious court, preserved his virtue inviolate. One would think that the deepest fallen of Adam's wretched race would have rejoiced to be associated with such a man—especially as counsellors to their most august sovereign—but lo! he had his enemies. His companions sought his ruin. Keen-eyed envy could not permit the good man to enjoy the honor and the power that his merits so richly awarded to him. Their faith in his integrity and uprightness was the only pin on which to hang a hope of success in their malicious design against him; for they said, "we shall not find any accusation against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God." Now when Daniel knew that the hand-writing was signed that was to make an end of his earthly hopes, and cause his miserable body to be food for hungry beasts, he was undismayed, and went into his house, the windows being opened, and kneeled upon his knees three times a day, as he had been accustomed to do. Without being angry, or getting into a rage, or seeking any earthly protection, he patiently waited upon his God, and notwithstanding all the precious promises, he prayed for divine deliverance. What an example of patience, of

hand upon him, and caused Job's miserable body to feel all the anguish that it was capable of enduring. And, to add to his sorrows, his misguided wife advised him to curse God and die; and still further his three friends, (alias his tormentors) reproached him, doubtless under the fullest conviction that notwithstanding Job appeared to be upright before men, yet some hidden crime of his was so heinous in the sight of God that eternal justice could not slumber over it, and that all his trouble and suffering was but a just retribution from the hand of God. Job maintained his innocency, and uprightness in the sight of God. A controversy ensued, and we see the patient Job, to human view, alone, bearing all the losses that he had sustained, and bearing the most excruciating pain of body, standing forth a witness for God: fully meeting all the arguments that were brought against him, and honoring the grace that saved him from eternal death, and with the most profound veneration bowing with unreserved submission to God; for, says he, "though thou slay me, yet will I trust in thee," and further manifesting a disposition to suffer all the will of God, as well as to do his will; for, he adds, "all the days of my appointed time will I wait until my change come;" "and ye have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." Among the Jews, the *end* of an act is often used for the design, or object contemplated. The apostle probably borrowed this form of expression from them, and we will understand him to say "ye have seen the design of the Lord, and how he terminated this matter; and that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy."

Job's three friends failed to confound him, and a young man, (Elihu,) seeing their utter failure, his inmost soul being stirred within him, breaks forth like the bursting of smothered flames, and, apologizing for his youth, attempts to show the stupendous majesty of Jehovah, and the utter impossibility of his doing wrong. Indeed his speech is inimitably fine; but Job, not yet convinced that he was in error, humbled himself before God, and God answered him, and said to Eliphaz,

“My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. Therefore take unto you seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept; lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right.” God be praised! he never leaves the humble soul that trusts in him; and here we might say of Job, also, “Behold we count them happy which endure;” for after God turned the captivity of Job, healed all his wounds, silenced his adversaries, and owned him as his servant, he restored unto him all that he had lost in the world, and that too with large interest. He gave the good old man one hundred and forty years to enjoy the comforts of earth, and to see his children happy in the world. Then the Lord took him up to himself, to enjoy the unfading glories of an eternal heaven. Ye fearful saints, think of Job. Have you any trials like his? He lived in a much darker day than you do; and he had the same infirmities that you have to contend with. The world was in as bad a condition as it is now, and the devil permitted to do as he would with him, save forbidden to take his life; yet, in the name of the Lord of Hosts he triumphed over all.

Having given this brief exposition of the text, the subject affords us a number of very encouraging reflections, for it is not exhausted.

1. Temptations, trials, persecutions, losses, and all the evils connected with fallen nature combined are not to be taken as evidence that man is forsaken of his God, nor that he has even lost “his first love.” “Take my brethren the prophets for an example.” Look, if you please, at those ancient worthies that were “sawn asunder,” that were “clothed in sheep skins, and goat skins,” and then torn to pieces by wild beasts. Indeed they were beheaded, burned, tormented upon the rack; and the sainted Lazarus died at the rich man’s gate, full of sores; but God was with him, and, doubtless, filled his soul with bliss before he entered into his rest.

smile at the thought of impossibilities. "Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

Lastly. After such a glorious life, we shall have a reward in eternity. Notwithstanding that after we have done all that we could, we are unprofitable servants, and have done no more than our duty, yet for all that we do, suffer or bear for Christ upon earth, we shall have a most full, free and eternal reward. "Be patient, brethren." The period is coming in the history of being, when you shall have enjoyed more of God than all heaven has enjoyed from the birth of time until now; and still it is heaven. Not a single being in the realms of bliss is robbed of one ray of glory. If we were to make large wages here, and to be paid by the hour, instead of by the day, month or year, we could only enjoy a small portion of earth, and that for a short time. But O! eternity! eternity! and shall I still be seeking my reward! My gracious God, I ask not that my trials be less, nor that my crosses be fewer; but give the grace, and I will gladly bear them all.

Dear reader, do you complain of your trials, or your troubles here? Think of the holy prophets, the apostles, the early Christians, and above all of Christ, and I ask, do you suffer as they did? Are you seeking the same heaven that they have attained? and if so, why that murmur, or complaint? Has your Redeemer ever become bankrupt, or failed in a single promise? If not, repent of thy folly, and be converted, that your sins may be forgiven you. Your time upon earth is short; your day of grace will soon be past; and what you do must be done soon. Another year, and thy soul is gone—thy flesh, perhaps thy greatest care, shall be mouldering in the grave. Millions of gold would then be given for a single sabbath, one more precious promise of pardon. But all is gone, and oh! the fearful account that the nominal Christian, the lukewarm professor, and the unholy wretch that has backslidden from his God, will have to give! May God have mercy upon us, and prepare us all for a happy change, when our end shall come.

SERMON XVI.

*A Thanksgiving Sermon.**

BY JOHN COIL.

“O! that men would PRAISE the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men.”—PSALM CVII. 8.

GOD is the author of all good, and unto him should all thanks be presented. The enjoyments of man on earth are not equal to those of the inhabitants of the celestial world. Here we have our clouds and sunshine, in their turn. However, each curse is a mark of God's displeasure towards man for his sins; and every blessing a fresh mark of the beneficence of divine providence. All recipients of God's favors should make their acknowledgments to him, and present their thanks unto his adorable name. Ingratitude is a sin of the deepest dye; therefore it should be carefully avoided by all. The sole price that high Heaven has placed upon his choicest gifts, is that of faithful acknowledgment, and unfeigned thankfulness, from the recipient thereof.

Individuals, families, and communities of every kind, should frequently be employed in making their acknowledgments to the Father of all our mercies. How pleasing the sight now before us. Here, in the temple of justice, we see those who are set for the defense of the rights of men, mingled with a large concourse of people; and all are here to acknowledge the high and unchangeable claims of Heaven upon us.

But cast your thoughts abroad through the extent of the state, and ten sister states; and contemplate the multitudes of patriots, Christians and divines, which are crowding many spacious temples, and paying their homage to heaven's King.

* Preached in the Court House at Greensburgh, Pa., 1848.

3. I will not attempt to prove the existence of God. The heavens declare his glory, and the firmament showeth his handy work.

“Those mighty orbs proclaim his power,
 Their motions speak his skill;
 And on the wings of every hour,
 We need his patience still.
 Part of his name divinely stands,
 On all his creatures writ;
 They show the labor of his hands,
 Or impress of his feet.”

4. The proclamation of a day of thanksgiving to Almighty God, recognizes his existence, and also his overruling providence, dispensing his bounties to mankind. “The Hindoos believe in one God, so completely abstracted in his own essence, however, that in this state he is emphatically the *unknown*.” Consequently he is neither the object of hope nor fear. He is supposed to be destitute of even intelligence, and to remain in a state of profound repose. The Platonists, and followers of Pythagoras, believed that all things happened according to divine providence; but this they overthrew by joining *fortune* with God. Plato says, “God, fortune and opportunity govern all the affairs of men.” The Epicureans held that what was blessed and immortal gave no trouble to itself or any others. According to the doctrine of Aristotle, God resides in the celestial sphere, and observes nothing, and cares for nothing beyond himself. These notions are inconsistent with the doctrine of providence.

5. Some who believed in the doctrine of providence, doubted the efficiency thereof. Seneca says that “evil happens to good men, because God, the artificer, could not change matter;” and that “many things were made ill by the great artificer—not that he wanted art, but through the stubbornness of matter.” If God’s providence is not supreme, we are exposed to every calamity, and God himself is unable to deliver us therefrom. The correction of mankind, by a wise and gracious being, for his improvement, is in opposition to such a doctrine as the above. God is set forth in the bible as

a refuge from trouble, and as a father chastening us for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. We are not left to grope our way through the dark, trembling at every step, lest some unavoidable evil should befall us. The light of revelation shines upon us, and walking by this light there is no cause of fear or stumbling in us. We know that there is a God, and that he is our God—that he is omnipotent, able to deliver us from all evil, and crown us with all good. That he created light, and formed darkness, and that the light and darkness are alike unto him. What time we are afraid, we will trust in him, acknowledging him in all our ways, that he may direct our paths. He is omniscient—knows all things—all our wants, and what will be for our general good. Omnipresent, whether we are in the city full, or in the waste, howling wilderness—in the deep and lonely valley, or scaling the mountain top, amid the lowering clouds, bellowing thunders, and forked lightnings of heaven; on terra firma, or riding the high risen and loud clamoring wave; we know that our God is near to protect and save us from all danger.

Some of the pagan philosophers who lived after the commencement of the Christian era, complained that the Christians had introduced a very troublesome and busy God, who did diligently inquire into the manners, actions, words and secret thoughts of all men. Yes, and all men are under his care; he humbleth one, and exalteth another. He maketh his sun to rise on the good and the evil; he sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. He is the God of all our mercies; the Father of lights, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift.

II. WE MAY NOW CONSIDER, BRIEFLY, THE FAVORS FOR WHICH WE ARE TO OFFER THANKS.

1. "The perpetuation of our civil and religious liberties." Our state and nation are free from all foreign jurisdiction, and free from tyranny at home. We enjoy our natural and constitutional rights in great purity. [In religious matters, as far as the civil authorities are concerned, all are permitted to worship God according

poor the objects of his peculiar regard—and the rich should minister to their wants. The children of the poor are in their prison, bound with the fetters of ignorance. The free school system is designed to demolish the temple of ignorance, and liberate all her prisoners. By this the rising generation may be fitted for the duties of life—enabled to read the bible, and learn their duties to God and man. Nothing can be of greater importance. How much superior to the athletic exercises of Greece and Rome, which were intended to fit the youth for *war*? May the time soon come when common education shall be afforded the children of all nations.

We have means of moral improvement. The temperance reformation has saved its tens of thousands from degradation, poverty, wretchedness and utter ruin; has in many instances dried up the streams of fire and death, and caused the perennial streams of bliss to flow in their stead.

We have also bible societies, which contemplate supplying every family with a copy of the scriptures. The bible is the moral lever by which the world is to be raised to God. Sabbath schools are established in the length and breadth of the land, where millions of children are taught sabbath after sabbath; and the preaching of the gospel, by a living ministry.

The American ministry is numerous, intelligent, pious and efficient. We see this angel, having the everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwell upon the earth, flying in the midst of heaven, or standing poised on steady wing in the mid-heaven, and crying with a loud voice, fear God, who made heaven and earth. All these fountains tend to widen and deepen the streams of individual, domestic and social happiness, and to make intelligent, moral, virtuous, pious and useful husbands, wives, children, parents, neighbors and citizens. Pellucid streams of intellectual and religious knowledge are flowing in every direction, deepening and widening in their progress; and they shall ultimately meet together in their courses, and cover the whole earth, as the waters cover the seas. It is in this

country that liberty, learning and pure religion, like three virgin sisters, are to grow up and attain their perfection. So intelligent, so virtuous, so fair, and withal so happy, that all nations, when they shall see them in their beauty, will instanter abandon their kings, ignorance and idolatry, and embrace these fair sisters as their *maritæ*, and the *matres* of their children. Happy individuals make happy families, and happy families make happy communities. This happiness is ours but in part, as yet. It is in the incipient stage thereof. It is unfolding itself continually. Already we see the dawns of the cloudless day. The American flag is hailed by many a brave heart in distant lauds—and they long for the day when the vexilla of freedom shall wave in triumph over their fields, and float in the breezes, on the walls of their cities. Hail, happy day, which shall break every bond, and let the oppressed go free!

I imagine that I already see the tyrant's throne crumbling beneath its cumbrous load, and the sceptre of injustice falling from his palsied hand, and the crown of the degraded monarch rolling in the dust—while the redeemed are exulting in the long desired liberty. The free toleration of all sects, and free or voluntary support of ministers, which have obtained in this country, are wakening an interest in the old countries; and the period is not distant when *national* churches shall be numbered with the things which *have been*.

III. I CAN SAY BUT LITTLE RELATIVE TO THE MANNER OF RENDERING THANKS TO THE HIGH AND LOFTY ONE.

I. With the Psalmist, we may enquire, "what shall we render to the Lord for all his benefits to us." And with him we may answer, we will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. We will pay our vows unto the Lord, in the presence of all the people.

Our thank-offerings should be heaped upon his altars, until they groan beneath the glorious loads; expressions of gratitude be borne aloft on the viewless winds,

God of the universe—unwilling to humble themselves under his mighty hand, that in due time they might be exalted. O! that every knee may soon bow unto him, and all tongues confess his goodness.

“ People and realms of every tongue,
Dwell on his love with sweetest song,
And infant voices loud proclaim,
Their early blessings on his name.”

SERMON XVII.

Divinity of Christ.

BY JOSEPH MONTGOMERY.

“ For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.”—COL. 1. 16. 17.

THE divinity of Christ is a doctrine of the bible. It is the doctrine of this text; and is here introduced by the apostle, as a reason why we have “ redemption in his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.” He appears to consider that it was the *dignity* of his nature which gave to his blood that atoning, that healing, and that all-cleansing power. Christ was fully able to redeem; for he was “ King of kings, and Lord of lords”—consequently fully able to produce that fountain which “cleanseth from all unrighteousness.” This is a subject of great weight, and full of comfort. Our Redeemer is our Creator, and our preserver also; and is “worthy to receive honor and power divine;” and merits all that love which flows from the heart, soul, mind and strength. He is divine!

It is true, this is an old subject, and much light has been shed upon it, but it is not on that account unworthy our notice. It is as important as ever. None of

its supporting and cheering influence is lost. Nor can age nor argument cover it with clouds and darkness. The words of the text are plain. Can any one read them, and deny the divinity of our Lord? In the discussion of this subject, I shall endeavor to show,

I. THAT CHRIST IS GOD.

II. THAT DANGEROUS AND ABSURD CONSEQUENCES, NECESSARILY FOLLOW A DENIAL OF THIS DOCTRINE.

I. *Christ is God.*

The text presents four considerations from which the divinity of Christ may be argued. 1. He is the Creator of all things. 2. All things were created for him. 3. He is before all things. 4. He is the preserver of all things.

1. He is the Creator of all things, "in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible."

If the apostle understood and meant what he said, he must have considered our Saviour truly and properly God; for he beyond doubt knew that "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth;" and that "one God created all things," who, according to the scriptures, is an infinite, unlimited, and an unoriginated being. Creation, then, is the work of him who is infinite, independent, all-sufficient, unoriginated, and eternal. But Christ is the creator of "all things," for the apostle does not say that he created thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, which would materially change his meaning—but that he "created all things," whether they be thrones, or dominions, principalities or powers. Therefore, according to the plain meaning and construction of the apostle's words, our Lord Jesus Christ must be God.

But we have more testimony to this truth. John, the beloved disciple, who was present and conversed with our Lord, during his personal ministry—who was an eye witness of his miracles, and who also witnessed his agony in the garden, and his death upon the cross—asserts that "all things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made." What will Arians and Socinians do with this? If, according to their hypothesis, the Son of God is a mere creature,

in the following expression of John the Baptist—"after me cometh a man which is preferred before me; for he was before me." John the Baptist was six months older than the humanity of Christ. How then, if Christ had no previous existence, could he be before John. I suppose that Unitarians might answer and say, Christ was a greater prophet, of more honor, dignity, superiority, &c. This would be a gross perversion of the term; for it will appear obvious to all careful readers of the sacred scriptures, that the word "before" is used to express priority of time. Thus, "if the world hate you, ye know that it hated me *before* it hated you."

Again. "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor." When was Christ "rich?" It was not during his incarnation. This passage must puzzle those who will not admit the pre-existence of Christ, and that "he was "rich in glory before the world was." But it is easily understood by those who believe that "he is before all things," and that he was truly sincere when he said, "and now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory I had with thee, before the world was." This is forcible and conclusive. "So decisive is this passage," says an able writer, "that were there no intimations in the new testament of the pre-existence of Christ, this passage would irrefragably demonstrate and establish it."

There are several other passages from which arguments might be adduced in proof of the pre-existence of Christ—such as, "he was sent into the world," "he came in the flesh," "he came down from heaven;" but for the sake of brevity we may pass them by, believing that the testimony and arguments which have been introduced—testimony which no criticism can shake or obscure—are sufficient to prove that Christ was "before all things," and that he existed prior to the formation of the world. If so, he undoubtedly is God.

4. "By him all things consist."

This is another argument in support of the doctrine I am trying to vindicate. Our Lord is here regarded the preserver and governor of the whole universe; and

can any power less than God, that mighty being which spake the world from naught, keep the same in existence? An eminent divine answers this question, when he says, "creation can only exist and be preserved by a continuation of that energy that first gave it being."

But in the preservation of "all things" we have a manifestation of the omnipresence of Christ, as well as his divine power. He must be present to "all things," in order to preserve them; for he cannot act where he is not. To this the holy scriptures testify. "When two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I, in the midst of them." It is reasonable to suppose that the first disciples, for whose comfort and encouragement this promise was given, met frequently, and in different parts of the world, at the same time, in order to pray together, and to worship the Lord. If so, he who could be in the "midst of them," wherever and whenever they assembled, must be omnipresent.

When our Lord commissioned his apostles to "go and teach all nations," &c, he said—"and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." This is clear and forcible. He who could be present with all his disciples, in all places, "always," even unto the end of the world, must be everywhere present—must be God.

Another passage of great advantage in support of this doctrine may be introduced. "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man, which is in heaven." Here our Lord declares himself to be at the same time in heaven and in earth, which argues conclusively that he is everywhere present—that he fills heaven and earth—and, consequently, that he is perfectly acquainted with the thoughts, words and actions of men.

Now, if it is true that omnipresence is ascribed to Christ, which has already been shown, it follows that he must possess all the attributes which belong to God, since they cannot exist separately. He who possesses one must possess all. This would not be difficult to establish; but it is needless to add more arguments—

was set up by our Lord Jesus Christ; therefore he is the God of heaven. The first principle of the divine law is, "thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." But when he bringeth in his first begotten into the world, he saith, "let all the angels of God worship him." And every "knee shall bow at his name." Here men and angels are commanded to worship him. But "thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Therefore Christ must be the "Lord our God;" for God is immutable in the principles of his administration.

Finally, if Christ is not God, the whole Christian system is built upon a false foundation, and must ultimately fall. The Christian church is built upon the "foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner-stone." If Christ was an impostor, and his apostles idolaters, the foundation of the church is anything else but good; the bible cannot be the word of God, but of false prophets and idolaters; our preaching is in vain—your faith is also vain—and Unitarians, in the midst of these clouds, can have no better views and prospects of eternal life, than the heathen, who have never heard of a Saviour.

Such are some of the absurd consequences which crowd upon the system which rejects the divinity of Christ. While those who acknowledge the "trinity in unity" can receive and welcome the bible as a revelation of Heaven's will to man, believe the prophets and apostles to be men inspired and sent of God, filled with the Holy Ghost, and way marks to the kingdom; that the Christian church has a permanent foundation; and that through faith and obedience to the commandments of God, they shall have a "right to the tree of life," and pass through the gates into the celestial city, and live forever.

SERMON XVIII.

The New Commandment.

BY EDWARD BIRKETT.

“A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another: as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall also *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”—JOHN XIII. 34, 35.

A VERY partial survey of the existing condition of mankind, is sufficient to develop the fact that numerous evils exist in the social system, and that there is more of malevolence exhibited in their intercourse one with another, than sincere love. We frequently find man the foe, the injurer, the oppressor of his fellow-man. We see injustice and aggression, fraud and villany, everywhere prevailing. Many fine spun theories, many soap bubble schemes have been put forth from time to time, to remedy this state of things, and to bring society into a state of social harmony and affection. Infidels of various grades have admitted that the world is sadly out of order, and have proposed various plans for its improvement—but what have they ever *done* to remedy its evils? They have made loud complaints of the imperfection of the church, and of the bigotry and selfishness of professors of religion, but they have never been able to furnish the world with a better system than Christianity, nor have they ever accomplished anything of importance for the benefit of society. It may be admitted that the church comes far short of her duty; that she is very imperfect in her operations of benevolence—but then it is very evident that she immeasurably transcends all other agencies employed for the reform and well-being of society. And it might be very easily shown, that the benevolence of infidels, and the compassions of worldly men, so far as they operate, should be attributed indirectly to the influence of Christianity—for nothing of this kind exists where the bible is unknown.

acter of the object. We are to love each human being, not as he may be amiable, or virtuous, or the reverse; but because of our relationship to each other, because he is a man and a brother. We are bound by this precept to love the distant heathen, however ignorant, cruel and wicked—and why? Because they are our fellow beings—“our neighbors.”

But the objects of regard presented in this new command, are the followers of Christ, those who are partakers of like precious faith with ourselves. It is an affection, then, which is founded upon our mutual adoption into the family of God. It grows out of our relationship to each other, as brethren in Christ Jesus. We cannot therefore obey this precept, and exercise this holy affection, until we are born of God, and have such a new nature implanted within us as shall lead us to love virtue, goodness, holiness. The love of God must be shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, given unto us; and then shall we love all those who bear the divine image with a special and peculiar regard.

These precepts differ—

2. *In the elements of which they are composed.* The love of our neighbor consists principally in feelings of benevolence, pity and compassion, manifested as occasion may serve in corresponding acts; but the love of the brethren embraces not only these elements, but also many others. It includes feelings, and sentiments, and acts of complacency, delight, esteem, desire and cordial regard. We are not required to feel sentiments of complacency and esteem toward the ignorant, rude and vicious; yet we are bound to have benevolent feelings toward them, and if they are in need or distress, to relieve them according to our ability. But we are commanded to cultivate sentiments and feelings of a higher character towards the disciples of Christ. They are to be our friends, our companions, the chosen ones of our hearts. We must look with complacency upon their excellent moral qualities, esteem whatever is good in their character, and desire and delight in their society, fellowship and conversation. But some one may be

ready to object—"I see so little of the image of the Saviour in those around me—so few marks of Christianity—that I can have little esteem for, or confidence in my Christian brethren."

But we may reply to the objector, that he is only required to esteem and take delight in his brethren in proportion as they breathe the spirit, and exhibit the moral features of the Saviour; and after all, the greatest fault may be in himself. He may have very little brotherly love in his own heart; he may be diligently watching the errors and imperfections of his brethren, and at the same time be overlooking all their real worth and moral excellence, and all those qualities on which his love should fasten with a deathless grasp. If his own heart was filled with the Saviour's love, his eyes would be wonderfully enlightened to discover the image of Christ in his brethren; and perhaps the spots and blemishes upon which they are now fixed, would all vanish away.

The more excellent way in examining into the moral character and condition of others, is to begin at home, examining first our own hearts, and to proceed no farther until we feel our own souls glowing and burning with divine love; then shall we be prepared to appreciate its possession by others, and we shall be drawn together by a kindred sympathy and attraction, and be sweetly melted into one. But if we begin with our brethren first, it is probable that brotherly love will be diminished rather than increased.

But these precepts differ 3dly *In the motives and considerations by which they are measured and enforced.* We are commanded to love our neighbor *as* we love ourselves; but we are required to love the disciples of Christ *more* than we love ourselves, "as Christ loved us." And how was that? He loved us *more* than he loved himself, for he laid down his life for us. This is a hard saying. Who can bear it? No man in nature's strength, but any man by the omnipotent power of grace. We are to be influenced in our love to the brethren by the consideration and impulsion of Christ's great love to us. *His love*, is to be the measure, and

stant efforts to promote each other's temporal and spiritual welfare? Let us each institute an inquiry into this matter; not whether my brethren have loved me according to the Saviour's rule, but whether I have so loved them. Let us now consider,

II. THE PRACTICAL INFLUENCE WHICH OBEDIENCE TO THIS COMMAND WOULD HAVE UPON OTHERS.

“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” It would convince the world that we are what we profess to be, the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. The possession of brotherly love is one of the evidences of a personal adoption into the family of God. “For we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.” But it is the evidence that it furnishes to *others*, of our discipleship that is referred to in the text. And there is no evidence so powerful, so conclusive, so convincing as this! We may have an orthodox creed, and scriptural sacraments and forms of worship: we may have a wealthy and numerous membership, and a new testament discipline, but after all, if we do not walk in love, as Christ also walked, we do not furnish the world with the right kind of proof that we are the disciples of Christ.

We may remark 1st That obedience to this “new commandment” would render the church efficient in her efforts for the salvation of the world. This result is undoubtedly contemplated in the text. The Saviour did not mean merely that brotherly love should be a mark of distinction between his disciples and others, but that the possession and manifestation of this principle by them, would exert an attractive, powerful, and saving influence upon mankind. The church is represented as “the light of the world,” but in order to this, her beams, like those of the natural sun, must possess both light and heat—the light of truth, and the heat of love—otherwise there will be no spiritual vegetation, beauty, or life. The church is said to be the “salt of the earth,” but it is only in proportion as she exemplifies the spirit of love, that she possesses the seasoning power, and can exert a corrective, healing and

preserving influence upon the vast mass of moral putrefaction by which she is surrounded. She may retain a correct system of faith, and continue the ordinances and institutions of religious worship after she has lost the "savor" of love, but she will cease to exert a converting, saving influence upon mankind.

The Christian is instrumentally the spiritual physician of morally diseased and dying men. He offers to administer for their cure "the balm of Gilead"—to guide them to the healing streams of Calvary. How is the sin-sick soul to distinguish him from a spiritual quack? How is that confidence to be inspired, which is necessary to induce the diseased soul to trust to his guidance? By the exhibition of a love like that which glowed in the bosom of the Redeemer, and beamed forth from every part of his life. This indicates that he has been trained in the right school, and that he may be trusted as a safe adviser in the great concerns of the soul's salvation. But if destitute of this love, he goes forth to offer his services to mankind, no wonder if he is met with the humiliating response, "physician, heal thyself." The sacred history informs us of "the seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests," who attempted, without the requisite qualifications, to imitate the apostles in casting out evil spirits. They went to one who was thus possessed, and said, "we adjure you by Jesus, whom Paul preacheth," and what was the result. "The evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was, leaped upon them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, and they fled out of that house, naked and wounded." Should we not learn from this how vain are the efforts of a nominal Christianity to convert mankind, to dispossess human hearts of those spirits of wickedness which reign therein with potent sway? They who would "turn men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God," must have the divine mark of a love like Christ's imprinted upon their foreheads; otherwise their efforts may end in defeat and disgrace. But if it is seen and felt, that "the love of Christ con-

ries; but the light of eternity can alone reveal the full and fearful consequences of disunion and strife.

It is not alleged that there has hitherto been no brotherly love in the churches, or between the churches; but that there has not been as much as their ought to have been. The evidence of discipleship has not been sufficiently strong to convince and convert the world. The love which does exist needs to be brought out, and manifested, and greatly increased. The walls of exclusiveness and bigotry should be razed to their foundations, that they may no longer obstruct the light of love, but that it may shine forth in all its glory. If all Christians cannot be united in one church, they may all be united in one spirit, "having the same love." If controversy cannot altogether cease, it may at least be conducted with more forbearance and brotherly kindness.

The command in the text is a part of the Redeemer's farewell discourse to his disciples, which was delivered immediately before his betrayal and crucifixion, and which was followed by a most beautiful and comprehensive prayer. One of the petitions which he offered on their behalf, at this affecting period, was this—"that they all may be one as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." Here seems to be a strong intimation that the unity of the church will be the means of converting the world to the faith of Christ. This will furnish a testimony which they cannot refute. This will exert an influence which will subdue all before it. This is the leaven which will leaven the whole lump.

The strength of the church will be in proportion to the unity of her various elements. United in love, she will be able to stand, to conquer, to triumph over all opposition; divided in heart, she must fall. At the present time the church has great need of closer union and concert of action, in order to resist and overcome her foes, who in mighty masses are coming down upon her, to accomplish, if possible, her destruction. The forces of infidelity, and Romanism, and Puseyism, and

fanaticism have already been marshaled, the battle cry has been sounded, and they are hurling their deadly missiles against her. Let the churches then combine for mutual safety and defence. Let them cease their assaults upon each other, and face and fight the common enemy. The herds of Switzerland, when attacked by wolves, instead of goring one another, as professing Christians too often do, unite, form a close batallion, and face the common foe on all sides. And shall the churches be less prudent than they? No: let them also unite in one mighty phalanx, and though they may proceed to battle in their different regiments, and under their respective captains, let them have a common standard, the standard of the holy cross; and let each flag bear the motto—"One is our master, even Christ, and all we are brethren." Thus united, and inspired with the common spirit of love, glorious success would crown their efforts, and soon the Redeemer would bestow upon his church the gift which his Father promised to him—"the heathen for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession."

Such then would be the result of obedience to this "new commandment." Our profession of Christianity would be justified in the eyes of a gainsaying world; thousands would be won to Christ by the eloquence of love, speaking through the lives of Christians; the enemies of the church would be put to confusion and shame; and ultimately the divine leaven of love would assimilate every human heart to its own blessed likeness. Lord, incline our hearts to keep this law.

from infinite goodness, and exercised towards holy beings it is a divine approval, a holy affection, a sweet and blissful communion of his Spirit with theirs. God with them and in them. Towards sinful beings, it is divine compassion and pity moving in acts of mercy, and tender regard for their restoration to the divine favor. It prompts to long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, but have everlasting life.

In human beings love is a drop from the infinite ocean of divine love. A ray from the sun of righteousness, first received and then reflected back to its source. This affection, when exercised towards God, is a heartfelt esteem for the divine character—a holy delight in the divine perfection—a grateful sense of God's "wonderful goodness to the children of men" generally, and to ourselves in particular. "We love God because he first loved us."

Between good men it is a holy sympathy and union of kindred elements, a divine attraction by which their hearts are mutually drawn together, as each in his brother beholds God's image. Towards wicked men, while it is destitute of the elements of approval and union of kindred feeling, it moves in the character of pity and commiseration—a tender and strong solicitude for the welfare, temporal and eternal, of immortal beings. To this last feature of the subject particular attention is solicited.

The wicked are our neighbors, and we are bound to love them as ourselves. Taking our Saviour's explanation of the passage, we are to conceive ourselves in their circumstances, and them in ours, and then take into account the whole of their existence—an existence that must measure the flow of eternal duration. Then consider the vast consequences, the imperishable interests, suspended on the improvement of the brief period allotted to human probation, and then ask ourselves what we would that they should do unto us, if our circumstances were reversed; and the answer becomes the measure of our duty.

Do you ask, "who then can be saved?" With God it is possible that every human being should be saved,

by entering in at this "strait gate," and walking in this narrow way." And this is the very kind of salvation which God has undertaken for our race. The very soul of the gospel system is benevolence. The first announcement of our Saviour's advent declared that the triumphs of the gospel would consist in bringing "glory to God in the highest, and on the earth peace and good will to men."

The end for which Christ died for us was, "that we should not live unto ourselves, but unto him who died for us and rose again." And to live unto him, is to carry out, so far as is in our power to do it, the great ends of his mission. It is to have the mind that was in Christ—to possess in our measure the same holy love for the good, the same tender solicitude for the bad. And he is the best man, the purest philanthropist, and the holiest Christian, whatever else he has or lacks, who lives for his race, the all-controlling motive of whose conduct is to make men better.

This benevolent mind that was in Christ—this love of immortal spirits—this longing anxiety that they may "taste and see that the Lord is good"—is implanted in every soul that is born of God. But alas! in how many instances "has the fine gold become dim?" How many who would shudder at the thought of being backsliders, have nevertheless left their "first love," and in their affections, if not in their professions, gone back "to the weak and beggarly elements of the world?" Where is that love for the souls of their fellows, which gushed out in prayers and tears, and earnest entreaty, almost with the same breath that praised God for first deliverance? How many have forgotten the injunction, "as ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him?" They received him by forsaking all, and following him. They received him by an entire and perfect dedication of soul and body to his service, and they are to walk in him by the same entire and perfect dedication of soul and body to his service, day by day. Then, indeed, are they "living sacrifices unto God." While it is the duty of every Christian to pray, "thy kingdom come," it should be the great governing

others as you would that they should do to you, if you do not make the trial? Does not your judgment say it is right? Does not your own conscience urge you to the duty? Does not the Holy Spirit speak to thee, saying, "he that converteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death?" And does not God's blessed promise, like the sweet music of heaven in thy soul, encourage thee, saying, "they that turn many to righteousness, shall shine as the stars forever and ever?" Can you not bring your feelings to this work? Pray God to create a clean heart in you, and to renew within you a right spirit. Pray him to restore to you the joys of his salvation, and then to uphold you by his free Spirit, that you may so teach transgressors the way of life, that sinners shall be converted unto God. Think of the worth of your own soul. Think of the agony of Christ in the garden, and on the cross.

"How vast the love that him inclined,
To bleed and die for thee."

Linger at the foot of the cross till you feel afresh the healing streams that gush from Immanuel's side. Think of God's love to a perishing world, till your soul is filled with adoring wonder. Then reflect upon the hopeless and everlasting anguish of a lost soul, who might have been saved, who might have become a child of God—an heir of glory—and who might have sung the song of the redeemed in heaven. Think of these things, I entreat you, till your soul melts within you. Then go, constrained by the love of Christ, constrained by the love of souls, trusting in the God of your salvation, with child-like simplicity, and with godly sincerity entreat your neighbor to go with you to heaven. The Holy Trinity will be with you in such an undertaking. Holy angels will mark your footsteps as thus you go forward in the work of the Lord. You will sometimes fail of seeing your heart's desire upon your neighbors, but others will repent and turn to God. And even when your message is not received, the blessing which God had in store for your neighbor, will fall

upon your own spirit. In either case, God will wonderfully bless and comfort your own soul; God will open to your mind the treasures of heavenly wisdom and knowledge, as you never expected. You will have such views of God's goodness, as you never had before. You will see such a fullness in Christ as you never saw before. You will see such beauty and fitness in the plan of redemption as you never saw before. You will have such a sense of divine things as you never had before. You will find such cords of love binding your heart to the hearts of those whom you have led to Christ, as you never conceived of before.

You will see the tear of penitence, a richer sight than ever glistened upon an earthly crown. You will hear the first notes of praise from the new-born soul, as the beginning of heaven's own melody. You will see joy and gladness beaming upon the countenance just beginning to radiate God's image.

If there is nothing in these considerations to move you, how can you have the love of God abiding in you? How soon it will be too late to do the sinner any good. How soon it will be said, "let him that is unholy be unholy still, and him that is filthy be filthy still." How imperishable, how overwhelming the interests suspended upon the brief period allotted to human probation! To a soul fully alive to the *realities* of religion to the *facts* of immortality, of heaven and hell, how stirring the motive to "be up and doing while the day lasts!" The generations which have preceded us, have acted their part for weal or for woe, on this world's stage, and have gone to their long reward. We now stand where they stood on this theatre of action, and like them must soon give place to the generations to come; but we shall leave our impress upon those who shall succeed us. Let it be our highest aim, then, so to exhibit the excellency of the religion we profess, as that the world may be the better for our having lived in it.

The great object of God's long-suffering towards the children of men, according to the scriptures, is that they may be led to repentance.

for their children! Do they reflect that their misguided affection is almost sure to ruin the souls of their children? That around the necks of those over whose infant slumbers they have watched with all a parent's tenderness, they are fastening a weight, even though it be a weight of gold, that will sink them into the depths of perdition?

It is infinitely more desirable that our children should be preparing for heaven, than that they should marry the sons or daughters of the wealthy, or that they should enjoy any amount of earthly good whatever. It is better for them to eat their bread by the sweat of their brow, than to loose their souls.

If these remarks are just, it is very evident that our duties to ourselves, to our children, and to our neighbor do by no means conflict, but that very course of conduct which is best for one, is best for all. And this is true with everything belonging to Christianity. Every individual is acting most for his own real interest, when, influenced by an enlightened zeal, he is laboring most earnestly for the glory of God. Whatever is due to the cause of God, whether of money, or talent, or labor, becomes a curse when withheld from its proper channel; but when appropriated as God designs, it is treasure laid up in heaven. Herein have been displayed the infinite wisdom and goodness of our Heavenly Father.

How happy for the church and this world, if this lesson were practically understood! Should we not then rather desire to know how much God would permit us to give, than to know how much he would permit us to withhold? Should we not rather enquire how much we may *give* without sinning, than how much we may withhold, without losing our own souls?

The religion of Christ is the great regulator of human society. This it does, by purifying its fountains. And while it is a duty which religion enjoins, to relieve distress, by whatever means produced, it should be the main object to remove the evils which have been the cause of suffering—otherwise we shall be continually dealing with remote effects, while the causes which

have produced them still continue in vigorous operation. While it is our duty to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, and to visit the sick and the prisoner, we are to remember that extreme poverty is seldom the lot of the real Christian. In a great majority of cases it will be found to be the result of habits which religion would have prevented. An individual who had enjoyed good opportunities for an extensive acquaintance with mankind, has said—"I have been young, and now I am old, yet have I never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." Our Saviour's promise, that to those who "seek first the kingdom of God" all needful temporal good shall be added, is proof of the same thing. If there are exceptions, they are only exceptions, while the general rule holds good. These facts should by no means damp the ardor of our zeal for the relief of suffering humanity, but should inspire new zeal for the removal of those causes which have operated to produce the suffering, and which still continue to be the legitimate cause of its perpetuity. No permanent good can be conferred on the great majority of human suffering, (I speak now of the suffering arising from extreme poverty,) without elevating the moral condition of the sufferers. And the only way to elevate their moral condition, is to bring religious truth to bear at once upon their consciences. All those theories which profess to seek the regeneration of mankind, by unsettling the foundations of society as at present organized in Christian countries, and as established by God himself, by whatever names such theories may be dignified, are but the wretched abortions of the wretched system of infidelity. They speak the truth, when they affirm that there is much that is wrong in society; but they utter what is false, when they affirm that human nature is right without the grace of God—and the remedy which they seek to apply is far worse than the evils of which they complain. What kind of reform is that which saps the foundation of all social organization? If the stream is somewhat bitter, will its waters be rendered sweet and healthful by poisoning the fountains? If the blood does not flow to the extremities in

joy in the Holy Ghost;" a being as much interested as ourselves in the amazing love of God to a perishing world;" a being for whom Christ shed his precious blood, as much as for ourselves; a being as capable of being cheered with high and holy hopes of a blessed immortality as ourselves; and especially when we consider that a period is promised, when the vast majority of the human race shall feel the power of saving grace, and that this period may be hastened greatly by Christian exertion; who can fail of esteeming it a most precious privilege to contribute his mite to swell the aggregate of human happiness? Who will not pray with all his heart, "thy kingdom come," and labor with all his might to hasten it?

God has yet a great and a glorious work to be accomplished on the earth. Mighty conquests are to be gained; stupendous achievements are to be effected, unlike anything in the kingdoms of the world. "The host of God's elect," clad in full armor, are to go forth in a *war of love*, to certain and glorious victory—to the conquest of the world! Not a hostile army, covering the earth with the blood of the slain, and filling the air with the wailings of widows and orphans! No razing of cities, nor beheading of kings, nor dividing of spoils, nor plundering of nations, nor laying waste of countries, nor torturing of captives. They go to scatter blessings in their pathway. Instead of turning fruitful fields into barren wastes, they cause the desert to "blossom as the rose." To the poor they offer durable riches; to the ignorant, heavenly wisdom; to the dark and benighted they hold up the lamp that lights the pathway to immortality. They pour the oil of consolation into the heart of the widow and the fatherless. They show the defiled and polluted the fountain open in the house of David for sin and uncleanness. They show a world destroyed by sin, how to be saved by grace. The vanquished sing "unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, be glory and dominion forever and ever." And when the victory shall be complete, this fair earth shall once more be the garden of paradise.

SERMON XX.

On Novel Reading.

BY CHARLES COOKE.

“They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.”—
JONAH II. 8.

THESE are the words of the disobedient prophet, while entombed alive within a sea monster; or rather, they are among his reflections after a miraculous deliverance. In his meditations he acknowledges his sin and folly; his sin in disobeying the truth—his folly in hoping to escape with impunity. In discoursing upon his words, I purpose dwelling first upon the nature, and secondly upon the evil of the conduct to which he refers.

I. THE NATURE—THE OBSERVING OF LYING VANITIES.

The term “lying vanities” is of similar import with the words “a vain show.” Such are idols and idol worship. Such also is the world—its honors, wealth and pleasures. Of these, inspiration declares, “all is vanity.” The author of one of the sacred books, than whom no one has had a better opportunity of knowing the world, says—“I was great and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem; also my wisdom remained with me; and whatsoever my eyes desired I kept not from them; I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labor: then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labor that I had labored to do; and behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit.”

The field is wide, too wide, as now presented, to be explored in a single discourse. I shall therefore confine myself to one point, and invite attention to but one class of “lying vanities.” But its name is legion; for who can tell the number of fictitious works, from the

do thus subserve the cause of piety. Yet this is the point at issue, and hence we still maintain that the position we have assumed is tenable, if truth be more powerful than a lie.

Novels, we contend, are "lying vanities," because they particularly suit light and vain minds. They are the very food upon which such subsist, if indeed they can be supposed to subsist at all. It is known, nor are we solicitous for our own sake to conceal the fact, that intellectual powers of the first grade have been engaged in originating these empty things; and that many, not a whit behind the chief of each sex in mental acumen and scientific attainments, have feasted upon them. It is also admitted, that divines, by their recommendation, have invested them with a popularity in the religious world they never merited, and without such desecrated aid, could never have attained. Nevertheless, we are not inclined to shrink from our proposition. The means are in possession of defense against the attacks of many at whose feet we should gladly sit to learn many things, but who, being defective and vulnerable on this point, are ready to say, with the Jewish doctors, "so saying thou reproachest us also." That there are many who read books of this kind who will read no others, is known to the librarian of every circulating library in Christendom, intended either for the use of the public, or for societies. But why is this so? The answer is plainly this—such persons have neither patience nor the love of truth sufficiently engrafted upon their minds to induce them to read records of the sober realities of life as it has been or now is. Such vain readers, having no relish for substantial truth, are exactly suited when a truthless or exaggerated tale is presented. A great mind may be pleased for a moment with such little things, as it would be with the semi-annual oratory of a school boy—while upon the whole it relishes with a much keener appetite matters of real moment. Whereas, the vain mind is only delighted with such gewgaws, having no capacity for truth, which is the only nutritious food of intellectual existences. The following just remarks of a judicious author I shall

in this connection take the liberty of adopting, as they express the sentiments now advocated in a very clear and impressive manner: "when I read one of our modern novels, I enjoy for a few hours a transitory amusement in contemplating the scenes of fancy it displays, and in following the hero through his numerous adventures; I admire the brilliancy and force of the imagination of the writer, (for I am by no means disposed to underrate the intellectual talent which has produced some of the works to which I allude) but when I have finished the perusal, and reflect that all the scenes that passed before my mental eye were only so many unsubstantial images, the fictions of a lively imagination—I cannot indulge in rational or religious reflections on the subject, nor derive a single moral instruction, any more than I can from a dream, or a vision of the night." Now what is more empty and vain than a "dream?" Nothing, unless it be a novel! Dreams are sometimes true, but novels never are. Such will be the reflections of every honest man, after such employment, if he reflect at all. But others, as frivolous as their favorite authors, will pore in "pleasing melancholy," as they call it, over the scenes of fiction which have flitted before their minds, and shed more tears at the recollection of calamities that never occurred, than in all their life they are likely to mingle with those which genuine sorrow is constantly causing to flow from the eyes of disconsolate widows and fatherless orphans. O shame on such tenderness! It betrays a weakness we should blush to own—while the cool indifference with which life's real sufferings are contemplated, indicates the total absence of true Christian sympathy.

Thus am I led to notice another reason for the opinion, that novels are "lying vanities." They give rise to vain grief, and inspire vain hopes. With whom does the reader of such literature sympathize? Does he weep with those who weep, and rejoice with those who rejoice? Nay: he weeps for he knows not what; his rejoicings are like the morning cloud and early dew, and his hopes feed on phantoms that never

Having seen that novels and romances of every grade and kind are "lying vanities," in further investigating the first part of our subject, which was to explain the character of the conduct spoken of by the prophet, it devolves upon us now to show what is embraced in "observing such things." It cannot certainly mean that observation which every one ought to make, not only on this subject in particular, but on men and things in general, to be able to separate the precious from the vile, to discern the evil from the good, in a world where the wheat and tares are to grow together until the general harvest. It does not follow, however, that novels must be read first, in order to determine whether they should be read at all. The nature of the observations to be made extends to their character in general, and not to those shades of difference which appear in the features, voice and complexion of the children of the same family. Their advocates themselves being judges, they should be sealed books; for they admit that there are "bad novels, foolish and pernicious tales, which should be all thrown into the fire." "They corrupt at once the taste and the morals; they weaken the head, and deprave the heart." How are we to determine which have these tendencies, and which "ought to be read," if we do not read them? Perhaps it may be said, we should learn from others. But learn from whom we may, we must receive our information from those who have it, and how can it be had, go back as far as you please, unless it be by reading? There is no possible way. Will it not then be better to send the whole fraternity into exile than run the risk of having the taste vitiated, the morals ruined, and both the head and heart depraved? It would seem, if we reason conclusively, that there is one sense in which we may observe these vanities, and that is, as *always exceptionable*.

To "observe lying vanities" in the sense of the text, involving censurable conduct, and leading to consequences presently to be considered, is to pay such affectionate and practical attention to vain shows as to consume that valuable time given for a better use,

and which might be more profitably employed. That species of this evil now under consideration is thus improperly and dangerously observed when *read*. We might always be better employed. Especially in the present state of literature, when every kind is so simplified in form, and reduced in price, that all who have a relish for reading, may profitably indulge it, by reading books from which may be learned "something of the character, the attributes and providence of God, and of the moral and physical state of mankind." And when no such taste has been formed, it may be implanted and cultivated by the perusal of those works which treat of facts. From almost every scene in real life, and every incident considered of sufficient note to be recorded, instruction may be deduced to promote the exercise of humility, meekness, gratitude and resignation—to lead the mind to God, as the source of felicity, and as the righteous governor of the world—and to impress the heart with a sense of the folly and depravity of man. But it is obvious that no distinct moral instruction can be fairly deduced from scenes, circumstances and events "which never did, nor can take place."

With these reflections I close this part of my subject, and shall now proceed to consider the consequences of following or observing lying vanities. These, with but a few exceptions, which can be accounted for, are evil, and only evil. We notice then,

II. THE EVIL—A FORSAKING OF MERCY.

All our enjoyments in this present evil world, and all the sources of them, are "mercies." We are utterly unworthy of any favor, and only deserve at the hands of the Lord the penalties of his violated law. He is the "Father of mercies," and innumerable are his children. They are more than the stars of heaven, or the sands upon the sea shore, for multitude. So great are they, and so adapted to our state and circumstances, that if we are not made happy by their ministrations, it is because we will not be. Are we guilty? We may be pardoned. Are we impure? We may wash and be made clean. Are we led captive by

argued, by those whose names more than their arguments have given weight to the sentiment, that light reading entices the young to the love of books, and the appetite once formed, impels to the perusal of works of more substance and value. We should judge, however, that such occurrences are rather accidental—exceptions to the rule—than the results of its ordinary working. Do not such high-seasoned intellectual condiments destroy the appetite for everything else? Is it not a fact, attested by the experience of thousands, that this kind of reading shuts out all other company, not only by the time it occupies, but by the disrelish it inspires? Is not a morbid sentimentality thus superinduced, that makes every kind of plain and nutritious food pall upon the mind; so that it turns with disgust from the true sources of information, while it luxuriates with the keenest gusto in the sickly dreamings of the romance? There is no other aspect in which we can contemplate this baneful influence in which the truth of our text is more obvious.

In intimate connection with this view, it may be remarked, that *knowledge* is forsaken. Knowledge is a just conception of the truth, and cannot be possessed if the truth is neglected. What do those who become fascinated with romance learn in their favorite pursuit? Nothing with certainty of history, philosophy, morals or religion. Distorted views of all these subjects are imbibed, and exert a correspondent influence. Whereas the records of sober realities, clothed in a fascinating style, not only please and improve the mind, correct the morals, reform the heart, and purify the conscience. Why does time hang often heavily on a company of young people; alas! and on those of mature years, also; if no silly game, nor the dance be introduced to kill it? How easily might this be traced to the evil now contemplated. No general knowledge is possessed, which would enable them to profit and please each other in conversation; and the obvious reason is, not that their opportunities have been unfavorable to intellectual culture, but because they have lived in a fairy land—their reading has amused, but not profited—has

intoxicated, but not strengthened. Conversation in such a circle is all life and animation for a while. But as soon as the current incidents of the day have passed round, thoughts run out, and conversation fails. Cards, or the violin, or something equally intellectual, must come to the relief of all concerned. Would that such an admonition might excite alarm! But it will not. The track is a beaten one—from the novel to scenes of exciting amusement, and back again to the not less exciting novel. What a life for a young man, otherwise capable of wielding a mighty influence in any sphere or circle of society! And what a life for a young lady, whose future relations may open a wide field for usefulness, in which, like Lot's wife, she will stand a petrified monument of youthful folly! Increasing responsibilities will have no correspondent growth of capability; and duties, on the faithful discharge of which domestic bliss may greatly depend, must of necessity be neglected! A world of realities is entered; but all the preparations for its substantial associations have been either entirely omitted or made of unreal materials; and hence there is no fitness in existing relations, and therefore no happiness arising from them! Let youth beware!

But there is a tale yet more sad to be told—a dereliction more criminal, and hence more fatal. By the course of life of which we speak, *grace* is forsaken, and all the advantages it is adapted to secure, are forfeited. Those who permit themselves to become involved in this snare, are in a poor state of mind to search the scriptures, to read with profit "such books as tend to the knowledge and love of God," to hear the word of life properly, or to use any means of grace successfully. "Evil communications corrupt good manners," and hence our association with the creatures of fancy will so intoxicate the mind as most probably to eventuate in dismissing grace, rather than not revel with unbridled indulgence in the imaginary luxury of light reading. If conscience has been awakened, it would be difficult to find a more effectual soporific; and if it has not, what sentinel would so effectually

suality. You may thus be sowing to the wind, and will reap the whirlwind. Are you a wife? Do not take advantage of a confiding husband's warmest affections, to compel him to ruin you, by gratifying your appetite for fancy and fiction. You may learn to suspect, and be taught too provokingly to express your unfounded suspicions; and thus the evil you feared may be brought about. Where then will domestic bliss be? And what is the married life without it? A life of disappointment and woe! Are you young? If you desire to live to some purpose—to contribute in some degree to the happiness of the world—to please God, and secure the rewards of a blissful immortality; drink not at the fountains of fiction, however sparkling the stream, and, for the time being, refreshing the draught. There is poison in it—deadly, damning poison. It will first intoxicate, and then, like every other kind of intemperance, kill you with absolute inanity, or plunge you into inextricable labyrinths of folly and crime. To all and every one inspiration proclaims—“buy the truth, and sell it not.” It is often more strange than fiction, and always more worthy the time employed in its perusal, and the immortal mind it impresses. And may he who said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life,” guide you into all truth, and bring you to that land of holy realities, where fiction is not known, and God is loved supremely, and enjoyed forever. Amen.

SERMON XXI.

The Hope of the Hypocrite.

BY THOMAS STUBBS.

“For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?”—JOB XXV. 8.

HOPE is that which stimulates man to action, buoys him up in all the storms of life, throws a delightful radiance round him, and cheers him on his path to the grave. But there is a false hope—and that forsakes the person when he needs it the most, and leaves him in darkness and despair. There is nothing perhaps in the world that is good and valuable, but has its counterfeit. Religion, piety which is manifest in obedience, self-denial, and taking up the cross, is not exempted. And the imitation may be so well executed as to baffle the most experienced, and elude the most vigilant. A bank note frequently passes without detection by the most scrutinizing. So a beautiful piece of statuary, made of common metal, yet so artfully made and finished as to be called a golden statue; but it is mere lacquered work. So true is that saying, it is not all gold that glitters. And thus it is in matters of religion; we cannot always discern between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not. Outward actions, as far as man may trace them, may be good, while the heart is bad. A man may even preach the truth, and enforce the wholesome doctrines of the gospel, from a mere theological training, without having the heart changed; and may enter into that holy work from selfish motives, and not for the glory of God. If he has not entered upon the work from the love of Christ constraining him,

“With cries, entreaties, tears to save,
To snatch them from the gaping grave;”

To pluck them as brands from the eternal burning, and

Reflecting upon his own strict and unblamable character, according to the precepts of the law, he prided himself in that confident reply to Christ—"all these things," says he, "have I kept from my youth; what lack I yet?" And when it was made known to him what he lacked, and what he must do, he went away sorrowful, for the world had possession of his heart, and he was not willing to give it up. And so of Saul of Tarsus, before his conversion. No doubt his hopes of heaven were as full, and fair, and large, and clear, and as promising as his heart could desire, for said he, "touching the righteousness of the law, I am blameless." And this very obedience to the outward letter of the law, while his heart was unchanged, and he did not believe in Christ, only puffed him up, and strengthened him in his deceptions. For his heart at the same time was like a cage of unclean birds, a den of thieves. So of the Pharisee that went up to the temple. He compared himself with others, and when he saw that his outward performances were superior to the publican, the harlot, the thief, the licentious, the abominable, he thanked God that he was not such as they; and still more, he told how benevolent he was, and how pious and devoted; and thus put his performances in the place of Christ. He did not thank God for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus. He did not thank God that the hand-writing of ordinances that was against him were blotted out, and that his sins were nailed to the cross. He did not thank God that his soul was washed in the atoning fountain, that he was begotten again by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. Oh, no: to all this he was a stranger. And thus comparing himself with the profane and the debauched, his strictness with their loose and sinful habits, his righteousness with their profligacy, he set it down as a matter of course, that all was right, and blessed himself with the assurance of heaven; while at the same time his righteousness was but filthy rags, and his heart full of sin and corruption. Thus he was deceiving himself. No wonder then that men think they are doing well when they

compare themselves with those worse than themselves, instead of comparing themselves with the pure and holy law of God. So a man in business may think he is prospering, and at the same time he is poor, near to breaking up, because he does not examine his stock, nor take a survey of his accounts. Just so the self-deceiver thinks he is prospering and laying up treasure in heaven, and at the same time he is withering, near to cursing, and ready to be cast away. A hypocrite, then, is one that apes humility, but is proud. He is a painted sepulcher. A hypocrite comes to you as a friend, speaks fair to your face, but perhaps to the next person pictures you in the blackest colors; while he gives you the kiss of friendship, at the same time stabs you to the heart. This is the very spawn of hell. It is a covering for the vilest lusts, a mask for the blackest treason. So a hypocrite may abstain from many sins, and attend to many religious duties.

II. Let us now notice *his hope*.

1. His hope relates to a future state of happiness. He expects when he has done with this world he will go to heaven. But his hope is futile and vain. It is nothing but a wish, a sigh, a theme to be talked of, a picture in the head, a mark to be shot at, but never hit. Job compares it to flags and rushes; while it is yet in its greenness, and not cut down, it withereth away. He compares it to a spider's web, which is so easily demolished. And as the spider draws all out of its own bowels, so the hypocrite draws all his confidence and his blooming hope from his own inventions and imaginings, and thus weaves himself a robe to cover the pollution of his heart.

2. His hope is fruitless, because it does not purify him—because it does not make him a better and a holier man, and therefore it is worthless. But the hope of a Christian leads him to purify himself, to become more holy, more devoted, more and more like God. "For he that has this hope," says the apostle, "purifies himself, even as he is pure." What a contrast there is between the Christian's hope and that of the hypocrite. The one is compared to an anchor, the other to the

shed upon it. Perhaps some relative or other pronounces aloud his titles, and utters his eulogium; and as the coffin is lowering into the repository for the dead, they may say, peace be to his ashes. The body may rest in quiet, but the soul God has taken away; and there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked, living or dying, neither in time or eternity. And what is now his hope? It is gone; it has perished; God has taken it away. But the righteous resign their souls into the hand of God. Like Stephen, they say, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit." Or with David, "into thy hands I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O God of truth."

But the hypocrite God taketh away, or plucketh away his soul. Mark it—the soul, not the body. The body is nothing but the material casket. The soul is the precious, sparkling gem. The body is the tabernacle; the soul is the inhabitant—the soul is the spiritual immaterial subsistence that will exist when worlds are shivered to atoms. Man is not a mere bundle of corporeal instincts, but is possessed of a thinking, intelligent soul. What astonishing powers the soul is in possession of! It seems to grasp the universe of God. He is an empire in himself. Look at one of its powers—thought! The soul is not thought, but it has the power of thinking. How rapid is thought! We talk of the velocity of light, and it is the most rapid of any thing we have any knowledge of, but how slow in its motion compared to thought! The soul in thought, in a moment, runs back to the period when God spake the word, and suns, and stars, and worlds sprang into existence; in a moment to the period when time shall be no more. And is this the boundary line over which it cannot pass? Is this the gulf fixed, over which it cannot go? No, no: there is no boundary line. It is onward still. Everything in nature has its limit. The ocean has its ebbing and flowing, and it may toss, and dash, and roll its billows to the strand, but there is its limit. The wild tornado may come rushing, roaring, sweeping along, and threaten destruction to everything in its course, but like a child it soon brawls itself to

rest ; it has a limit. But the soul, in its thinking, and in its expansion, and in knowledge, is still onward. It soars into the starry regions, counts their numbers, calls their names, and tells their distance ; and is this its limit ? No, no ; away it soars to the very center of all centers, where God has fixed his throne ; and is that its limit ? No : that indeed is the fountain of happiness, in which it may forever bathe, or the throne on which it may forever sit, with God, in God. But the soul will be forever growing, swelling and expanding in all its vast, capacious powers—so that it is, with it, still on, and on, and on.

What then is the hope of the hypocrite, when God taketh away his soul ? In that very day his hopes perish ; and his soul is cut off from all it gained—cut off from heaven, from angels—cut off from everything that is pleasing, from light, from life, from liberty, from happiness. And God passes upon it the withering, blasting, overwhelming sentence, “ depart from me into everlasting punishment,” where hope never comes, but black despair settles upon the soul forever.

Oh ! may we examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith. Whatever we have gained, have we gained the approbation of God ? Are we sincere before God ? If we have hope, have we been begotten again unto it, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to the inheritance above ? Does the hope that we possess enable us to purify ourselves, so that we are becoming more and more partakers of the divine nature ? If this be the case, my prayer is,

Then when the mighty work is wrought,
Receive thy ready bride ;
Give us in heaven a happy lot,
With all the sanctified.

having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. For this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance. Then comes in the words of our choice.

Let us

I. NOTICE THE LABORS AND SUFFERINGS OF THE GREAT APOSTLE OF THE GENTILES.—“For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach.”

II. THE GRAND REASON WHY THE APOSTLE BOTH LABORED AND SUFFERED REPROACH.—“Because we trust in the living God,” &c.

I. The labors of St. Paul were both of a physical and mental nature. As to physical labor, he, like his divine master, was an itinerant minister of the new testament. His circuit, or parish, was the whole world. Hence the command of the Saviour to him (as well as the other disciples)—“go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” He felt the force of moral obligation in his divine call to the work of the ministry. Hence he declares, “wo is me if I preach not the gospel.” His work in the Christian ministry was arduous, in view of his extensive travels by land and sea, as well as his frequent ministrations by day and by night. “In labors more abundant.” Far from sitting down to take his ease in a church already gathered into Christ, he traveled incessantly, preached everywhere, and at all risks, in order to get the heathen converted. We learn, Acts xviii. 3, “and because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought (for by their occupation they were tent makers).” It is evident that he had a respectable trade, but the learned do not agree as to what kind of a trade. Dr. Clarke is of opinion that he was a carpenter.

The apostle was not ashamed to work with his own hands. The apostles were obliged to labor, in order to supply themselves with the necessaries of life, while preaching the gospel to others. This no doubt was the case in every place where no church had been as yet formed. Afterward the people of God supplied their ministers, according to their power, with food and raiment. Again—“these hands have ministered unto

my necessities, and them that were with me." It was neither "sin nor discredit" for the apostle to work to maintain himself, when the circumstances of the church were such that it could not support him. Still, many eminent ministers of God are obliged to support themselves and their families, at least in part, in the same way, while preaching the gospel of the grace of God. Whatever it may be to the people, it is no cause of reproach to the minister, to be obliged thus to employ himself. Though St. Paul thus labored with his own hands, when it was necessary, while planting churches, he nevertheless recognizes the principle, and inculcates the moral obligation of the church to support her ministers. "For it is written in the law of Moses, thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn." Again—"even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live by the gospel." And those that withhold their support from the ministers of Christ will have to answer to God for the same in the day of judgment.

2. *The mental labors of St. Paul.*

Much prayerful study is absolutely and indispensably necessary for the success of the Christian ministry. This work he was engaged in with all the gigantic intellect which he possessed. That he was a man of deep study himself, is evident from his exhortation to his son Timothy—"till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrines."—Tim. iv. 13. Timothy was therefore to be diligent in reading the sacred writings at home, that he might be the better qualified to read and expound them in the public assemblies. Again—"study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."—2d Tim. ii. 15. Therefore, by rightly dividing the word of truth, we are to understand his giving each his portion of meat in due season; milk to babes, strong meat to the full grown, comfort to the disconsolate, reproof to the careless and wicked. "For I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God."—Acts xx. 27. But it must be remembered that the faithful minister's work is not done

ry of godliness. God was manifested in the flesh.”—
1 Tim. iii. 16.

The doctrine of the divinity of our Saviour is not only a fundamental doctrine of the bible, but is the very foundation of the Christian system. In the benevolent atonement made by the Saviour for all men, we have an exhibition of unparalleled love, well calculated to call forth the admiration of angels and men.

But it is thought by some that if Christ died for all men, then it necessarily follows that every man will be saved. But this mode of reasoning would be to confound the unconditional blessings of atonement with the constitutional blessings of salvation, which are the legitimate fruits of the atonement. Others are of opinion that Christ died only for a part of the human family, or only for the elect, and that as Christ cannot die in vain, it follows of necessity that all for whom he died will be eternally saved. But we do not so understand the economy of redemption. We believe that Jesus Christ made a free and full atonement for the sins of the whole world. We shall now adduce a few scripture proofs in support of this position. “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”—John i. 29. “God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.”—John iii. 17. St. Paul introduces several unanswerable arguments in his epistles to the Romans and Corinthians, to prove that a sufficient atonement has been made for all men. “Therefore as by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.”—Rom. v. 18. “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.”—2d Cor. v. 14. “Who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time”—1 Tim. ii. 6. “We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that he by the grace of God should taste death

for every man.”—Heb. ii. 9. We will also present a few gospel invitations to show that God wills and desires the salvation of all mankind. “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.”—Isa. xlv. 22. “Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters,” &c.—Isa. lv. 1. “Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice,” &c.—Rev. iii. 20. “And the Spirit and the bride say come, and let him that heareth say come, and let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”—Rev. xxii. 17.

In the language of a Christian poet—

“Lord, I believe, were sinners more
Thou sands upon the ocean shore—
Thou hast for ALL a ransom paid,
For ALL a full atonement made.”

3. *He has become the Saviour of all the infant world.* Having made a complete and full atonement for all men, thereby redeeming us from the curse of a violated law, it necessarily follows that all infants will be saved. But as the final salvation of all infants has been called in question, it may not be improper to bestow some attention upon this subject. We once heard a professor of religion say that he had no doubt but that there were little children in hell, especially those of the reprobates. We also heard a professed minister express nearly the same sentiments. Now, if these views are correct, (which we do not believe) it would seem to argue a want of virtue or efficacy in the scheme of human redemption; and if there be not sufficient power in the atonement to save poor helpless, fallen children, who are not capable of moral action, what is to become of adult sinners and old transgressors? We believe that all children, before they cross the line of accountability, stand in the same relation to God that those do who are justified by faith, and if removed from earth, are sanctified and taken to heaven. The Saviour has said, “except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.”—Mat. xviii. 3. Again—“suffer little children, and

hearts or lives. "Without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."—Heb. xi. 6. The blessings of salvation are suspended on the condition of true faith in Christ, and belief of the truth. Hence, "if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."—Rom. x. 9, 10. From the foregoing it is evident that a divine trust in the all-sufficiency of the sacrificial atonement made for all men, as well as a confession of our guilt and sin, with a determination to forsake them, is absolutely necessary to pardon and salvation. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved."—Mark xvi. 15. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."—John i. 12. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."—John iii. 16. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." It is the privilege of all Christians to be saved from their sins in this life. "For he shall save his people from their sins"—from the guilt and condemnation of sin. Hence saith the apostle, "there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death." "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."

But the people of God are saved from the fear of death. Many timid Christians have suffered much from a fearful apprehension that when they are called to die, they will not have the victory over their last enemy,

which is death. But let such remember that the promise is, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." The Psalmist says, "yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

This special salvation follows its subjects into the darkness of the tomb. "Jesus saith unto Martha, I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." "And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."—John vi. 40. The apostle declares—"for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first."—I. Thes. iv. 16.

We remark, in conclusion, that in all ages of the world those who have trusted in the living God have been called to labor and suffer reproach. The old testament furnishes numerous examples, among whom we have Noah and Abraham, Moses and Elijah, Daniel and Isaiah, with a host of others, whose toil and sufferings resulted from their devotion to the service of God. The new testament also abounds with examples. Indeed they are almost as numerous as the primitive Christians. Nearly all the apostles closed their lives of suffering and toil by the death of martyrdom; and their immediate successors realized a similar fate. Polycarp, Ignatius, and Tertullian proved the truth of that solemn declaration that those who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. And while the human heart retains its enmity against God, and wickedness prevails in the world, there will be witnesses of this truth. The great reformers in the christian church, Luther and his faithful co laborers in the sixteenth century, had much to remind them that this world is no friend to grace. Nor is the present age destitute of examples. Within the recollection of those now living, the friends and advocates of experimental religion have both labored and suffered reproach.

with the already dead ; while those that may come after us may remain ignorant of our being until the veil of time shall be rent asunder, and eternity disclose the fact that others have lived and died as well as they.

3. Were the dissolution of the human body a matter of mere speculation, its certainty might be inferred from the construction and the laws of our physical constitution ; complicated in its arrangements, and delicate in its machinery ; carrying within it the elements of its own destruction. But, when adventitious causes act in concert with this natural tendency, though they cannot render the result more certain, may nevertheless greatly accelerate the time. Disease in its various forms and modes of attack shorten more and more the period of human life.

But speculation here would be in bad taste, for realities, fearful and painful realities, obtrude themselves upon our notice from every direction. The monster death, that fell destroyer of our race has already entered our happy dwellings, seized a loved one as his victim and rendered his seat in the domestic circle forever vacant. The countenances of those that were joyous but a short time ago are now sad ; the eyes that were once lively and sparkling, are now soiled by weeping ; the family circle has been interrupted by death ; our friends and relatives have been torn from our society, and we scarcely knew how much we loved them until they were gone ; gone to that state in which they need no more our offices of love and kindness. The dearest objects of our affections are often the subjects of these mournful realities. But they are gone, and little remains to calm a troubled mind, or to soothe a heart lacerated and torn by bereavement, but the odor of a good name, the example of their piety, and the hope, O, yes, the *hope* of meeting them again ; not here, but

“ Far from a world of grief and sin ;
With God eternally shut in.”

You need scarcely be told that the present discourse is to have special reference to the death of our dear departed friend and brother, Rev. Simon Elliott.

From the text we deduce three propositions which we shall consider in their order. The brevity of human life, and the troubles with which it is fraught; inquire upon what principles these can be accounted for, and, finally, the influence they should exert upon us.

I. THE BREVITY OF HUMAN LIFE, AND THE TROUBLES WITH WHICH IT IS FRAUGHT. "Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble."

1. *His days are few.* Does Job assume the position that the mortality of man is predicable of the mortality of the instrument of his being! "Born of a woman." How delicately does he touch this point! Taking the correctness of his position for granted, for none, it is presumed, can feel a disposition to call it in question, there needed no protracted, intermediate process of reasoning, for the conclusion was immediate and inevitable. Man born of one so feeble and frail must himself be feeble and frail; born of one who is a child of mortality, must himself inherit the same mortality. A mere glance at the past is all the illustration that is necessary here. Abraham is dead and the prophets; the preceding races of mankind are swept from the face of the earth as with a besom of destruction. Our fathers, where are they? Our brothers, sisters, children, where are they at this moment?—the companions of our bosom? We will let the throbbing heart and the silent tear answer these questions.

2. Nor is the termination of human life, the certainty of our dissolution, more strikingly set forth than the brevity of its period, beautifully illustrated: "he cometh forth like a flower and is cut down. He fleeth also as a shadow and continueth not." The flower; in the morning it "unfolds its silken leaves;" it displays its beauty, and we inhale its fragrance; but as the day advances, if it is not "nipped by the winds untimely blast," it is "parched by the sun's directer ray." It withers, it droops, it dies. The qualities that once rendered it an object of interest have all disappeared, and now we turn from it with feelings of indifference if not disappointment and disgust. So brief and so fading are the life and honors of man. But the figure is changed

man mind! Why, revelation itself claims nothing higher than this! Are they identical? Why then the difference in name? The learned prelate has evidently drawn extensively upon the Platonic philosophy, and has, though unintentionally, transferred the glory due to revelation to the researches and investigations of reason. This whole theory is founded upon a misconception of the circumstances connected with mankind: we hesitate not to affirm that there never was a period in the history of the world in which mankind has been wholly destitute of such knowledge; and here we meet the question, which was waived a few moments ago. It is this—how was it originally obtained? Was it innate? If so it must have been both uniform and universal, i. e. what was predicable of one, was predicable, for the same reason, of the entire species; but history and matters of fact, the whole system of heathen mythology, prove the contrary. Was it by the exercise of reason? The apostle's declaration is fatal to this supposition: "the world by wisdom knew not God." But if it be said in opposition to this, that the same apostle says in another place that "the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse"—we reply: the language of the apostle clearly implies that the knowledge of the being of a God was possessed by the heathen; and, the *eternity* of his power and Godhead is not the question at issue. This passage of scripture, then, so far from militating against our position, is, in connection with what immediately follows, a strong confirmation of its truth. "Because when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." How? By depending too much upon their own reasonings. If it was not innate, nor by the investigations of reason, then it must have been by revelation—for we can conceive of no other mode, and no other has ever been resorted to.

3. We would not for a moment disparage the just

claims of reason, for when it acts under the control of its superior, revelation, its exercises are indispensable to the happiness of man. By it he may investigate the laws of physical nature; examine its organization; trace the relations of cause and effect; solve questions of prudence, and perhaps of morality; and apply the established and acknowledged principles of art and science to all the practical purposes of virtuous life. Reason should not be excluded from matters of revealed religion, for revealed religion can never suffer by any process of fair and rational investigation; it is only when reason transcends its legitimate boundaries; when it claims the honor of discoveries beyond its powers; when it aspires to the throne of God, and would take from him the glory of his grace, that it should be arrested in the arrogance of its assumptions, the madness of its course, and be brought back to its own proper sphere of operations, its own horizon, for higher than this, unassisted, it cannot ascend. All above is gloom profound.

4. All that is necessary to our present purpose is the establishment of this one point, that the original idea of a God was not innate, nor obtained by the operations of mind in a process of reasoning, but by revelation alone, in one form or other. The doctrine and moral obligations of natural, are the same with those of revealed religion. This identity furnishes strong presumptive evidence of the identity of their origin, and the mode of their acquisition. But as to the occurrence of death, and the dissolution of the human body, revelation only can assign an intelligent and rational cause. Having done this, all that remains to be done here is to notice briefly the channel through which it descended. This channel is tradition. We are not ignorant of the fact that this has been denounced as clinging to an *assumed* and *exaggerated* ignorance of the heathen world; but such assertions can no more invalidate the evidence in its favor, than they can supply its entire absence in the opposite. Adam talked face to face with his Maker, and although his corruption by sin greatly obscured his conceptions of his character and perfec-

cloud impenetrable, and discloses the realities of invisibility. Here the mind may contemplate things eternal. Within "the dark waters and thick clouds of the skies, into "the pavilion, the secret place" of the Most High, it introduces man, and now breaks upon his astonished vision a being at once so great and glorious that reason, deified by man, becomes abashed, and shrinks to nothing—while the virtuous mind can do little else than *wonder, love and adore*. Every other scene becomes uninteresting, and every other pleasure dry and insipid. We are indebted to this source of information and instruction for all that is pure in religion, excellent and elevated in morality, and soothing and comforting amidst the troubles and afflictions of human life. It shrinks not from investigation, for investigation can only bring out more prominently to view its beauty and its strength. Like the rock of Gibraltar, it will stand immovable, and the waves of infidelity and persecution shall spend their strength for naught, break upon her base, retire harmless, and sink into the deep. Here, and only here, are we able to trace death, the dissolution of the body, and the troubles of human life, as effects to their proper cause. This only remains to be done on this division of our subject.

8. Though capable of mortality, it does not appear to have been the original intention of his Creator to subject man to death. To prevent this result, and counteract the force of the elements out of which his body was composed tending to it, he gave him free access to the *tree of life*; and so strong was his natural love of life, that he never could want a motive to apply to the means of its preservation, for that motive was constitutional and inherent, and must on this account always be present with him. The enjoyment and continuance of life, therefore, being the privilege of man, as is clear from the circumstances in which he placed him, his subsequent and actual subjection to death must have proceeded from some other cause, and this cause must have been a moral one. For "to suppose the dissolution of the human body to take place, either through the defect of its own nature, or through an

adverse principle in any external cause, while we admit moral evil to be unknown, is to impeach the moral justice of God." As the death of the human body could have been no part of the original intention of the Creator, so this event could not be brought about by the exercise of any power located in created existence; it could not have proceeded from created existence inferior to man, for over this he held the dominion; and if we were to suppose that there existed a disposition to this, on the part of any being higher in this scale than man, the power to effect it must be under the entire control of the supreme power of the Creator; for it is essential to his character as supreme ruler, to protect his loyal subjects in possession of their rights and privileges. If death therefore did not proceed from any original intention of the Creator, nor from any coercive power located in the scale of created existence, it follows that it must be the effect of some cause created by man himself. This is the point precisely at which the scriptures charge home upon man the burden of human ills.

"Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woes."

"By man sin entered into the world, and death by sin."

9. Man's first transgression of the law made him liable to the penalty, which was death. "Thou shalt die." Now as the *tree of life* furnished the means of preservation from dissolution, by the appointment of his Creator, all that was necessary in order to carry out the threatening was to interdict that tree. This was done, and the career of man from that moment was downward to the grave. But as the command of God that had interdicted "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil," during man's innocence, was violated, so his command interdicting *the tree of life*, now he has become a guilty, corrupt being, was less likely to be regarded. The measures therefore of a wise administration required, as well as the future good of the offender, that that tree should be sufficiently guarded. This was done by "cherubim and a flaming sword

was soon added the advantages of a sound education, and to a soul large, generous and kind, the embellishments of true piety and virtue. His was an enlightened and warm-hearted Christianity. Would to God the number of such were multiplied! The counsel and instructions of his brother Charles, who was a professor in the college at that time, and an eminent minister of the gospel, had unquestionably much to do in the settlement of his early principles, and the formation of his character through life. The result is alike honorable to both. And here we have exemplified the true policy in an educational training in all similar institutions, which should always be decidedly religious, as well as literary. And here we must be permitted to say, that we mean emphatically the religious training drawn from the holy scriptures, and not from creeds and confessions of faith. For then, and only then, can we rationally expect the final triumph of civil, social and religious liberty,

2. *The influence these exerted over his choice of the business of life.* The learned professions were before him, and he might have succeeded in any of them—but he chose one that necessarily required much labor, privation and suffering—that of an itinerant Methodist preacher. This choice could not therefore have been the dictate of worldly wisdom, for such a calling never promised to any man, in this life, honor, ease or wealth. But, seeing in the case of others the same reasons to a religious life that existed in his own, and unwilling that they should be subjected to the dreadful consequences of sin, which he himself was determined by God's grace to avoid, he did not, after the clear convictions of duty, hesitate for a moment, but commenced the holy and responsible work of calling sinners to repentance. Nor was this, in his intention, to be only the work of a day, but to employ his future life. Accordingly, he in due time took upon him the vows and obligations of the Christian ministry, and entered fully upon the duties of the sacred office, the functions of which he continued to discharge until he who had called him to the station granted him a release. What the

sainted Wesley frequently sung in anticipation, was literally true in the case of brother Elliott—

“My body with my charge lay down,
And cease at once to work and live.”

3. Nor did these truths exert a greater influence upon him in the adoption of a calling, than they did in the character of his preaching. This was of no ordinary grade. He was clear, sound and earnest—possessing a mind of great natural strength, cultivated by constant application to reading and study, he was able to bring forth from the repository of knowledge things “new and old.” He was well acquainted with the philosophy of mind, and when his subject was of a character to require or justify it, would enter the field of metaphysical disquisition. Here he was always instructive and interesting—many times profound. His originality of conception, and fairness of argumentation, rendered his conclusions irresistible, for they seemed to embody the mandates of heaven. Though somewhat harsh and severe in his manner, at times, he was never dry and unfeeling. The promises of the gospel, too, with him constituted topics of frequent discourse; and the consolations of religion, to assuage the sorrows of the heart amidst the troubles of life, were often poured forth in strains as eloquent as they were consoling. But it was when he was upon the law, its denunciations, its terrors and penalties; when portraying the character and destiny of the sinner, that you could fancy yourself standing at the base of Sinai, and feel the mountain shake by the thunders and lightnings that issued from its summit. These were the times especially when all the feelings of his soul labored with the operations of his mind for the conversion of sinners, and the salvation of souls; and if his manner seemed to put on a little too much severity, it was a severity easily pardoned, as it proceeded from an enlarged and generous soul, laboring for the greatest good of the very persons on whom the severity fell.

4. *But these truths exhibited their influences in the re-*

ure of infinite value ; the flames cannot destroy it ; the floods cannot sweep it away. He that possesses this cannot be poor, for peace of mind is a constant feast.

3. The shortness of human life is illustrated by a flower that springs up and is cut down in a day ; but unlike the flower, man contains within him a living principle that cannot die—a soul immortal, which must survive the body. This, in order to be happy hereafter, must be purified from the contaminations of sin in this life, much as this life may resemble a flower or a shadow. Every aspect of the subject, every inference drawn from it, urges upon us, upon all, the duty and importance of early piety. We read the same lesson almost in everything that transpires around us, in everything we see. All, all admonish us of the great duty urged by the prophet—“prepare to meet thy God.”

SERMON XXIV.

The Resurrection.

BY JOHN J. SWAYZE.

“For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.”—I. COR. xv. 53, 54.

THE Christian religion is the sun which illuminates the moral universe, revealing the beauties of nature, the wonders of providence, the mysteries of redemption, and the secrets of eternity. The dim star of natural religion may shed a flickering light on the path of virtue, but it can never reveal to the sin-burdened soul a throne of grace, or bring to view the regions of immortality. We admit that some of the moral precepts of the gospel may be found in the writings of Plato, Zoroaster and Confucius ; but the resurrection of the

human body is a truth for which we are exclusively indebted to divine revelation. When the inspired author of the text proclaimed this doctrine at Athens, the Grecian philosophers declared that he had brought strange things to their ears. The multitude listened with profound astonishment, and their mouldering deities seemed to totter in the presence of a power whose jurisdiction extended beyond the limits of the tomb. But if reason could not discover this truth, she is equally incapable of overthrowing it; and if nature has never presumed to reveal it to man, she has never dared to contradict it, but utters much in its favor.

We propose in the farther prosecution of this subject to show—

I. THAT THERE WILL BE A RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

We may infer the possibility of this event—

From the indestructibility of matter. Whether it is possible for creative power to annihilate matter, has occasioned some controversy; but we prefer simply to view things as they are, and to take for granted what is universally admitted. Annihilation may be imagined, but it has never been witnessed by man, and so far as observation extends, it is inconsistent with the laws of nature. When we contemplate the material universe, we behold a changing, yet enduring scene. The sun which illuminated the new creation in the morning of time—which glittered on the bowers of Eden—and witnessed the apostacy of man; the sun which rolled back on the dial of Abaz, and veiled his face in darkness when his Maker suffered—still burns and shines with undiminished splendor. The stars, which were worshiped by the eastern magi, from their tents of gold, still guide the nightly wanderer, and smile a welcome from the skies. The towering mountain, on whose cloudy summit the Deity descended to promulgate and record the principles of his moral government, has withstood the shock of devastating centuries; and the ocean, that listened to his restraining mandate, continues to acknowledge his authority. The tower of Babel has fallen, but the heedless traveler treads upon

or in any other region where pure spirits resided. Murder, the blackest of the train, inspires no terror where mortality is not. "The soul, secure in her existence, smiles at the drawn dagger, and defies its point." Intemperance and licentiousness, with all their abominations, are necessarily excluded from such a state. So on the other hand, those virtues and moral excellencies so highly recommended in the new testament, and so essential to the perfection of human nature and the well being of society, are quite dependent for their various manifestations on the present constitution of man. Faith, "the evidence of things not seen," looks through the dim crevices and apertures of this earthly tabernacle, to a building of God, eternal in the heavens, and recommends submission and obedience, where neither the senses nor the intellectual powers can afford either direction or support. Hope, "the desire and expectation of future good," consults the well being of the body, in connection with the felicity of the soul. And charity, "the noblest of the train," seeks its subjects in jails and dungeons, in deserts and hospitals, where ethereal beings would neither dwell nor suffer. Finally, the whole economy of moral government, every blessing for which we thank God, every evil that we deplore, every act of merit or demerit—all the relations and dependencies of the present life, are so interwoven with this fundamental truth, that we can scarcely identify man as an accountable creature if we annihilate the union between mind and matter. And we are hurried by an almost irresistible impulse to the equitable conclusion, that when the brief time of his probation is ended, he should appear before his judge invested with the same physical peculiarities which are incident to the present state. And we are unable to comprehend how the final sentence can be approved or appreciated by an intelligent universe, without a general resurrection, "both of the just and of the unjust." Thus far the light of reason mingling with the beams of revelation, enables us to explore the abyss of futurity. But the word of God conducts us through this wilderness of probability and conjecture,

into a region of moral certainty, giving assurance to faith, and immortality to hope. The bible is emphatically the book of life—the living word of the living God. We are aware that it has been affirmed by one who was fitly denominated “a good politician, but a bad divine,” that the old testament contains but a dubious manifestation of this doctrine, “that the patriarchs were wholly ignorant of it.” He might have learned his lesson better in the tent of Abraham, or under the taskmasters of Egypt. Balaam could have taught him better, when he predicted the future Messiah, and Job could have instructed him in this sublime doctrine. We admit that as we approach the gospel dispensation, “light and immortality shine with a clearer lustre, until from the Mount of Olives, or the island of Patmos, we behold the earth and the sea giving up their dead.”

But we deem it unnecessary to multiply quotations from the holy scriptures, to prove to a Christian audience that the human body will be redeemed from the power of the grave. God has furnished us with an example of this glorious truth, in each of the three dispensations, with which he has blessed our world. And I am willing for one, that my hope of immortality shall be identified with the fate of its author. Let him carry it in his bosom to the cross; let it be bathed in his blood, and embalmed in his tears. It shall rest in peace, and though all the powers of hell guard the sepulcher, and the king of terrors brandishing his spear, shall perch on the stone at the entrance. The morning of the third day shall exhibit the scattered arms and ensigns of a routed army, a bleeding porter, a broken seal, and an empty sepulcher. Beyond that hour, Judas has no power to betray, Caiaphas to accuse, or Pilate to crucify. As well might the clouds and vapors of night gather on the eastern hills, to prevent the dawn of day.

We proceed to consider—

II. THE NATURE AND MANNER OF THE RESURRECTION.

The question again recurs—“how are the dead raised, and with what bodies do they come?” The identity of man is as subtle a mystery as the essence of

tion! But on the other hand, "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament," with every degree of splendor, from the feeblest star that twinkles through the distant vapor, to the brightest sun that wades in glory through an exulting universe!

We proceed to notice—

III. THE TIME AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE RESURRECTION. The generations of mankind will follow each other to the tomb, like the waves of the ocean, rising and rolling and breaking on the shores of eternity. The eight hundred millions who now inhabit the earth, will pass from its busy scenes to the general rendezvous of the dead. The mist of ages may settle down on their memories, posterity may muse over their monuments, and guess at their illegible inscriptions; winter and summer will go and come again; the earth will bloom and wither, and men will follow its fleeting shadows, as did the generations that preceded them. The stream of time will roll on covered with the wrecks of many a fruitless enterprise. And scoffers will appear, enquiring of the humble believer, "where is the promise of his coming, for since the fathers fell asleep, all things remain as they were from the beginning." They know not that the summer is nigh. But signs in the heavens and upon the earth admonish the good man that the Sun of Righteousness is re-crossing the vernal equinox, and the spring time of immortality is coming. Already the buds and flowers appear. The purling streams begin to flow through their long obstructed channels, and "the voice of the turtle is heard in the land." Meanwhile the angelic reapers, ranging along the vine trailed hills of immortality, wave their bright sickles, and look down on the approaching harvest with intense interest. The trump of God pours its omnific blast through the trembling universe, and death's wide empire quakes from its pale center to its frigid extremities. The trampled dust of every kingdom teems with life. Armies arise from the field of battle to other music than that which lulled them to rest. Ship-loads engulfed in the ocean, awake from their coral beds, and

every blue wave brings an immortal being to the shore. The incarcerated inhabitants of Pompeii and Herculaneum burst from their shattered palaces, and crumbling colonnades. Friends long separated now meet and recognise each other. The newly sheeted corpse starts from its short slumber on its way to the sepulcher. Smiles of celestial beauty wander over its melancholy features and immortal bloom crimson the faded cheek. The lonely exile, banished from his country and his home, that sighed to the pitiless winds, and found a grave in the arid sands of the desert, now heaves the accumulated dust of centuries from his triumphant brow, and hastens to meet his long forgotten family. The shipwrecked mariner, entombed in polar snows, feels the ethereal fire flash through his icy bosom, and reanimate his torpid energies, with a power that mocks the inclemencies of the frozen zone. The countless monuments erected by the king of terrors to perpetuate his victories over fallen man, now crumble and dissolve. His banner no longer waves over the field of the slain. His bow is broken and his last arrow is spent. The icy scepter melts in his palsied hand; and his terrific crown is laid low. But hark! what sounds are there, rolling from the "sea of glass mingled with fire." The sacramental hosts are striking the "harps of God," and chanting the new, eternal, universal song, "worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive riches, and honor and power, and glory and blessing." The long night of mortality is past, and the day of eternity, whose unclouded sun shall never sink below the western horizon of the heavenly world, now dawns with unutterable splendor, revealing, to admiring saints and angels, "a new heaven and earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Unlike the former, which has passed away, its verdant fields and aromatic groves will never wither, nor lose their fragrance. No pestilence shall walk in darkness, or destruction waste at noon day. The voice of anguish and lamentation is heard no more. *Man lives for ever!* The inalienable denizen of a munificent eternity. The chronologer and beneficiary of departed time. Rescued from the ruins of nature by the hand that was

man, the firm and unyielding rock is but a very imperfect symbol of him who is the foundation of the universe, and upholds all things by the word of his power. He could with the greatest propriety be regarded as the foundation, as well as the chief corner stone of the magnificent temple of man's redemption and salvation. Here is a superstructure whose architecture is neither Gothic, Ionic nor Roman, and the plan and design are far beyond human or angelic strength, either to devise or execute. It stands unique in all its proportions—showing most conclusively by its happy adaptation to the condition of those who are to be its occupants, that it was planned and completed by a power divine. Infinite wisdom shines through all its parts, while from the smoothly polished surface of every living stone there is reflected the image of its maker.

This temple is perfect, and all attempts to add to it are like the numerous additions to the temple of Herod, serving only to destroy its proportions, and despoil it of its pristine beauty.

Let the rude hand wither that would take a single stone from this noble structure, or mar its beauty with any additions. Let its threshold still be low, that the poor and maimed may enter there. Let the divine shekinah still be bright, that the blind may behold the glory of this house. Let the joyous song of deliverance still be sung, that the deaf may be charmed with the melody of the place. Here let incense still arise purer than ever smoked on Jewish altars, until the earth shall be filled with the glory of this stupendous temple.

I. THE FIRST THING CLAIMING OUR ATTENTION IS THE ALLUSION MADE IN THE TEXT.

There were many things not a little singular which occurred during the erection of the temple at Jerusalem. We are told that the stones were all so perfectly fitted and prepared at the quarry that they all went together, and not so much as the sound of a hammer was heard upon all the building. Slowly but silently that splendid structure went up upon Mount Sion to its final completion.

Among the first stones brought upon the site for the

temple, was one of most wonderful and singular form. In the foundation no place was found for it. Tier after tier went on, and still it was refused. It was moved and removed, to give place for more acceptable material, until it became to those master builders a "rock of offense." They had so frequently to change its position, and finding no place that it would fit, that they became impatient of its presence, and wondered why such a stone as that was ever brought from the quarry; and as they frequently stumbled upon it, they as frequently wished it back again whence it came. At length, as the completion of the temple drew near, what was their surprise to find that they were deficient in material. The last stone had come from the quarry, and had been put in its designed place, and still the building was unfinished; a stone of singular construction, with peculiar notches, was needed to complete the "chief corner." What was to be done? Those wise master builders were confounded, and knew not which way to turn. In the midst of their silent astonishment, one ventured to suggest that the long neglected and offensive stone might possibly fit that place. Its dimensions being taken, they found to their greatest joy that it was just the required stone. With the most grateful feelings, having assembled all their men, they proceed to place this stone of rarest workmanship in its designed place; and when they behold its adaptation, the beauty and finish which it gives to the temple, they with simultaneous voice shout, "crying, grace, grace unto it." To this singular occurrence reference is unquestionably had in this text.

II. THE SPIRITUAL TEMPLE, OF WHICH THE FORMER IS TYPICAL.

Upon man's expulsion from the garden of Eden, he became a homeless and houseless wanderer. There was none to protect or give him comfort. By transgression he had forfeited purity, happiness and even life itself, and had taken in their stead condemnation, misery and death, with all their multiplied concomitants. "There was no eye to pity," and no created "arm to save." The penalty consequent upon transgression

and noise, and tumult, they hurry him away to Pilate's hall, not that he might receive justice, but that they might with better pretence accomplish what they had long before resolved to do, take his life.

Here transpired a scene stranger than earth before had ever seen. False and bribed witnesses are there. An enraged populace demand his conviction. The wise men cry, "away with such a fellow—he is not fit to live!" He alone, of all that throng, was still. "He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." He, who with one word might have swept the whole throng from the stage of life—yea, a single volition of that divine mind—might have hurried every one of them down to the dreary regions of eternal night. With all this power at his command, he quietly suffers them to go on—scourge, mock and spit upon him—returning not a word of complaint, patiently waiting for his glorious exaltation, like that rejected stone, for the completion of the temple. That multitude, could be appeased in no way, but by crucifixion. "Away with him, crucify him, crucify him!" Why, what evil hath he done? So much the more a great deal cried they, "crucify him!"

The decree at length is passed, the warrant sealed, and he is hurried away to calvary, where so many had died before, that it was now the "place of a scull"—and there "being numbered with the transgressors," he gave up the ghost upon the cross. The scoffs of the rabble were now at their highest pitch, as they exclaim with sneering contempt, "he saved others, himself he cannot save." Was he rejected? Did he close his eyes in death?

Go ask the temple. It points you to its veil, "rent from the top to the bottom." Interrogate the rocks—they show you their shattered fragments, exclaiming, we were one till that sad day. Ask the sun; he points you to the sable garments which he wore on that day of universal gloom. Enquire of the silent graves, and in sepulchral tones they answer, our victims were here, in dreamless slumber, till earth's convulsion on that day

aroused them from their dusty beds. Behold, the place where they lay. These all answer in language not to be misunderstood, exclaiming with united voice, we saw him die, and in the agonies of dissolving nature, heard him say, as he gave up the ghost, "it is finished." The sacrifice is accepted. The law is satisfied, and God can now "be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

He was taken down from the cross, and laid in Joseph's grave. Sleeps he there yet? Has he known no waking? "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." The strong guard which was stationed around the sepulcher, to prevent deception, most clearly fulfilled their mission, but not in the way designed by those who placed them there. There were two very important ends accomplished by the stationing of this guard around the sepulcher. First, that the resurrection of our Saviour might be witnessed by disinterested persons, and those not of his party. Second, that any pretence upon the part of the chief priests that his body was stolen, with any show of truth, might be entirely out of the question. We can see at once if they had left the sepulcher entirely alone, then they might have said that he was stolen away, with some plausibility; but as it was, such a declaration carries its own refutation upon its very face. If the disciples had seen him rise, and went and told it, then they might have said, they tell this that the predictions of their leader may appear to be fulfilled. For he said he should rise from the dead the third day. But as the thing was arranged, there were no grounds for falsehood or deception. The truth, however unwelcome to those who had clamored for his blood, could not be evaded, but with the most barefaced and palpable falsehood.

The days rolled on, and as it "began to dawn toward the first day of the week," many an anxious eye was turned towards the sepulcher. It was early dawn, and all was still around Jerusalem. No hum of the busy multitude had as yet rolled up the sides of Calvary. The massy gates had not as yet swung back upon

must of course be taken, but they are really no part of the condition; they only serve to prepare the mind to comply with the real condition—bring it up to that point where it can grasp the promise, and exercise the faith which bringeth salvation. We never did suppose that a person could at any time, without any previous mental exercise, sit down and exercise evangelical faith; but that a certain mental discipline must in all cases be passed through, before the requisite faith can be brought into exercise. And all the means and helps which are calculated to produce the required mental state, are no more to be disregarded as valueless than they are to be trusted in, as any part of the condition of our acceptance with God. All the steps leading to the door of this temple must be ascended, but faith alone unbolts the door, and admits us into its luminous and splendid apartments.

“Without faith it is impossible to please God.” This alone brings us into sacred fellowship with the Son of God, and salvation is ours through the atoning merits of our blessed Saviour. We enter into this rest by faith. We stand by faith. We live by faith. But where this is in lively exercise, it must necessarily produce its corresponding fruits. Faith is an active principle—a living tree—a pure fountain; and it never did, it never can exist, in connection with disobedience or wilful transgression. It produces in the Christian a life of piety, just as necessarily as it brings pardon to the guilty and desponding heart of the truly penitent. It is also progressive in its character, for it is by faith that the Christian learns to exercise faith, and he never can fully understand how perfectly natural and easy it is for the pious heart to trust implicitly in Christ, until his faith comes to that stature which enables him to grasp the largest promises, and claim the fullest blessings that God hath proffered to fallen man. When he arrives at that happy goal, he learns what he can never fully know before, that “faith is communion with God,” in the appropriate language of Bishop Hamline. Faith produces perfect love, and love with a kind of reflex action increases and strengthens faith. O that we had

more of both of these! But, says the individual, how can I believe! The astonishment with me is, how you can but believe. You can without effort believe what is told by your fellow, with all his short sightedness and imperfection; and yet cannot believe God, who is absolute perfection! You can believe what you see, hear or feel; yet how liable are all these to lead you astray, in comparison to the sure word of God. It would be far more consistent for you to doubt the evidence of your senses, yea, your very being, than to disbelieve the infallible promises of the living God. "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, to the glory of God by us."—2d Cor. i. 20.

Here then we may behold the open door, and enter the hallowed temple, rejoicing beneath the constant smiles of our reconciled Redeemer, and reclining happily beneath the shadow of this "great rock," which alone can invigorate the homeless pilgrim in this "weary land." He finds a shelter from the stormy blasts, food convenient for him, and garments white as the driven snow. O here may we take shelter from the rude storms of this howling wilderness, be fed with that manna which cometh down from heaven, and be clothed with that raiment which is the righteousness of the saints!

This is the rock upon which "whosoever shall fall, he shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." Falling here upon this despised and rejected rock, we may find the cleft opened for our reception. But joining with the multitude who cry, away with him, we shall find that its ponderous weight will sink us to the lowest hell. Reject Christ, and thou art lost—thou hast turned thy back upon the "only name given under heaven, and among men," through which salvation can come to thy soul. By this one rude act, thou art excluded from all the joys of this spiritual temple on earth, and all the glories of eternal life in heaven.

Whither wilt thou fly, in that dread day, when mountains shall fail "to hide thee from the face of him who sitteth upon the throne," or screen thee from the "wrath

19, 10, 14.) Jerusalem is compared to a useless vine. Also, we have in our text the deceitful vineyard, which describes the ungrateful church or the ungrateful sinner. We will endeavor,

I. TO SHOW THAT GOD HAS DONE ALL THAT HE CAN DO CONSISTENTLY TO SECURE OUR HAPPINESS.

II. WHAT HE EXPECTS OF US IN RETURN; and

III. THE RESULTS OF THIS DEGENERACY.

I. We are to show *that God has done all that he can do consistently to secure our happiness.* "What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it?"

1. *In our physical condition.* Perhaps there is no truth more evident to the contemplative mind than that the mechanism of the human frame evinces the wisdom, power and goodness of God. His physical developments show conclusively that he was destined for a high and noble destiny. The eye is not only ingeniously formed and fixed, but it becomes one of the great sources of our knowledge and happiness. With what emotions do we frequently contemplate the great and small things in nature!—the rugged Himalayas, towering far above the surrounding clouds; the blue Andes, stretching far away in the distance; the burning volcano; the coursing river, rushing to its terminus; the ocean, reposing in calm, or chafed into a mighty storm; the brilliant rainbow; the diverging light; the drifting cloud; the vivid lightning; the driving storm. If the assisted eye be turned to the heavens, there we see, extending away in the illimitable distance, the works of the Creator in such variety and magnitude that the mind is almost overwhelming. When the whole material universe was spread out before Sir Isaac Newton, on his discovery of the great law of gravitation, the sun with all its attending planets, the planets with all their satellites, the comets wheeling in every direction in their eccentric orbits, and the systems of the fixed stars, stretching to the remotest limits of space—no wonder that such was the agitation of his mind that he was unable to finish the calculation which led to such a stupendous discovery. And if the assisted

eye be turned in another direction in the great temple of nature, the same results will follow. Every drop of water, every leaf in the forest, teems with living, organized beings, which evince to us the wonderful wisdom of the Creator. O what an inexhaustible source of knowledge and true gratification may the eye be to the soul!

God has likewise consulted our happiness in the gift of hearing. Who can listen to the rolling thunder, the eternal roar of the cataract, the mellow sound of the lute and the harp, or the deep and melting cadence of the human voice—who can listen to the wail of sorrow which comes up from the vale of poverty and affliction, or the shriek from the habitation of cruelty—without being moved with awe and delight or compassion? Who can describe the extent of domestic and social happiness which arises from the possession of this gift! How consoling the voice of prayer upon the ear of the disconsolate! How great the blessing of hearing the word preached! “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” It may be added here that human speech is another evidence of our Creator’s benevolent designs towards us. If the human family were deprived of the organ of communication, what channels of knowledge and happiness would be dried up forever! What silence, yea, what oppressive silence would reign throughout the world of mankind! And whatever is true of one sense of the body is strictly true of all the senses—for the whole physical man is a striking illustration of the fact, that the wisdom, power and benevolence of God have been laid under contribution to render us happy.

2. *The intellectual and moral constitution of man evinces the benevolence of God.*

It appears to have been necessary in the divine mind in bringing man up to that high state of perfection for which he was designed, that his mind should receive an embodiment of such material as would attach it to the physical universe. As mind is a spiritual immaterial essence, that which is abstract from matter, and has no properties in common with matter, it is obvious,

ed for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." 1. John iv. 9, 10—"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." "Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission."

The extent of the atonement may be argued, first from the universal necessity of regeneration, which the following scriptures prove. "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." "Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." "For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe." "And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else."

But we may argue the extent of the atonement, secondly, not only from the above passages, which show that Christ died for all, but from the universal invitations and expostulations given. "Say unto them, as I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end." "For I have no pleasure

in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God; wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye." "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." "And the spirit and the bride say come; and let him that heareth say come; and let him that is athirst say come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

We see, then, from the nature and extent of the atonement, that the benevolence of God is as extensive as the moral necessities of his creature man.

II. *We will notice the return which God expects from his vineyard.* "When I looked that it should bring forth grapes," &c.

1. *God looks for repentance and its fruits.* One of the fruits of evangelical repentance is humility. We should feel our unworthiness, and be willing to look at our own character, as it is revealed to us in the word of God. Humility teaches us to "confess our faults one to another," to "esteem others better than ourselves." While pride "loves the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi;" and while it "sounds a trumpet" before it in distributing alms—humility seeks the lowest rooms at feasts, and in the synagogues, and when she "doeth alms, her left hand knoweth not what her right hand doeth." Pride "loves to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets;" "thanks God that he is not as other men"—while humility enters into her "closet" and prays, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Our Saviour severely rebukes pride, and teaches humility in the following passages. "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child,

ty, and eternal life!" "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish."

We will now look at

III. *The results of this degeneracy.* "And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up, and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down."

I. The mercy of God will be taken away from those who continue to reject the gospel. "I will take away the hedge thereof." This is a fact which we think is fully established in the following scriptures. Prov. i. 26—28—"I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish come upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me." Luke xiv. 24—"For I say unto you, that none of those men which were bidden, shall taste of my supper." Mat. xxi. 43—"Therefore say I unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Heb. xii. 25—"See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven," Gen. vi. 3—"And the Lord said, my spirit shall not always strive with man." These passages of holy writ evidently demonstrate the possibility of man being forsaken of God in this world—given up to hardness of heart and reprobacy of mind. Consider how lamentable will be your condition—"driven out of light into darkness." The hedge of preventing mercy being removed, the soul frequently gives itself up to "work wickedness with greediness." The gospel, which was once a "savor of life unto life," is now a "savor of death unto death;" and as death approaches, and even before, there is a "certain fearful looking for of judgment and indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."

2. *Your hopes will be destroyed.* "And it shall be eaten up." Hope, whether of a worldly or religious character, is formed of desire and expectation. This is a principle which takes a strong hold on the mind. The business man is constantly sustained by the expectations of success in business. The man of deep poverty looks constantly on the sea of hope. The man of affliction and misfortune is sustained by the hope of relief. The difference between a mere worldly hope, and a religious hope, is obvious. The one depends for its accomplishment upon the successful revolution of the wheel of chance, while the other is founded on the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. But if that mercy should be taken away, we see at once that hope must perish forever. How lamentable is the state of that man from whose mind the hope of success in some long cherished scheme has fled, and he sinks down in despair! But O, who can describe the horrors which seize that soul from which mercy and hope have fled forever!

O wretched state of deep despair!
 To see my God remove,
 And fix my doleful station where
 I must not taste his love!

It is said "The expectation of the wicked shall perish." "When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish; and the hope of unjust men perisheth." And the hypocrite's hope shall perish. "For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul."

3. But one other fearful result of this degeneracy will be the loss of the soul. "And it shall be trodden down." Christ has declared "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Again, "For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth forever." But O, my soul, what is this loss! In what does this loss consist? It is a universal loss; a loss of all; a loss as extensive as eternity is immeasurable. A loss so deep, so wide, that eternity alone must measure it. A loss of God's

the transactions of that solemn day—to contemplate the painful condition of the wicked, and the happiness of the saints.

Different figures are employed to represent heaven, the future habitation of the righteous. It is called a country. The land of Canaan, which was said to flow with milk and honey, is considered a type of the heavenly world. It is called a mansion. Christ says, “in my Father’s house are many mansions.”—John xiv. 1. John represents it as a splendid city, with streets paved with gold, and gates of the most costly pearl—a river flowing through the midst of it, whose water is as clear as crystal, and containing trees which bear twelve manner of fruit, and yield it every month, the leaves of the trees being for the healing of the nations. But after the most beautiful figures and magnificent representations of heaven, our most exalted ideas in regard to it must necessarily remain very imperfect, as long as it is obscured from mortal vision by the veil that conceals time from eternity. But we may gather enough from what has been revealed, to render it a very desirable place. And to induce the reader to make all laudable efforts to secure a home in heaven, is the design of the following thoughts.

We shall consider,

I. THE DESIRABLENESS OF HEAVEN.

II. THOSE WHO DWELL THERE.

III. THEIR EMPLOYMENT.

I. Then, *the desirableness of heaven.*

This is eminently set forth in the language, “there is no night there,” &c.

There is no natural night in heaven. When the diurnal motion of the earth rolls any part of it from the sun, it is said to be night there, because it is not illuminated by the sun. In this sense, there is no night in heaven. The night season is designed for the repose of man. During the night, most employment is suspended; yet men are frequently compelled to transact business and perform journeys in the absence of the sun, which are done with great embarrassment. But his absence, to some extent, may be supplied by the

light of a candle, and many other combustible substances. But there is no candle, nor any other combustible substance, in heaven; neither does the material sun diffuse his golden rays through heaven, and perpetually illuminate that bright world of glory. "There is no sun there." It is illuminated by God himself, with a brilliancy far surpassing the splendor of ten thousand burning suns.

The terms day and night represent the moral condition of the world. Every nation that is destitute of a written revelation from God is in moral darkness. Their situation is indescribably awful. Millions of them are rolling into eternity without ever having heard of Christ, and destitute of a knowledge of the God that made them. It is true they are furnished with the light of nature, to lead them up to nature's God—but this is no more to them than the light of a candle, in the absence of the sun, is to us, if as much. All unconverted men are living in moral night; many are living in midnight darkness, where the light of the glorious gospel of Christ spreads a soul cheering brilliancy, and conducts mortal man to the throne of grace. This is not for want of an opportunity to obtain information. They have been exalted to heaven in point of privilege. They have the twilight, next the rising sun, and afterwards the sun in his full splendor. But they refuse to come to the light, that they may be saved. While they are enveloped in moral darkness, they perpetrate with impunity crimes of the deepest dye, and the most crimson character. Go to the "celestial kingdom," and to other parts of the heathen world; there you will see the most abominable crimes approved, such as homicide, parricide, infanticide and theft, with many others of great enormity. But these crimes are not peculiar to the heathen world. In our own happy land all these, and many more, disgrace the human family. There is no moral night in heaven. That salubrious climate will never be polluted by any that breathe such poisonous breath. The gates of heaven will be forever closed against any that die in their sins. Night is put for affliction. In this sense we have night

have safely crossed Jordan's icy stream, and have placed their immortal feet upon the golden streets of the city of the new Jerusalem, where, with glorious solicitude, they are waiting our arrival. And if we are faithful a few more fleeting moments, a requiem will be sung by an angelic choir, while our spirits will be borne on pinions of love, to join the happy company that has gone before us.

The character of the inhabitants of heaven. They are holy; and those who go from this earth must form a suitable character to associate with holy beings—and holiness is the essential qualification. And this character must be formed antecedent to death. There is no purgatory beyond death, in which the souls of men are purified and rendered fit for heaven. On this earth the blood of Christ was shed; this atmosphere echoed with the dying groans of the Saviour of mankind; here the atonement for our sins was consummated; and here our sins must be pardoned, and our souls sanctified, if we are ever furnished with a suitable character to associate with holy angels, and to approximate the throne of God. Hence is developed the great necessity of holiness of heart, and entire devotedness to God in this life.

The appearance of the inhabitants of heaven. The apostle John says, when Christ appears we shall be like him.—I. John iii. 2. Therefore, the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ, at his second coming in glorified state, will develop the appearance of the inhabitants of heaven. Our knowledge is perhaps very imperfect in regard to his glorious appearance. What little we have, is derived through the medium of revelation. But this is sufficient, not only to excite our imagination, and create within us an ardent desire for more extensive information upon this subject, but also to determine our minds in favor of pursuing that course of conduct which will secure to us the same brilliant appearance, when we shall have been done with our earthly pilgrimage. But how will Christ appear? He will appear far more glorious than he did on the mount of transfiguration, in the presence of Peter, James and

John. There his divine nature shone through his humanity, until his raiment became shining exceeding white as snow.—Mat. ix. 3. Again John says, “I saw seven golden candlesticks, and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to his foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire, and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace, and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars, and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword; and his countenance was as the sun shining in his strength.—Rev. i. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. This language is highly figurative, and represents the glorious and magnificent appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ, when he shall come to judge the world in righteousness. “And when he shall appear, we shall be like him.” Like him in holiness, like him in happiness, and like him in immortality, our existence will run parallel with his. Again, the prophet says, “they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever.” From the above quotations, we learn that the inhabitants of heaven will present a most beautiful and magnificent appearance. No object upon which we have ever been permitted to gaze, equals them in splendor or glory. O, my dear friends, shall we compose a part of that happy number, in the great day of eternity! If we prove true to our trust, we shall be numbered with salvation’s heirs, and crowned eternally in the upper sanctuary of our Father and God.

III. *The employment of the inhabitants of heaven.*

Their employment will doubtless be as interesting as their appearance is beautiful. They will converse one with the other. Conversation is a source of great happiness in this world; and it will doubtless be increased in the same proportion that the felicities of heaven are superior to the enjoyments of earth. Indeed social conversation is the acme of all earthly en-

sanctified souls, "glory to God in the highest." Yes, the vast concave of heaven will echo with a shout of holy triumph, and the song will be to him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood. Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth!

This song must be learned on earth, or it can never be sung in heaven. And on earth it will cheer the way-worn pilgrim. But the song will not be consummated until, around the throne of God, he meets with all his redeemed friends, where music will be sweeter than was ever heard by mortal ear, and where joy will be increased by the assurance that this melodious song will never terminate, nor become monotonous.

The inhabitants of heaven will never die. Death will be swallowed up in eternal victory, and the hand of affliction shall not touch the Lord's redeemed; for the Son has made them free, and they shall be free indeed, and flourish in immortal youth, in the kingdom prepared for them.

If we were to receive information of a place in any portion of the earth, where the inhabitants never die, and where they never become sick; where the young never grow old, and all the old immediately become young; where the blind are restored to sight, the lame are made to walk, and the tongue of the dumb is loosed; where all the infirm are restored to perfect soundness; and where the spontaneous productions of the earth furnish an abundance of the comforts of life for all the inhabitants. Other parts of the earth would soon be abandoned by all of the inhabitants, high and low, rich and poor; the afflicted and those in good health would all make an effort to reach so desirable a place. No difficulties would present sufficient discouragement to induce any to abandon the enterprize. Though the distance might be great, the way rough, and leading through a country frequented by dangerous beasts and venomous serpents, all would adopt the principle contained in the following verse—

"I can but perish if I go,
I am resolved to try;
For if I stay away I know
I shall forever die."

Our crowded cities, beautiful plains, and fruitful farms would soon be forsaken by all their owners. There would be a universal excitement. The blind would seek for some one to lead them—the aged and decrepid and afflicted for a vehicle to convey them. There is such a country. It lies beyond the Jordan of death. The very moment the pilgrims place their feet upon its soil, and breathe its atmosphere, they become immortal. The blind are restored to sight; the lame are made to walk; the infirm are restored to perfect health; the aged and decrepid are immediately made young and vigorous, and will forever bloom in perennial youth. This country is heaven. Millions have gone there from the earth, “and millions more are on their way,” and will soon be the happy recipients of the unclouded glories which it communicates. Dear reader, are you now on your way to heaven? If not, immediately commence your pilgrimage. You will, perhaps, meet with discouragement on your way. But recollect in the way there is perfect safety. It is a “highway, and no lion, nor any ravenous beast, is permitted to travel on this way; but the redeemed of the Lord shall walk there, and the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion, with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow shall flee away.”

SERMON XXVIII.

The Responsibilities of the Ministerial Office.

BY STEPHEN HEARD.

“For they watch for your souls, as they that must give account.”—Heb. XIII. 17.

WHAT is there on earth so much loved in heaven as the human soul? And although eclipsed of its pristine glory by the ruins of the fall, yet God, its great Creator, remembers it as among his greatest works,

the measure of the rule that God had given him, was ever seeking "to preach the gospel in the regions beyond." Neither was such a sentiment ever entertained by the apostolic Wesley, who said "the world is my parish bounds." Yet it is very certain that no individual minister will ever be able to carry his work to the extent of his commission, or, in other words to preach the gospel "in all the world." But he is not therefore at liberty, by his own act, to foreclose any door that may be opened to him to preach the gospel, for he is ignorant of where he may be placed by the providence of God.

The truth is, wherever the minister is, and wherever he finds souls, he finds his legitimate work—whether they be rich or poor, bond or free, learned or unlearned, he has a right, and it becomes his imperious duty, to watch every opportunity to bring them unto "the knowledge of the truth, as it is in Jesus," and to the experience of the remission of their sins, through faith in his name.

2. Ministers of Christ must have special care for the church. "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers; and to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." O, how delightful this employment! It matters not how many difficulties may be met in its performance, when the servant of God can realize that he is called to this work by the Holy Ghost, and can take with him that blessed promise, "lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." And again, he may be constantly strengthened and encouraged by the knowledge of the great care and love of his blessed Master for his church. It is "the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it."

This service to the church must be performed with a willing mind. Ministers are not to lord it over God's heritage, but are to remember that they are emphatically the *servants* of the church. And to cheer them on in their unremitting toil, the apostle Peter assures us,

reach the heart, we must speak from the heart. The minister, therefore, must not only be sound in the theory of religion, but he must also have tested those doctrines in the experience of his own soul. In a word, he must be a man "full of faith and the Holy Ghost;" he must have power with God, if he expects to have power with the people. "Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord," is an injunction that is of as binding obligation now upon the ministers of the Lord Jesus, as ever it was upon those that ministered at Jewish altars. So fully convinced was the Psalmist of the truth of these remarks, that in reference to his own case he says, "restore unto me the joys of thy salvation, and uphold me by thy free spirit; then shall I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee."

(3.) The man of God, in his onerous duty of trying to save souls, must watch to see that the discipline of the church of Christ is calmly but vigorously administered. The want of this, in connection with the ministry of that burning and shining light, Mr. Whitefield, will explain the reason why the wide and brilliant results of his ministry were so ephemeral in their existence. It is said of that great and good man, that there was little or no attention paid by him to discipline; but those that were converted to God through his indefatigable labors, were immediately given up to the care of others, or not to be cared for at all. But not so with Mr. Wesley. Less eloquent, not moving quite so fast, and in many instances not so conspicuously useful, yet by his great tact for government, other things being equal, he laid the foundation as he went along for much more ultimate and extensive good.

In the administration of the moral discipline of the church, the minister is called upon to act in the character and capacity of pastor, as well as preacher. The people must be visited. Mr. Wesley, in his note on Acts xx. 20, speaks upon the subject in this way: "An apostle could not do his duty by public preaching only; how much less an ordinary pastor?" A truth this, that should be realized by every ambassador of the Lord Jesus.

of the gospel in its public ministrations. In order that the gospel may have its legitimate effect upon sinners, the minister should be able to refer them to the church for an illustration of the purity and efficacy of its sacred teachings. So the apostle speaks of the church of Christ—"ye are our epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all men."—II. Cor. III. 2.

II. THE POWERFUL MOTIVE ASSIGNED BY THE TEXT TO URGE TO A FAITHFUL PERFORMANCE OF DUTY.

"They must give account."

1. Ministers are the servants of the church—consequently they are accountable to the church. There is such a relation existing between the church and the ministry, that the church has a right to *expect* and *require* faithfulness on the part of her ministers.

The M. E. Church is fully committed to this view of the subject, as will be seen from her disciplinary usage, in annually examining all her ministers, in reference to their fidelity and usefulness—claiming even the right to dismiss from her traveling connection such as have become inefficient and secular, so as to be no longer useful in their work.

2. They are accountable to the age in which they live. Of all the great elements that conspire to the formation of human character, none are equal in power and importance to the gospel ministry. All the great revolutions that have transpired on earth, by which thrones and empires have sprung up as if by magic, sink into obscurity and nothingness, compared to the mighty achievements of the truth of God, faithfully preached. The twelve Cæsars were as imbecile as infancy, compared to the twelve apostles of our Lord. Charles V. surrounded by all his kingly courtiers, at the Diet of Worms, and at Augsburg, presents a picture only meriting our pity, if not our contempt, compared with the moral sublimity of Luther, and his little group of faithful reformers, arrayed against the haughty Charles, the Pope, the world and the devil. Who, among all the great men that honored the age just gone by, did so much for the benefit of the human race as the venerable Wesley? who under God not only revo-

than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." O! what pangs of guilt and shame will seize them in the great day, when the accounts of men and angels shall be settled up—when the judge shall charge them with unfaithfulness, saying, "the diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost." Now their doom is fixed, their souls irretrievably lost, but their blood will I require at your hands. Sink down to perdition, laden with an accumulated weight of wrath, for your own and others sins.

But the servant of God, who has faithfully taught every man, and warned every man, that he might be able to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus, in that awful and solemn day will be distinguished by the eternal judge in the midst of flaming spheres and congregated worlds, by the glorious plaudit, "well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."

III. THE DUTY OF THE CHURCH, OR OF THOSE UNTO WHOM THE GOSPEL IS SENT.

Although not expressed in the text, it is plainly inferred.

If the duties of the ministry are so arduous, their station so responsible, the church should feel that her condition is one also of fearful responsibility.

1. If it is the duty of the preacher to preach, it must be the duty of the people to hear. The Holy Ghost never called men to preach to naked walls and empty seats. The specified duty of the former to go and preach, obviously implies the duty of the latter to go and hear. These remarks are so manifestly true, that it might be thought unnecessary to give them a place in any discourse; but when we look at facts, we must conclude that, as plain as these truths appear, they are not sufficiently realized, even by professed Christians. Many are found, who rightly think a preacher insufferably guilty, if he fails to meet his waiting congregation,

3. It is the duty of the people to love, esteem and remember their preachers. "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly, for their work's sake."

Apart from him who "came to seek and to save that which was lost," where on earth can be found any who have such anxious care, such tender pity, yea, such burning love for man, as truly evangelical ministers. Who more worthy of the love and high esteem of their fellow men? But you are to remember them. Ah! yes, remember them at a throne of grace. It is apostolical to say, "brethren, pray for us," and if an inspired apostle felt the need of the prayers of his brethren, how much more an ordinary minister of the gospel. O brethren! these men sent of God "to show unto you the way of life and salvation," have trials that can only be known to themselves and their God. Satan desires more of them than a Peter, "that he may sift them as wheat."

Will you not then interpose the ardent prayer of faith in their behalf? This all can do—and indeed it is all that some can do. And this alone has contributed, eternity alone can tell how much, to hold up the hands that hung down, and to confirm the feeble knees of your faithful pastors.

But you are to know and remember them. O how much is implied in these important words! "Know them which labor among you" Know them in adversity. They are frequently exposed to "unreasonable and wicked men, for all men have not faith." Know them when their names are cast out as evil, as did Onesiphorus, of whom the apostle makes such honorable mention. II. Tim. i. 16, 18—"The Lord have mercy upon the house of Onesiphorus, for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chains; but when he was in Rome, he sought very diligently and found me." If the writer of this ever is so happy as to get to heaven, it seems to him that he will wish to search out this worthy saint, on account of his magnanimity of

3. Preachers and people should alike remember their great accountability. And will God grant that all who have the reading of these remarks, whether preachers or people, may so spend the time of their sojourning on earth, that when they are called to give account, they may do it with joy and not with grief.

SERMON XXIX.

Piety—some of its Traits, and how it is regarded by the Lord.

BY JOSIAH ADAMS.

“Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened, and heard *it*, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.”—MALACHI III, 16,

MALACHI was the last of the Jewish prophets. The temple, which was begun to be rebuilt in the time of Zechariah and Haggai, was complete in his, and its portals open for the reception of tithes and offerings, which were nevertheless withheld by the covetous and backslidden Jews: indeed he flourished during a very dark period in the history of the Jewish church. All history attests that oppression imbrutes its unfortunate victim. Thus the Chaldean captivity, with its sinful associations and forbidden alliances, corrupted the heart of the Jewish nation, which was lamentably prone in every period of that favored people's history to beat in fitful throbs to other than a pure and spiritual worship. Although upon the return of the Jews from the Chaldean captivity, such as brought with them strange wives and a spurious offspring, were banished by Nehemiah, and though these, who built a temple on Mount Gerizim, near Samaria, where they worshiped the God of Israel, were never regarded by the Jews otherwise

people, faithful among the faithless, of whom the text furnishes us an interesting description. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." The main points shown in this description, and to the consideration of which the reader's attention will be directed in this discourse, are—

I. SOME TRAITS OF PIETY.

II. HOW PIETY IS REGARDED BY THE DIVINE BEING.

I. *Some traits of piety.*

There are marks, traits or characteristics, distinguishing the race of man from all other creatures. These are obvious, and essentially the same in each individual of Adam's extensive family—undefaced by diversity of color, deformity or beauty. Nor is man in danger of losing his identity, as he recedes from his primogenitor, for from generation to generation the son is begotten in the image of the father. In like manner, there is a striking family resemblance in the pious of all ages, each dispensation, and in all lands. Hence the study of Christian biography is eminently calculated to strengthen and develop in the admiring student those traits of character which he feels incited to emulate, and believes to be attainable. History thus teaches by example. The piety of Abel has spurred on the devotion of many a sincere worshiper; the patience of Job has been at once a comfort and an example to the afflicted, who have been enabled to imbibe the spirit of the patriarch, and exclaim, "though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."—Job XIII. 15.

In the beginning of the chapter in which the text is found, is a glowing description of the coming of the Messiah, preceded by a messenger, to be followed by the throwing aside the Mosaic ritual. Notwithstanding that great change now drawing nigh, God declares, "I am the Lord, I change not." "The new dispensation of grace and goodness *now* about to be ushered in, is the fulfilment of my everlasting purpose." The different dispensations are but parts of the grand, the stu-

“His parent hand, his forming skill
 Firm fixed this universal chain;
 Else empty, barren darkness still
 Had held his unmolested reign.”

In reference to his wisdom and knowledge, the astonished Paul exclaimed, “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and goodness of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory forever.”—Rom. xi. 33—36. Surely that being whose ubiquity renders it impossible to elude his presence, or escape the notice of his eye, should not only be “feared in the assembly of his saints,” but also had in reverence of all them that are round about him. “Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.—Psalm cxxxix. 7—10. This trait of piety is not incompatible with love to God. The “humble love” of the child of God is joined with “holy fear.”

2. *Piety is social.* “They spake often one to another.” Man is a social being. If driven by inhospitable winds and waves to some distant island that slumbers on the bosom of the broad ocean, he finds himself its sole inhabitant—in vain it smiles in the ceaseless verdure of the tropics; in vain the atmosphere is burdened with the fragrance of flowers, that are “born to blush unseen”—no music of its feathered songsters equals the sweet music of speech; and visions of the humble domicile he once called his home, hide from his view its wide domain, covered though it be with luxuriant vegetation. Like Selkirk, he asks—

“Ah! solitude, where are the charms
 That sages have seen in thy face?”

vast amount of good done in the world for now more than a century, by that mighty system, of which under God he was the founder, should lead his followers to guard it with a vigilance that never slumbers. Did we say Wesley instituted class-meetings? Did he not rather restore to the Christian church an ancient usage, the propriety and utility of which arises from the very constitution of man, and which is founded on the obvious teachings of the holy scriptures? Did not the pious cotemporaries of Malachi meet in class, and by mutual exhortations strengthen each others hands in the Lord? Like Christianity, class-meetings have been found to stand that infallible test of all theories, human experience; and is a means of grace dreaded by the the nominal, in proportion as it is esteemed by the real Christian. It is a place where we are

“ — taught by the wisdom of age,
And cheered by the sallies of youth.”

In all essential particulars Christianity has legislated for all the social relations of mankind. In countries where the bible is fundamental to their institution, the right of property is enjoyed, the domestic altar is guarded, and the duties each individual owes to himself, family, church and country, are clearly delineated, harmoniously arranged, and enforced by proper sanction. In this one aspect of the Christian religion, it indicates its divine origin; for he who made the wonders seen through the microscope, as well as the sublime objects disclosed by the telescope, must surely be the author of that system of religion, which, with such amazing accuracy and minuteness, arranges the multitudinous relations of the human family, with so harmonious a tendency toward individual, as well as the vast aggregation of happiness, of the whole family of mankind.

3. *Piety is meditative.* “They thought upon his name.” His name is “I AM”—is God himself. He was the subject of their serious contemplation. Conversation enlivens, but meditation strengthens piety.

uality of his essence, the purity of his nature, and the benevolence of his character, all, all invite her contemplation, and inspire admiration for him whose home is infinity, and whose life time is eternity.

No wonder, therefore, if piety ennobles human nature. Meditation on the character and works of the incomprehensible and ineffable Jehovah has this inevitable tendency. Nor is it remarkable if the heathen, whose objects of worship are so ignoble, make little or no advancement towards the perfectibility of which human nature is capable.

An inference or two will close this part of the discourse. When impiety is prevalent, when infidelity derides and contemns all profession of godliness, maddened by the rebuke a holy life gives its irregularities and heinous crimes, *moral courage* enables its possessor "to hold fast his profession." This principle claims for its crown of triumph the martyrdoms of all past ages. Here is true heroism. Dare to do right. Modes of torture invented by the taxed ingenuity of devils and their human allies, have been endured with becoming fortitude, by a noble army of martyrs, with a heroism of a different, a far nobler kind than that of an Alexander or a Bonaparte. Courage is a cardinal virtue. Cowardice is disgrace. The duelist is a stranger to the former, but is led by the latter to the perpetration of a deed, which is alike a violation of the laws of man, as well as the law of God. Afraid of reproach from individuals who entertain false notions of honor, he is impelled forward in a course which he knows to be wrong, and writes upon his character in letters of blood the dreaded word coward!

Finally: *True piety is a vital principle.* It goes not with the multitude to do evil. Through evil report as well as good report, it is not only "bold to take up," but "firm to sustain the consecrated cross." It is a lamp fed by an invisible hand, and burns on unconsumed. "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins: God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sin, hath quickened us together with

man is too insignificant for the divine regard. Thus David, after considering the immensity of Jehovah's works, exclaimed, "what is man, that thou art mindful of him?" He who covers with warm fur animals of the frigid zone, and with a coat of thin, silken hair, like the robes of the orientals, those of the torrid zone; whose care has provided adequate protection for the smallest seed of the vegetable kingdom; and in obedience to whose mysterious law, when deposited in the earth, they germinate, bud and blossom in their appropriate season, each after their own kind; surely "his eyes are upon the righteous, and his ears open to their cry."—Psalm xxxiv. 15. None are so obscure as to escape his notice—none so poor as to be beneath his regard. He stoops to the lowly, strengthens the hands that hang down, and confirms the feeble knees.

"The Lord pours eyesight on the blind;
The Lord supports the fainting mind;
He sends the laboring conscience peace;
He helps the stranger in distress,
The widow and the fatherless,
And grants the prisoner sweet release."

2. *No deed of piety is ever forgotten by the Lord.* Those faithfully recorded in God's book of remembrance constitute the "treasure" of the pious "laid up in heaven, where neither moth doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steel; and where their treasure is, there their heart is also."—Mat. vi. 20. Rescued from their natural state of bankruptcy and ruin, and started again in business by their gracious deliverer, with the solemn injunction, "work out your own salvation, with fear and trembling," (Phil. ii. 12,) the pious prosecute with various success their high vocation. It is a co-partnership, "for it is God which worketh in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure."—Phil. ii. 13. But what is most remarkable, the profits all accrue to man, one of the partners, through the boundless liberality of the other. Shreds of time, too frequently esteemed of little value, wisely improved enhance the heavenly treasure. Misspent

time and misimproved privileges are an irretrievable loss. O what an incentive is here to early piety, to begin the service of God early in the morning of life! It qualifies an individual better for the duties of all after life. If thou wouldest augment the happiness that awaits thee in heaven; if thou wouldest endure well the "burden and heat of the day;" and if thou wouldest in old age review the past without remorse—begin early, early in life, a life of piety. Toil on minister, missionary, servant of God—toil on! An eye that never slumbers is upon thee; thy record is on high.

3. *Piety is viewed with divine favor.* Turning from the frowns of a censorious world, the traces of grief grow less and less distinct in the soul, until they disappear altogether, as it hangs on the smile of an approving God, and listens to the whispers of an approving conscience. O happy experience! "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."—I. Cor. ii. 9. The soul seeks relief in utterance, and the lips of piety exclaim, "O Lord, I will praise thee, for though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me."—Isa. xii. 1. God declares that his love for his children is even stronger and more enduring than a mother's love. "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, she may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands.—Isa. xlix. 15.

Although God's providential dealings even toward the pious are often enveloped in darkness, which the light of eternity alone can dispel, he has not left us in doubt concerning his regard for them. Enoch had the testimony that he pleased God, and he was not, for God took him. Elijah, also, was exempted from death, and went up to heaven through a whirlwind, in a chariot of fire. When Sodom and Gomorrha, Admah and Zeboim were destroyed, the pious were forewarned, and

Lord shall be extended to those that fear him and keep his commandments.

In our remarks we shall notice—

I. THE FRAILTY OF MAN.

II. THE NATURE OF THE PRESENT LIFE—UNCERTAIN, SHORT.

III. THE CONSOLATION—THE MERCY OF THE LORD FROM EVERLASTING TO EVERLASTING.

Man, when first formed of the dust of the ground, and filled with the consciousness and energy of a living, immortal soul, was indeed a noble being. The Almighty himself pronounced him “very good.” His body, while he retained his allegiance, was possessed of the vigor of undecaying youth—was perfect in all its parts. His intellect was mighty, clear, unclouded, and his moral powers were all glorious—keenly alive to duty, to the beauty of holiness. He was the Lord of creation, and could control all things around him, so far as was necessary for the promotion of his happiness—himself unharmed by anything whatever, for God kept him. But by his fall the fine gold was dimmed. His body became dead because of sin: “Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return;” his intellect weak, beclouded; his moral constitution all diseased; he became an heir of eternal death. And though God gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life, yet in the future world only will the Son of God have completely destroyed the works of the devil—there only shall man arise a polished temple, filled with the glory of the Lord. Man is at present, in every sense—physically, intellectually, morally—weak, frail, so that he may be justly termed “dust.” True, he may astonish by the greatness of what he has done and still does, but he is nevertheless *dust*. He has struck the lyre to

“Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn.”

He has, as a Franklin, woven for himself “a garland” of glory “from the lightning’s wing.” He has, as a Newton, “written his name on the firmament with its

undying fires." He has breasted and bounded the stormy billows of every ocean, and converted the great deep into a store-house of his treasures. He has swept forests, drained morasses, and made desert and solitary places rejoice and blossom as the rose—converted large portions of the globe into fruitful fields. At his will, cities rise, and mountains are leveled. Earth, air, fire and water obey, to a very great extent, his command. Yet he is so frail, physically, that

"A fly, a hair, a grape-stone may kill;"

He is so frail, intellectually, as to have everything to learn, and, at best, to know but comparatively little. He is so frail, morally, as to be incapable of the least holy thought or action, unless assisted by divine energy. Truly his foundation is in the dust.

2. Yea, "as for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more." The tenure of existence of all flowers is precarious, but doubly so is the existence of the flower of the field. It, frail and beautiful, when droughts prevail, having not the gardener's attention, must droop and die untimely. Having not the same protection around it as its more favored sisters of the guarded plot, it is more liable to other casualties. The flocks and herds may snap it asunder or crush it; the wild winds may sweep over it, and the place thereof shall know it no more. And yet man's life is equally uncertain. He may, in the bloom of his youth, rival the richly hued flower, and yet as quickly as it may he pass away. More multiplied, if possible, are the agencies which may prostrate him in a moment. The pestilence which walketh in darkness, or the destruction which wasteth at noon-day, may smite him. The winged arrow may pierce him, the withered bough by the highway may crush him, or the deceitful brook may overwhelm him. The calm sky may grow wrathful, and with its hoarse voice and red right arm may summons him with fiery speed to eternity. And if he

that our places will soon cease to know us. For though we die, we shall live again, even forever.

3. This brings us to the third part of the subject—*the consolation afforded to man.*

What, though man be frail as dust; what, though his life on earth be as uncertain and fleeting as that of the flower of the field! “The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children’s children; to such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.” These words are music to the soul. We must pass from earth, the perpetual hills must, in due time, bow, but with ecstasy we can look up to the throne of God and cry out, “of old hast thou laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.” God is the king of eternity, and dispenses eternal blessings to his children, to such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them. Though his saints bow their heads and die, and their clay tenements are consigned to the grave—their souls are in paradise. They rest from the anguish of the present mode of existence. Sorrow and sighing have eternally fled. No more are they afflicted with the pains of a body humbled by sin. The wicked no longer persecute, the world no longer allures, Satan no longer buffets. They are filled with peace—deep, holy peace, that passeth understanding, and joy unspeakable and full of glory. With the morning stars, the elder sons of God, whose gushing praises first broke the silence of the universe, with angels, dominions, principalities and powers, with the spirits of the just made perfect, they run with vigor the race of glory, and honor, and immortality. “The smile of the Lord is the feast of their souls.” Thus they live till the close of the mediatorial dispensation. Then their bodies shall be cleansed from the dishonor of the grave—shall be made incorruptible, like unto

Christ's glorious body. When frail on earth, they may have been, in youth, beautiful; but then, they

“New rising from the tomb,
With luster, brighter far, shall shine:
Revive with ever-during bloom,
Safe from diseases and decline.”

Soul and body re-united, with increased vigor shall they run the high race of heaven. Who can tell the grand destiny of those thus enjoying the everlasting mercy of the Lord! Look up at the gemmed firmament and admire its brilliancy. Take the philosopher's glass, and gaze, not on world after world, but firmament after firmament, rising in majesty. And when this has failed, go to revelation, study the character of God, and with the mind's eye, through his infinite power, and wisdom, and goodness, you may see system after system of worlds arise, whose light has never greeted earth. Yea, it is highly probable that the material universe, being intended, partly at least, for the manifestation of the riches of divinity, is so magnificent as to leave the soaring thoughts of the highest created intelligence far behind. And what of all this! Harmony prevails in the operations of God. The soul is vastly valuable. If then the material creation be so stupendous, will not this valuable spirit experience corresponding sublime developments of power and bliss?—"eternity being its life time." Truly, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man a conception of the things which God has in reservation for those that fear him and keep his commandments. They shall be crowned with "an exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Not only are they themselves blessed, but God's righteousness—his holy, merciful dealing, extends to children's children; their descendants are blessed because of them. In the days of their flesh they poured out their souls before the Lord in prayer, with strong crying and tears; and when they are safe from the storms of life, their prayers are answered in the resting of a holy influence on their children, and their children's children. And in the

the name of the Lord, and fight him single-handed. With a few pebbles from the brook, and a sling, he met the giant on the plain, and triumphantly returned to the encampment with the head of Goliath in one hand, and his sword in the other.

What must have been the feelings of the Israelites as they behold that youth go forth to battle with the mighty Philistine. The fate of their national existence hung upon his weak arm, and as the proud warrior shook his spear and shouted in scorn at the beardless champion of Israel, how their hearts must have quailed, and their limbs shook. But when God vindicated his own cause, and the giant fell, shouts of victory rose from the host, and the women sang songs, ascribing unto Saul his thousands, and to David his tens of thousands. Young in years and unarmed, David conquered in the name of the living God. Justly, then, may we say no man had a better right to adopt the language of the text: "he that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

Without any further preliminaries, I come to the words made choice of—"he that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty;" and

I. MAKE A FEW REMARKS WITH REGARD TO THE SECRET PLACE OF THE MOST HIGH.

II. WHAT IS IMPLIED IN ABIDING IN IT; and

III. WHAT MAY BE UNDERSTOOD BY THE SHADOW OF THE ALMIGHTY.

I. *What are we to understand by the secret place of the Most High?*

By the secret place of the Most High we may understand, first, the heaven of heavens, where God resides, as far as we can attach locality to God. Some have asked, where is this place? This is a question beyond my limited powers. Philosophers have imagined an unknown center of creation to be the habitation of the eternal Jehovah, around which revolve worlds and systems innumerable. This is a grand idea, worthy the conception of the loftiest genius, but beyond mere

conjecture man cannot go. Inspiration tells us of a high and lofty one, that inhabiteth eternity; of a great white throne, and him that sitteth thereon; before whom the four and twenty elders bow, and countless millions of creatures ascribe "blessing and honor and glory unto him that sitteth on the throne, and the Lamb forever and ever." Paul the apostle was caught up into the third heaven, and saw things not lawful for man to utter. If, therefore, we want to know more of those heavenly mansions, it will be our wisdom to try and get there.

But in the second place, by the "*secret place of the Most High*" we may understand the ark and the mercy seat mentioned in the twenty-fifth chapter of Exodus. God speaking to Moses says: "and there will I meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony." God deigned to converse with Moses as a man would converse with his friend, while the wings of the cherubims covered the mercy seat.

Thirdly, the heart of the believer may be considered the "secret place of the Most High;" for the believer's heart is God's second throne. God will indeed make the heart of man his dwelling place. One might reasonably doubt this point, had we not the assurance of God's word for its truth. The heaven of heavens can not contain him, and he stoops when he takes cognizance of the tallest archangel. He humbles himself to behold things done in heaven; how much more, then, does he humble himself to take possession of hearts polluted by sin and every abomination. You may think this impossible; how can that which is holy associate itself with that which is unclean? But blessed be God, who is rich in mercy, he hath left it on record, that we "who were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." He hath said, "I will not leave you comfortless; I and the Father will come unto you and take up our abode in you, and in that day ye shall know that I am in the Father, and he in me, and I in you." Jesus dwells in his children by his Spirit, and they in him by

Peter and David, we may again be restored to his favor. May God grant grace to every returning prodigal.

III. I come, in the third place, to make a few remarks in regard to "*abiding under the shadow of the Almighty.*"

By "*abiding under the shadow of the Almighty,*" I understand two things. First, his special care, and secondly, his special presence. And, first, his special care with regard to pious nations and pious individuals. In the Jewish nation we have a striking example of his special care, as long as they continued to love and serve him. Behold the miracles wrought for their deliverance in all their wanderings through the wilderness, the watchful providence and miraculous power that brought them through the Red Sea. The armed host of Pharaoh pressed upon their rear, and the wide sea rolled before them—all hope seemed lost in despair—when Moses, the man of God, strikes his wonder working rod; the sea retires, and the ransomed of the Lord march over in safety. And when God was drowning the old world for their wickedness, behold his care with regard to Noah and his family. See it exemplified to the Hebrew children, and Daniel in the lion's den. You may behold it exercised towards Lot and his family, when the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by fire. But what with regard to the few that loved and served the Lord, when God made Titus Vespasian his rod to scourge the rebellious Jews? Although it has been said eleven hundred thousand of that perverse nation were destroyed and sold in the market on that occasion, amidst the general devastation and bloodshed the Christians made their escape, and there was not one fell in the general massacre. Let infidelity blush, if capable of blushing. For eighteen centuries this kingdom has been struck out of the list of nations, and its stricken and afflicted people scattered through all the earth, presenting a fearful example of the immutable justice of Jehovah.

But the care of God with regard to individuals. Jehovah Jesus fills immensity with his presence. Notwithstanding I said in the commencement of my

remarks that there is a place where God resides. As far as we can attach locality to God, he fills immensity of space with his presence. Wherever there is a man, there is a God, and wherever there is a Christian, he is eminently present. Could you convince me there was a vacuum in nature, I would not wish to go there; but if God fills immensity with his presence, let me be found in the line of duty towards God and man. Then I may "give to the winds my fears—hope, and be undismayed." "The very hairs of your head are all numbered." "Fear not, you are of more value than many sparrows." And if "the angel of God's special presence" watches over the destinies of nations, his tender care is certainly extended over individuals, for nations are made up of individuals.

"Let Providence command me to the farthest verge of the green earth,
To barbarous climes, or to the city full—'t is naught to me.
His hand the good man fastens to the skies, and bids
The world remove, nor feels her idle whirl."

An insulting British officer asked John Haime at the battle of Fontenoy, in Flanders, "Haime, where is thy God now?" "He is just by me," said the pious soldier. You may read the whole psalm from which the text is selected, and you will find that God has promised he will not withhold any good thing from them that love him. This is enough. God cannot lie.

But his special presence. As a father pities his son, and comforts him with his presence and approbation, so does God dwell with and comfort his children. Does any of you that is a father know how to give good gifts unto his children? How much more then does God give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. If any man can give me the full meaning of that text, "in that day ye shall know that I dwell in you," he knows more of the full meaning of the English language than I do. With a childlike confidence they approach him, "Abba, Father, I am thine;" while God acknowledges them as his children, and they "abide under his shadow." His hand is broad enough to cover all his people. "All

transitory things—the uncertainty of all human affairs—and the final end of all flesh. And while piercing the gloom of death, and contemplating the desolation of the mournful vale, his thoughts seem to have been carried onward to the scenes beyond. He enquires, “if a man die, shall he live again?”—not, as we presume, that he doubted the fact, but that he might make the subsequent declaration, that he would wait till his change should come, or, as it is rendered in the Septuagint, “I will endure till I live again.”

The subject, when viewed in connection with the preceding part of the chapter, seems to embrace—

I. THE STATE OF MAN IN TRANSITORY LIFE.

II. HIS DEPARTURE FROM THIS WORLD; and

III. HIS ETERNAL EXISTENCE.

I. *The state of man in this life* is evidently meant by the words, “all the days of my appointed time,” which, if rendered in strict conformity with their original meaning, will read, “all the days of my warfare.” The Hebrew word *tseba* means appointed time in a remote sense only, and in its more frequent meaning, signifies warfare. As a verb, it signifies, to assemble in troops, as soldiers, to make war, to assemble together in a stated manner. As a noun, it implies an army or host, a warfare, a military service, a military station.—(See Parkhurst and Castello.)

Tseba eshemim is rendered, the host of heaven, and our English *sabaoth*, which signifies an army or hosts, is formed from the Hebrew word *tseba*. We shall therefore read the text according to the obvious meaning of the original—“all the days of my warfare will I wait, till my change come.” And for the entire satisfaction of any person who may doubt the propriety of this reading, we refer them to the Septuagint, the Vulgate, Syriac and other ancient versions, and to a critical examination of the Hebrew text.

That this life is a warfare, especially to the people of God, their own experience will abundantly show. But we have full testimony also, on this subject, in the sacred writings, wherein we are directed to “take to ourselves the whole armor of God”—to “fight the good

fight of faith"—to "war a good warfare," and to "endure hardness as good soldiers."

The foes we must meet are numerous, and of various kinds. In our own hearts we are liable to find many, and such too as are not easily subdued. Unbelief, immoderate love of the world, the pride of life, improper tempers, and other remains of a sinful nature, are all in direct hostility to the spirit of true religion. These beset the unsanctified soul, leading it into sin and condemnation, if not to destruction. These are verily the foes of our household. If not subdued by grace, they gain the ascendancy, and their influence becomes fatal. Against these must the Christian soldiers maintain unceasing warfare, until they shall see them vanquished.

Besides our inward foes, we have those of the world. The world itself is delusive, transitory and vain. But its cares and sorrows, its trials and misfortunes, are its lightest evils. The spirit of the world is enmity against God, and against the salvation of his people. Its abounding wickedness, its flattering deceit, and its persecutions, displayed in a variety of ways, present a formidable opposition to the Christian cause—often darkening our prospects, and throwing dangers in our way. This spirit was an enemy to our divine Master, and such it ever will be to his true followers. It has caused the crucifixion of the Lord of glory, the suffering and death of millions who were his disciples, and its untiring efforts are still displayed against the progress of Christianity.

But the most terrible opposition experienced in the Christian conflict, is that which comes from the infernal powers. The scripture has said, "we wrestle against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness," &c. The chief of these infernal powers was the agent in bringing the sad reverse of fortune that befell Job, in his property, family and person. The same enmity still exists in this chief and his armies towards all the faithful, and, we may add, towards all mankind. If they are not permitted to destroy the property, friends or

present world is their treasure. Their hearts are set upon it. They are filled with the love of life, but death threatens them with dissolution. They must part with all they hold desirable. Friends, wealth, health, pleasure, every dear object, must be resigned, and the lamp of life extinguished.

To the irreligious, death is rendered terrible, likewise, by the prospect it opens before them—in which, one of two things is in every man's view unavoidable, namely, immortality or annihilation. While the infidel earnestly cherishes the hope of annihilation, even that hope must fill him with the dread of death. It may be rationally doubted whether any one under the Christian dispensation ever felt himself safe in rejecting the scriptures, and whether any one ever quietly rested on the belief of annihilation. The anxious thoughts of the sceptical mind, have been ingeniously expressed in the words of a well known poet—

— “ To die,—to sleep ;—
 To sleep ! perchance to dream ! Aye, there 's the rub ;—
 For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
 When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
 Must give us pause.”

It is difficult to believe without evidence, and a most extraordinary act to believe against evidence—yet if it be true that any have been given up to the delusion that there is no future state, no accountability, no *existence* ! they are not to be envied for the comforts arising from such views. Dark, dismal, must be the prospect of one who expects, from the light of day and the enjoyment of life, with its train of sensible objects, to pass into the shades of nothing. If death were disrobed of all its other terrors, this alone remaining would make it terrible to the firmest mind. Who that believes in annihilation, can look calmly on approaching death ? Tell us, ye infidels, tell us, ye members of the free-thinking fraternity ! are you above the terrors of death ? Do your doubts relieve you ? Do they enable you to look with calmness and resignation on the great change before you ? Do they so arm you

with courage that you have no fear or dread of the stern messenger in the midnight hour? Let Voltaire, in his gospel of the day, answer these enquiries. "In man there is more wretchedness than in all other animals put together: he smarts continually under two scourges, which other animals never feel—anxiety and a listlessness in appetite, which make him weary of himself. He loves life, and yet he knows that he must die. If he enjoys some transient good, for which he is thankful to heaven, he suffers various evils, and is at last devoured by worms. This knowledge is his fatal prerogative: other animals have it not. He feels it every moment, rankling and corroding in his breast. * * The bulk of mankind are nothing more than a crowd of wretches, equally criminal and unfortunate, and the globe contains rather carcasses than men. I tremble, upon a review of this dreadful picture, to find that it implies a complaint against Providence, and I wish that I had never been born."

Here then we have their own answer. With all the relief that doubts can give; with all the advantage of cherished unbelief (if it could give any); with all the cheerfulness and buoyancy that infidelity can inspire—the prospect of death is terrible, even to a philosopher. But if a belief in annihilation is attended with such terror at the prospect of death, must not the terror of an unregenerate mind be greatly augmented by a full persuasion of all the realities proclaimed in the word of God? To those who admit the truth of divine revelation, and are conscious of being unprepared for an eternal existence, the hour of dissolution must be an hour of unspeakable wretchedness. To say nothing of the pains and sorrows attending a separation from the present life, with its surrounding objects, who can describe the feelings of one who expects eternal existence, and eternal misery? Who can imagine the horrors of one who approaches the gloomy valley without hope of salvation through Christ, and conscious of having devoted a life of mercy to sin and folly? Does he look on the past? He sees golden days of privileges flown away, never to return; years that have left

lilation, and the unregenerate man who believes in the scriptures is smitten with terrible forebodings of future retribution, the faithful soldier of the cross is ready to depart in confident hope of a life to come— which brings us

III. *To the consideration of our eternal existence.*

In the future state of man we contemplate the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection of the body. These are among the most important subjects that we find among the doctrines of Christianity, and are equally interesting to all human beings. "If a man die, shall he live again?" This question brings these subjects fully before us. As the sacred writers have in several instances placed positive truths in the form of a question with a view to give them more energy, so the author seems to have designed in this text, positively to proclaim a most interesting truth. "Shall he live again?" Every believer in Christianity answers, he shall! and his existence be measured by the unceasing ages of eternity!

This interesting subject of immortality, both of soul and body, we are well aware, affords to the infidel and irreligious world no satisfaction. To them it is dreadful to fall into the shades of nothing, and still more dreadful to appear in the world of spirits, in the immediate presence of God, to answer for a guilty life. But "to those who by patient continuance seek for glory, honor, immortality, eternal life," it is most welcome. They follow Christ in this life; they expect to follow him in death, in the resurrection; and hope to participate in his future glory. Confident in the belief of this doctrine, and possessing an evidence of divine acceptance, they are able to say with the apostle of the Gentiles, "for we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

The immortality of the soul appears evident—

First, From the native activity which it possesses. Different from the body, it does not seek a release from action, nor is it, like the body, made weary by constant exercise. It becomes weary of long and close appli-

cation to the same subject, and seems to need variety in its exercise; but it is never weary of action itself, nor desirous of exchanging it for rest. From the time this astonishing spring is put in motion, though in some instances affected by the infirmities of the body, it evidently maintains this important principle, thereby evincing its immaterial and everlasting nature. Machinery set in operation by the skillful artist wears away, and becomes unfit for use. The bodies of men, and of all animals, become fatigued by motion, and frequently feel the need of rest; but the untiring spirit, animated by its own immortal nature, flies with facility from object to object, and is ever on the wing, moving and being moved, as if activity without weariness constituted one of its most distinguishing properties. It appears,

Secondly, From the capacious desire for happiness which seems to have been planted in every human breast, and which transitory enjoyments can never satisfy. It is this that governs the lovers of wealth—this influences the ambitious—and this inspires the sons of pleasure. The wandering savage seeks the forest; the mariner pursues his perilous manner of life; and various persons taking opposite courses, all have in view the same object. This desire appears to be closely interwoven with human nature, and is abundantly displayed in the actions of all persons, in all conditions of life. But great and constant as this desire is in all hearts, the experience of ages shows how little there is in created things to fulfil it. Our own experience shows it, and the declarations of eternal truth admonish us, that the soul of man was never made to be fed and satisfied with the fading comforts of the present world. It requires food from the skies to refresh the mind, and water from the fountain of life to satiate our spiritual thirst. And if the divine Being has given us a desire for happiness that is constant in its nature, and common with all human beings—a desire too, which, though laudable in its nature, can never be satisfied with transitory good—the inference is clear, that we were made, not merely for this mortal state, but for an everlasting

die, surely he shall awake in the likeness of his Maker, and shall live during interminable ages. Death is before us; the dark valley, with its gloomy aspect, is in full view. But a ray of glory from the celestial world pierces the thick cloud, and opens to our sight the peaceful shores of the blessed—thus changing the passage of death into the gate of endless life; thus making the king of terrors an angel of mercy, to attend us through the shades, and to direct our footsteps to Mount Zion, to the

—“blest scenes of permanent delight!
Full, above measure! lasting, beyond bound!
Where seraphs gather immortality
On life's fair tree, fast by the throne of God.”

The words, “shall he live again,” might be applied to the resurrection of the body, as well as to the immortality of the soul; but our limits will not permit us to enlarge, and time urges toward a conclusion. It must suffice to say, that the resurrection of the body seems necessarily implied in the soul's eternal existence. The scriptures speak with the same clearness of the one, that they do of the other—and the union of the soul and body seems requisite to complete the privileges of the righteous, as well as the miseries of the wicked. From this view of the subject, let us close with a few practical observations.

1. How dreadful is the state of the unbelievers in Christian revelation. Death is before them, and with it comes, as they suppose, eternal slumber, or annihilation. And when, shaken and distracted with doubts, as they often must be, how great must be their fears of future retribution! O, ye fools, when will you be wise? Whither will you flee to escape the storm which threatens you? Ah! fly to the Christian revelation, to the sure word of prophecy, to pure religion. Fly to “the Desire of Nations,” who alone has power to save you.

2. Let those who admit the truth of scripture, and yet remain in disobedience, be alarmed. They acknowledge the truth; they admit that God is calling

them to repent ; and with their eyes open, they seem hastening to eternal destruction. How desirable that they should be awakened to a sense of their situation ! How important, my brethren, that we should warn them at every opportunity, that they may be excited to use the means of grace ! They must die—they must live again—and O, how necessary that they should escape eternal misery !

3. To such as believe and obey the truth, this subject is designed and calculated to afford unceasing consolation. We have, indeed a warfare, but in this same warfare was Christ engaged before us, having the same enemies to encounter that we have, except those of the heart. In this conflict we are following the path trodden by the patriarchs, prophets and apostles. They conquered, and so may we. The victories they won are within our reach—and the prize they obtained is offered to us. What if we have some difficulties, some sorrows, and some afflictions, in this vale of tears ? They will yield us the fruits of righteousness ; they will work out for us an “ exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” Let us then labor in this warfare, to build up the cause of Zion, to win souls to Christ, to encourage true believers, and thus accomplish the great work we are called to do ; that when our days shall be numbered, our warfare ended, we may meet our change with cheerful resignation, and enter through the gates into the blessed city—which may Heaven grant, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE END.