

T H E
AMERICAN PREACHER;

OR,

COLLECTION OF SERMONS

FROM SOME OF THE

MOST EMINENT PREACHERS,

NOW LIVING,

IN THE UNITED STATES,

OF

DIFFERENT DENOMINATIONS

IN THE

CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED.

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S E R M O N LVI.

THE DESIGN OF CHRIST'S COMING
INTO THE WORLD.

B Y

J O H N E W I N G, D. D.

And Provost of the University of Pennsylvania.

J O H N viii. 56.

Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad.

TO a race of sinful and wretched creatures, who expect deliverance from the ruins of their fall, and a restoration to the favor of God, through the interposition of the great Redeemer of mankind, nothing should appear a more proper subject of meditation, than the glorious scheme, whereby the benevolent Father of our Spirits has accomplished this important design. It is the only support, which a guilty creature can have, who is in any degree sensible of his perishing condition, and has any just apprehensions of the favor or displeasure of God. We find, that the saints of God, in all ages of the world, have supported themselves

with the notices which God has been pleased to give of his pardoning mercy, and of his gracious design to deliver mankind from their wretched condition. The salvation of man, by a Redeemer, was the mercy which God promised to the fathers; and although many ages passed, after the introduction of sin into the world, before the appearance of the promised Messiah, during which time the blessings of the gospel, and the method of dispensing them, were gradually set in a clearer light, as the fulness of time drew near, in which the Sun of Righteousness was to arise; yet still they trusted in the promise of a faithful and covenant-keeping God, that he would, in due time, raise up the GREAT DELIVERER for them. Adam and Abel, and Enoch and Noah became heirs of the righteousness, which is by faith, having firmly believed that the promised seed of the woman would, in due time, *bruise the serpent's head*, and destroy his usurped dominion among the children of men.

And Abraham too, the father of the faithful, *was transported with an earnest desire* (as the original should be translated) to see the glorious time of his appearance, and he saw it by an eye of faith, and was glad. He was comforted under the views of his guilt, and amidst the labors of his pilgrimage, by the prospect he had of this interesting event; while he firmly believed the gracious promise of God, *that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed.*

As the secret of the Lord might be with them that feared him, in a more peculiar and extraordinary manner, under that darker dispensation in which he lived, it is probable, that he had some particular discoveries of this interesting event for his own private consolation; especially in that singular trial of his faith, when he received the excruciating command from God; *Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering, upon one of the mountains, which I will tell thee of.* It is probable, that his ready obedience to this unusual command was facilitated by some private information, which he received at that trying conjuncture, that the sacrifice then enjoined was a symbolical representation of the method which God had determined to take for the redemption of mankind, by the sacrifice, death, and resurrection of his own Son. An inspired interpreter assures us, that he accounted *that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from whence also he received him in a figure, or symbolical representation.*

And if Abraham, the father of the faithful, was transported with the distant prospect of that glorious day, when the Lord of Life should be made flesh, and take upon himself, not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham; how much more reason have we to rejoice in the goodness of a gracious Providence, which has determined our ex-

istence in that glorious day of gospel-light, which the patriarchs and prophets desired to see?—When the angel announced the birth of our Saviour to the humble shepherds in the fields; he assured them, that he brought them *good tidings of great joy, which should be such to all people.* It is, indeed, the best news that ever came from heaven, and lays the most solid foundation for the joy and gladness of our degenerate world.

The more we consider the benevolent errand, on which the Redeemer came, and the glorious effects of his interposition in our behalf, the more should our hearts overflow with undisssembled love and gratitude to our merciful Deliverer.

The whole human race was involved in the mournful consequences of our original apostacy from God: Every mouth was stopped, and all the world was guilty before God. We all, like lost sheep, had gone astray, and were sunk into the most melancholy state of ignorance and folly, guilt and bondage. We had blinded our minds and darkened our understandings by unruly appetites and passions; effaced the original law of righteousness, that had been written upon our hearts, and corrupted all our principles of action. Hereby we had degraded our natures, and spoiled the beauty and harmony of our moral constitution. This disjointed and polluted state of the mind must be necessarily attended with a fatal alienation of heart from God, the source of life and happiness—from

his laws and government, and with a consequent inclination to submit to the ignominious slavery of sin and satan. Hereby we became guilty before God, subjected to condemnation, and delivered over to satan, the merciless executioner of the divine vengeance, to receive from him the just wages of sin, even death in all its formidable extent. In this miserable condition, we had no created eye to pity us—no created arm to bring us salvation, and must have sunk for ever under the insufferable weight of the divine displeasure, had not his bowels yearned over the ruined workmanship of his hands—had he not sent his Son to make an atonement for our sins, to rescue us from the bondage of sin and satan, and *to proclaim liberty to the captives, that the ransomed of the Lord might return with joy upon their beads.* Accordingly, he dispatched the Son of his bosom into our ruined world, with a commission from heaven to put away sin, by the sacrifice of himself, and thereby to seal and publish a pardoning and justifying covenant by his blood.

With divine philanthropy he undertook the arduous mission. He voluntarily submitted to the law of God, and paid an unfinning obedience to it, in its most extensive requisitions, and thereby fulfilled all righteousness for us. He is every where represented, by the sacred writers, as perfectly innocent, and free from every instance of moral guilt; holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. Nay, farther, he not only obey-

ed the law of God in all its latitude, but he also submitted to its penalty, which we had incurred by our sins, and paid down his sacred life as a ransom for us. Hence he is said, by the evangelical prophet Isaiah, to be *wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities; to have the chastisement of our peace laid upon him, that by his stripes we might be healed.* He is said to be *delivered up for our offences—to bear our sins, or the punishment of them in his own body upon the tree—to make his life an offering for sin—to die, the just for the unjust—to be made a curse for us, when he knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him; and to have the iniquity of us all laid upon him, that by his death he might destroy death, and him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and bring us to God.*

Now the most plain and obvious meaning of all these and similar expressions, that are every where to be found in the sacred writings, is, that Jesus Christ suffered the penalty that was due for our offences, and that he died in our stead a substituted sacrifice for the sins of the world, that we might be delivered from the penalty of the broken law, and obtain the justification of life, through the redemption that is in him. And this doctrine of the vicarious satisfaction of Jesus Christ is sufficiently confirmed by all those passages of scripture, in which he is called the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world, and is said to be a sacrifice for sin, as the great antitype of the propi-

tiatory sacrifices under the law, which had their accomplishment only in him. As it was impossible for them to purge the conscience, or expiate the guilt of sin; and as they were only intended to prefigure the great atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, we must conclude, from their being offered by sinners, and their dying in their stead, that the death of Christ, which is so often, and so expressly compared to them by the sacred writers, was designed to be considered by us as a proper atonement made by him for the sins of the world. The writers of the New Testament have scarcely left a single phrase appropriated to the propitiatory sacrifices under the law, which they have not expressly applied to the death of Christ. Now the proper notion of a sin-offering under the law was this—the guilty person laid his hand on the head of the victim which he offered, confessed his sins, and prayed, that the life of that innocent creature might be accepted instead of his own; hereby acknowledging the justice of God, in punishing his sin by his death, at the same time, that he expressed his hopes in the divine mercy, through an atonement yet to be made. Now as it was impossible for the blood of bulls and of goats to take away sin, or expiate its guilt, and it was, nevertheless, constantly used, by divine appointment, under the Mosaic dispensation, what can we rationally conclude, but that they were instituted as types and figures of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, whose blood cleanseth from all sin. If then, the sacrifices under the

law were substituted in the room of the guilty person, by whom they were offered, and yet could not expiate his guilt, or purge his conscience, but only prefigured or pointed out the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, whose blood cleanseth from all sin, we may rest assured, that he died in our stead, the just for the unjust, and bore the punishment of our sins, in his own body, on the tree, that we might be delivered from our obligations to punishment, and be entitled to eternal life, through the merits of his death.

Thus has he sealed a justifying covenant by his blood, by which we are delivered from condemnation, and are treated as if we never had sinned; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ, whom God hath set forth as a propitiation for our sins, through faith in his blood. For when God justifies a sinner, on the terms of the gospel, through the atonement of Jesus Christ, he is in the eye of God, and of the law, considered as a righteous person, and is treated as a righteous person, being freed from condemnation, and having obtained a legal right to the justification of life.

Hence he is invested with the glorious prerogative of forgiving the sins of those whom he has redeemed by his blood. In consequence of his having undertaken and accomplished the arduous work of our redemption, God has exalted him to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and

remission of sins. The power of Christ to forgive sins is a plain and intelligible doctrine, as every prince, from the nature of his office, must have the prerogative of forgiving offences against his government. Remission of sins is ascribed in scripture to the blood of Christ, as, by its being shed, that covenant was ratified and sealed, which ensures pardon and salvation to all that believe on his name. So that when they are pardoned, on their repentance and conversion to God, they are said to be washed and made clean in the blood of Christ; because they are pardoned and justified, in virtue of that covenant, which was sealed and ratified by his blood,

But, that we may have a still clearer notion of the way, by which we become entitled to the benefits of the Redeemer's purchase, let us attend a little to the precise meaning of our justification before God, through the merits of his Son.

The justification of a person supposes, that a charge is brought against him in open court, and that a plea is entered for him, either by himself or his advocate. If he is found innocent and not guilty of the charge, he is justified, and cannot be properly said to be pardoned; but if his plea is set aside, as unavailable, and he is found guilty, he may be pardoned, but cannot be properly said to be justified. Now this is easily applied in the affair of our justification before God. When we are charged with the violation of the divine laws,

we cannot deny the charge, and plead, not guilty; but must depend on the mercy of the judge for pardon and deliverance from condemnation. But although we fly to mercy for protection from the sentence of the law, yet this is not the whole of our plea. We plead an atonement made—a sacrifice appointed, offered and accepted, and a covenant made by God himself, and ratified by the blood of his own Son. Upon this plea, pardon is dispensed through a Mediator, *who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification.* So that gospel-pardon is forgiveness upon a plea, upon a covenant, and in a way that is consistent with the justice, as well as with the mercy of God; and, therefore, is justification as well as pardon. In a word, the Son of God has so pleased his Father, by his active and passive obedience, that he has exalted him to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins, and has given him authority to pardon penitent believers, and to justify the ungodly upon their conversion to God, and to bestow upon them eternal life, as the gracious reward of their obedience and fidelity in his service.

Yet still we are not to consider the propitiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ, as an incitement to the Father to forgive our sins, and to receive us into his favor, as though he had no compassion for us, until he was appeased by blood, and softened by sacrifice. No; he first loved us, when we loved not him, but were enemies to him by wicked

works. It was the essential compassion of his nature, and his unmerited love to the human race, that engaged him to find the Ransomer for us, and to lay on him the iniquity of us all. *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* Nothing but the eternal complacency of the divine mind in his own adorable scheme, which he has concerted for the redemption of mankind, could have induced him to accept of the atonement of his Son for us, when he might have insisted upon our suffering, in our own persons, the penalty of his violated laws. Accordingly, our Redeemer himself every where represents his mission as from the Father, and says, that *he came to do the will of him who sent him.* It is, therefore, an unworthy and injurious representation of the invariable goodness of the Supreme Being, to suppose that he refused to be reconciled to his offending creatures, until he was prevailed upon by the intercession of his Son. But still his mercy and compassion for us must be exercised, in a way, that would support the authority of his laws, and the rectitude of his moral government; and maintain the essential claims of his justice and his truth, and manifest his regard to the happiness of his moral creation, in perfect consistence with the exercise of his pardoning mercy. The atonement of Christ is, therefore, to be considered as a glorious provision of infinite wisdom for the exercise of his mercy, in such a way as would vindicate

the authority of his laws, and illustrate the wisdom, the justice, and the equity of his government, by awakening, in the minds of his rational creatures, an awful sense of his holy indignation against sin, and a proper reverence for his laws; or in the words of a sacred writer, it is a gracious plan, whereby *God can be just, and the justifier of those that believed on his Son.*

We know not how far it might have countenanced a rebellion among his other rational creatures, and given them disadvantageous impressions of the Supreme Lawgiver, to have seen a whole race of guilty rebels pardoned and received into favor, without any satisfaction or atonement. But to prevent these ill impressions, God has shewn, in this amazing plan of our redemption by his Son, such a holy abhorrence of sin—such a regard to the honor of his laws, and such a concern for the happiness of his moral creation, that he would rather give his own Son to be a propitiation for our sins, than not to condemn sin in the flesh; and that, when man had sinned, nothing that mere man could do, should be of any avail, or of sufficient efficacy, to procure his pardon. When we see, by this astonishing plan of divine wisdom and grace, that God does not pardon even the penitent and reformed sinner, but only on account of the blood of Christ—when we see so much majesty and innocence given up to the tortures of the cross in our stead; and when we see ourselves delivered

from death and hell, by an expedient so amazing as the death of the only begotten Son of God, it should certainly inspire us with the highest reverence for the laws of God; with the greatest horror of sin, and with the warmest gratitude to our divine Redeemer, whose sacred side our sins have pierced, and whose innocent soul our transgressions have wounded. Such a view of our redemption must also have a natural tendency to constrain us, who are thus bought with the precious blood of the Son of God, to devote ourselves to his service, and to live *to him, who has loved us, and washed us in his own blood; and who has died for our sins, and risen again for our justification.*

Nothing is more evident, from the whole tenor of the New Testament, than that the design of Christ's dying for our sins, was not to free us from our obligation to holiness, but rather to lay us under stronger engagements to obedience; and that according to the gospel-covenant, none can expect to share in the benefits of the mediation and atonement of Jesus Christ, but such as turn from their sins, by a sincere and hearty repentance, and pay a cheerful obedience to his wise and good laws. The doctrine of Christ's satisfaction, when properly understood, as it is delivered in the New Testament, is so far from giving the least encouragement to sin, that its evident tendency is to impress the mind with a sense of its heinous malignity, and of the terrible displeasure of God against it. While

he promises pardon to the penitent, he has, at the same time, provided, that it should be dispensed in such a way, as would make an awful declaration of his hatred of sin, and vindicate the authority of his laws and government. What could have a greater tendency to prevent our abusing his mercy to licentiousness and vice, and to excite in us a holy fear of incurring his displeasure, than to consider, that he would not receive the penitent sinner into his favor, without a sacrifice of such inconceivable value, offered on their behalf, and that it was only on the merit of his sufferings that the covenant of grace was established, in which God has graciously promised to accept of our obedience, and to reward our fidelity in his service ?

How welcome, then, should the news of this great Deliverer be to the children of men ! With what raptures of holy joy should we entertain the glad tidings, that unto us a Saviour is born, who is Christ the Lord, and that the only begotten Son of God has come into the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself ! Nay, farther, he came not only to deliver us from the punishment of our sins, but also to make provision for our deliverance from the power of our corruptions, and to purify us to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Knowing that it was impossible for us, while we were averse to the laws of God, and disaffected to his government, to be restored to his friendship, until the moral disorders of our souls

should be rectified, he came in the character of the great Physician, to heal our spiritual maladies—to cure our depraved natures—to make us holy, as he is holy, and thereby to unite us to the Author of our beings and the fountain of our happiness. He came to strike off the fetters of our slavery, and to release us from the bondage of sin, and the captivity of satan. He has entered into the house of the strong man armed, and bound him in chains. He has called to the prisoners with an awakening voice to escape for their lives, and, by his irresistible word, commanded them to go free. He came to put a stop to his progress, in blinding and bewitching the minds of men, and by the amazing force of gospel-light, and the sacred illumination of his holy spirit, *to turn us from darkness unto light, and from the power of satan to serve the living and true God.*

Hence it is, that he employs his gospel to break the power of sin in the soul, and to turn the heart by a genuine conversion, from the love and practice of sin, to the love and practice of godliness. When his gospel, that divine word of power and of truth, enters into the heart, and changes its principles and temper, we escape from the dominion of sin and satan, being made free from the law of sin, and becoming the servants of righteousness. Now the truths of the gospel are calculated to produce this glorious change, as they are the most important and interesting of any that we can

be acquainted with, and have a natural tendency to open the blinded eyes of our minds, and to make us wise unto salvation. The gospel of Christ sets before us, in the clearest and most striking point of light, the method by which alone we can escape from that destruction which hangs over our guilty heads, together with the most alarming motives and considerations, to engage us to fly from the wrath to come. And when it enlightens the mind and changes the heart, Jesus Christ thereby delivers the soul from the bondage of corruption, to serve God in newness of life. Such persons are then said to know the truth and to be made free by it. *If the Son make you free, then are you free indeed.* Now if liberty and an enlargement from an ignominious bondage be matter of joy and triumph, what reason have we to bless the Son of God, who by the instrumentality of his gospel, has given us the noblest and most honorable freedom that any of the sons of Adam could ever boast, whereby we are delivered from the power of evil habits, and vicious inclinations.

And that the gospel may prosper to the end, whereto he has sent it, even to the pulling down of the strong holds of sin and satan, he has purchased the holy spirit to accompany the preaching of his word, that it may be brought home to the heart with divine power, and effectual energy. It is the office of the holy spirit, in the sacred economy of man's redemption, to take of the things of

Christ, his doctrines and precepts, his arguments and motives, and to shew them to us in such a strong and convincing point of light, that they may transform us into the divine image, and bring our hearts and lives unto the obedience of the gospel. When men's eyes, therefore, are opened by the spirit of Christ attending the preaching of his word, they are, by his efficacious grace, delivered from the bondage of sin and Satan, and translated into the glorious liberty of the children of God. And how should our hearts triumph in such a Saviour as this, who saves his people from their sins, both from the dominion and power of them, so that they shall not reign in our mortal bodies; and also from the ruinous consequences of them in the world to come!

Especially when we farther add, that he came not only to deliver us from the guilt and power and consequences of our sins, but also to procure for us immortal glory and blessedness. Herein all the sufferings of his life and death, and all the operations of his providence and grace, have their final accomplishment. It is his efficacious will, that those whom the Father has given him to be redeemed by his blood, should be with him where he is, that they may behold his glory, and be happy in the manifestations of his eternal love. Hence he has promised to come again and receive them to himself, when he has sanctified them by his word and spirit, and prepared them for an inheri-

tance, with the saints in light; and that their salvation might be complete, he has promised to unseal the prison of the grave, to call forth their sleeping dust from the house of corruption, and to rebuild the whole man, in a glorious immortality and ineffable joy. When he expired upon the cross, he conquered death, and him that had the power of death. And, therefore, at the appointed hour, when he shall come in the glory of the Father with his holy angels, he will issue the sovereign orders, that shall be heard through all the silent repositories of the dead, and send forth his angels to gather his elect from the four winds of heaven. Clothed with their Redeemer's spotless righteousness, and made perfect in his glorious image, their mortal part shall put on immortality, and they shall hear the transporting sentence pronounced by the mouth of their Judge, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world!* And when the grand solemnity of the final judgment is concluded, he will lead them forward, amidst the joyful acclamations of their elder brethren, to those mansions of eternal rest and peace, which he has prepared for them with his precious blood. Millions and millions of ages shall then roll on, while they are enjoying the smiles of his countenance, and the ineffable manifestations of their Father's love; and when these are past and gone, their happiness is as far from ending, as it was the first moment of their introduction into the Paradise of God. *Eye has*

not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive of the dignity, the happiness or duration of their future inheritance. It is a portion large as their most extensive wishes, lasting as their immortal spirits, and worthy of God to bestow; and what should endear it still more to our affections, it was purchased at the expence of the precious blood of the only begotten Son of God.

A P P L I C A T I O N.

Behold now, my friends, with awful joy and wonder, the stupendous scheme of divine mercy and grace through a Redeemer! a world of rational beings rescued from over-whelming misery, and made everlastingly happy, if their own incorrigibleness in sin prevent it not! And say, what sentiments should this inspire?—Why, certainly sentiments of joy and gratitude too fervent to be concealed, and yet too big to be uttered! If ever joy and exultation were reasonable in our degenerate world, it is certainly reasonable on the coming of the great Deliverer of Mankind, in whom all the causes of joy and festivity conspire. Let us therefore, with the transported Patriarch, be glad that we have seen the glorious days of the Son of Man, and rejoice in the God of our salvation; while we contemplate, by an eye of faith, a spectacle more august and glorious, than was ever exhibited in the world before. Behold the adorable Son of God travelling in the greatness of his strength, and mighty to save—treading the wine-press of his Father's

wrath alone, expiating the sins of a guilty world, and shutting up the solemn scene with these comprehensive words, *Father, it is finished*; the great, the stupendous work is done; the universal sacrifice is completed, whose virtue and efficacy extends from the foundation of the world to its final conflagration, and which angels and men shall contemplate throughout eternity, with wonder and astonishment, with joy and gratitude!

And can we, my friends, who are the subjects of this marvellous grace, ever hear of this prodigious expence of divine goodness with a stupid insensibility, or a cold indifference? Can we think of it without hearts overflowing with love and gratitude to that compassionate God, whose bowels of mercy yearned over the ruined workmanship of his hands, and therefore, provided the Saviour for us; and to that glorious Deliverer, who being in the form of God, humbled himself unto the death of the cross, to raise us to the exalted privilege of becoming the sons and daughters of the most high God?—If we honor and esteem the distant patriot, with whom we have no connexion, and from whom we can derive no advantage; how much more should we honor and love the great Redeemer; the benefit of whose actions and sufferings extends to all nations and to all ages? What are all the heroes and patriots that ever lived, in comparison with the Son of God? What are the blessings which they have procured for

their generation, in comparison with glory, honor and immortality? Lighter than vanity when laid in the balance with a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. They may indeed be an honor to the country in which they live, and procure for it some temporary advantages; but our Saviour was born for the whole world, and his birth is *glad tidings of great joy to all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel.* Hard and obdurate must that heart be, that can attentively consider this amazing plan of our Redemption, without feeling the lively emotions of gratitude, and without being constrained by the powerful efficacy of his love, to live unto him who first loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.

And now, my friends, let me urge it upon your consciences, and my own, with all the importunity which a matter of such unspeakable consequence demands, to enquire, with impartiality, whether ever the design of Christ's coming into the world has ever taken place, with respect to our own souls? Has the terrible displeasure of God against sin, manifested in the death and sufferings of his own Son, convinced us of its ruinous nature and tendency to such a degree, as to engage us to hate it as the abominable thing which the Lord hates; and as that which occasioned the unparalleled sufferings of our blessed Redeemer? It is the vainest hope that ever deluded the fallen posterity of

Adam, that you can possibly have an interest in his death as an atonement for sin, unless you also feel the power of his grace, renewing the heart, and turning it from the love and practice of sin, to the love and practice of holiness. *For without holiness no man can see the Lord.*

He came into the world, not to make your repentance unnecessary, nor to release you from your obligations to obedience; but to render both your repentance and obedience acceptable through the merits of his atonement. He came to deliver you from the dominion, as well as from the punishment of your sins; and he never will accomplish one of these ends to any soul, but in conjunction with the other. So that those, who live under the unbroken dominion of sin in the heart, must inevitably sink down under the punishment of it, notwithstanding all that the Redeemer has done and suffered for the expiation of it; nay, their punishment will be greatly aggravated by all that he has done and suffered for the redemption of man. We have not a stronger demonstration of the unparalleled love of God for our degenerate world, in this marvellous plan of redemption, than we have of his utter abhorrence of sin, and of his unalterable determination to execute the fierceness of his tremendous wrath upon all the impenitent workers of iniquity. The compassionate Jesus, who bled and died upon Mount Calvary, to make an atonement for our sins, and to purchase the

facred influences of his holy spirit, to enable us to repent and believe, and live in newness of life, and is now beseeching sinners to accept of them for these salutary purposes, will one day appear in clouded majesty, and, with unalterable determination, command that those his enemies, that would not have him to reign over them, should be brought forth and slain before him.

And can you, notwithstanding all this, be deaf to all these arguments of love and terror, and force your way to destruction, through all these restraints which are intended, in mercy, to bring you to joys unutterable and full of glory? Will you have no compassion on your own precious and immortal souls, until the last incurable wound be given, which shall seal you up in everlasting despair? How will you answer it to God, who has given his Son to redeem you from ruin? How will you answer it to Jesus Christ, who expired upon the cross, under every circumstance of humiliation and shame, to purchase eternal life for you, if you are found at last among the despisers of his grace? We appeal to your own consciences, that power which God has implanted in you, whereby you can look forward to eternity, and consider the consequences of your actions in another world; whether it be not inconceivably better to comply with the gospel-method of salvation, by faith and holiness, than to wander on in the ways of your own heart, and in the sight of your own eyes, un-

til you fall into the hand of the living God, and experience the irresistible power of his wrath! Would to God that we could prevail with sinners to break off their sins by repentance, and humbly accept of life through a Redeemer on the terms of the gospel. But stronger arguments we cannot use. Nothing but the Almighty power of Divine Grace, and the quickening energy of the Holy Spirit, can bring the truths, the arguments, the motives, and the threatenings of the gospel, with sufficient efficacy to the hearts of sinners. To the grace and power of God, therefore, we commit you, and beseech you, by all the arguments of love and terror exhibited in the death and sufferings of the only begotten Son of God, that you would cry mightily to him, for the renewing and sanctifying influences of his holy spirit, to create you anew to good works in Christ Jesus; that it may be indeed a matter of joy to you that a Saviour has been born into the world. And let us all depend upon the merits of his death, and the efficacy of his atonement for the pardon of our sins, and for the communication of his grace, to enable us to comply with the terms of the gospel-covenant. And let it be the business of our whole lives, to testify the gratitude of our hearts, for the love of God in Christ Jesus, by adorning his doctrines in all things, that when he comes again without a sin-offering to judgment, we may be found of him in mercy, and be admitted to dwell with him forever in his heavenly kingdom. Amen.