

T H E

AMERICAN PREACHER;

O R, A

COLLECTION OF SERMONS

FROM SOME OF THE

MOST EMINENT PREACHERS,

NOW LIVING,

IN THE UNITED STATES,

O F

DIFFERENT DENOMINATIONS

IN THE

CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED.

VOLUME I.

ELIZABETH-TOWN, (NEW-JERSEY)

PRINTED BY SHEPARD KOLLOCK, FOR THE EDITORS,
WHO HOLD THE PRIVILEGE OF COPY-RIGHT.

M.DCC.XCI.

S E R M O N X I I I .

THE SPIRITUAL DEATH AND LIFE OF THE BELIEVER.

B Y

W I L L I A M L I N N , D . D .

One of the Ministers of the Reformed Dutch Church, New-York.

G A L . i i . 20 .

I am crucified with Christ ; nevertheless I live ; yet not I , but Christ liveth in me ; and the life which I now live in the flesh , I live by the faith of the Son of God , who loved me , and gave himself for me .

TO understand these words, it is necessary to attend to their connection. The apostle, in the former part of the epistle, vindicates himself against the misrepresentations of false teachers in the Galatian Church ; who alledged that he was no apostle, and that he taught doctrines contrary to Peter, and the other apostles. In the 16th verse of this chapter, he begins to establish and defend the doctrine of justification by faith, which these teachers attempted to subvert. They urged the strict observance of the ceremonial law, and particularly of circumcision, as necessary to salva-

tion. The apostle, on the other hand, excludes all works, whether of the ceremonial or moral law, from having any influence upon it; and directs to seek righteousness only through faith in Christ. He likewise answers that old and common objection made by adversaries, that if persons be not justified by their obedience to the law, then a door is opened to licentiousness, and Christ becomes the minister of sin. This he rejects, by pressing holiness, or a strict conformity to the moral law; and lest they might say, that this was *building again* what he had *destroyed*, he shows, that faith and obedience are always united; that the same faith, which looks to Christ for the pardon of sin, derives from him also, strength to subdue it. *I through the law*, says he, in the 19th verse, *am dead to the law, that I might live unto God*. By being dead to the law, we are not to understand, the being freed from it as a rule of life; but the not putting confidence in obedience to it, for justification. That obedience which the law demands, has been fulfilled by Christ the surety of the believer, and accepted in his behalf. He is also dead to the law, as being delivered from the curse of it. But though the law has neither power to save, nor to condemn him, yet he is under obligation to live unto God. His being indebted to Christ, is so far from excusing him, that it increases the obligation, and is the most powerful inducement to holiness of life. This the apostle farther explains and enforces in the text.

I am crucified with Christ. “Through this crucified one, I die to the law, sin, and the world;—and my death resembles his. Nevertheless, as he rose and lives forevermore, so I live spiritually; having grace here, the earnest of future glory.—Strictly speaking, however, it is not I that live. I am neither the cause nor the promoter of this life; *but Christ liveth in me*; by his spirit directing the inclinations of my heart. *And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God.* The great instrument of my life is, a firm belief that Jesus, who was crucified, is the Son of God: Here I lay hold upon *the hope set before me*; and this hope is *as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast.*” The apostle speaks in the first person, *I*, and thus declares his own experience with respect to the doctrine he defends. This was his condition, and is truly the condition of all believers; though they may not be able, so clearly, to adopt his language, or to use the appropriating words, *who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

In discoursing on this subject, I shall direct your attention to the leading thoughts; and therefore, I shall endeavor to show, *First*, What is implied in being crucified with Christ.—*Secondly*, What we are to understand, by Christ living in the believer; and point out the great influence of faith in the divine life. Or, in fewer words, show—How the believer dies, and how he lives.

I. Expressions similar to this, of being *crucified with Christ*, are more than once used in the wri-

tings of the apostle. No one will be so weak as to imagine that Paul was a sharer with Christ in the merit of his sufferings. Such a thought would be horrid and blasphemous. Thus, though he desires to *know the fellowship of his sufferings*, yet he means only, to enjoy the benefit of them and be conformed to them in his own. Seeing his Lord suffered, he did not repine, but rejoiced in suffering for his sake. Accordingly he says, in another place, *if so be that we suffer with him*. How suffer with him? He means, in his cause; and by assistance derived from him. This is a part of conformity to Christ, as well as that he makes their sufferings his own, by tenderly sympathizing with them, strengthening and rewarding them.—There is implied in being crucified with Christ,

First, A refusing obedience to the ceremonial law, as being no longer necessary to salvation. It was only temporary. The design being fulfilled, it ceased to be of farther use. *The law*, says the apostle, *was our school-master, to bring us unto Christ; that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a school-master*. Though certain erroneous teachers held that it was still obligatory, yet he declares, that he was crucified with Christ; that his death put an end to this legal service. When he said, *it is finished*, this law was abolished, and a new dispensation introduced.

Secondly, there is implied a chearfulness in undergoing all that scorn and contempt with which a

firm adherence to the doctrine of the cross was attended. *Christ crucified* was, *unto the Jews, a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks, foolishness*. Notwithstanding the offence of the cross, the opposition to it, and the reproach to which the promoters of it were exposed, the apostle was *not ashamed of the gospel of Christ*. While his enemies in the Church constrained their proselytes to be circumcised, and gloried in it, he rejected, with detestation, the thought of glorying, *save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ*.

Suffice it just to mention these, as what may be implied when we consider the scope of the epistle, and the circumstances of Christians in the primitive state of the Church.

Thirdly, There is implied in this expression, a partaking of the merits of the death of Christ, and the being dead to the moral law, in the manner mentioned in the preceding verse. As in this and other places, the ceremonial law is to be understood, so the moral is evidently to be included.

The believer is justified on account of the perfect obedience and meritorious death of Christ; the one answering to the precept of the law, and the other to the violation of it. Neither of these can be performed in his own person, the law admitting of no less than a perfect obedience, and the satisfaction it requires being infinite. This inability does not arise from any insufficiency in the law, but from that weakness in man, which has

taken place since the fall. *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us.* Jesus Christ, being every way equal to the work of redemption, hath obeyed and suffered as the representative of all his spiritual seed. This righteousness is imputed to the believer. He is crucified with Christ. The demands of the law are answered for him by Christ, and accepted by God. In the plan of redemption, it is accounted the same as if the believer had done it personally.

In the first covenant, Adam, representing his posterity, by his failure, involved them in sin and misery: in the second covenant, Christ, representing his chosen, restores them to the favor of God. *For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.* The believer renounces his own righteousness as the ground of confidence before God. Any thing he does or suffers is neither whole nor part of the righteousness which saves him. The Apostle, in the third chapter of his epistle to the Philippians, sets this matter in a clear point of light. *If any other man, says he, thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more.* Then having summed up his privileges, and told us, that *touching the righteousness which is in the law, he was blameless,* he adds, *But*

what things were gain to me, those I counted loss to Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord : for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ ; and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.— This righteousness, which is imputed to the believer, as the only foundation of his acceptance with God, and title to eternal life, does not supercede the necessity of an inherent righteousness. The pardon of sin and the destruction of it in the soul, are inseparable ; and therefore,

In the *fourth* place, There is implied, in being crucified with Christ, an experience of the efficacy of his death. This is, no doubt, an important, if not the principal idea in the words ; and which we find plainly expressed in the following passages : *Knowing this that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. And they, that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts.* By the body of sin in the one place, and the flesh in the other, is meant that corrupt nature which mankind inherit since their apostacy ; that evil propensity and opposition to holiness which is in us. It has been called the power or dominion of sin ; and consists in want of conformity to God, and a disposition to offend.

The person who is crucified with Christ is, in some measure, brought to this conformity, the power of sin being subdued. The obedience and death of Christ produce this, as in consequence of these, the holy spirit creates anew the heart, and cherishes holy desires and resolutions. Under the influence of this blessed agent, the believer is sanctified and prepared for the enjoyment of God. The great means of carrying on this work, are the truths of the everlasting gospel; especially those which respect the sufferings and death of the Saviour.

The contemplation of this amazing object crucifies sin in the soul. Here is a display of the holiness and justice of God. He is so holy, that he will manifest his abhorrence of sin; and so just, that he will by no means clear the guilty. These perfections of Deity, shining in the sufferings of Christ, burn up the dross of sin, and inspire with the strongest detestation against it. Here is a display of love and mercy sufficient to melt the soul and stir up every grateful feeling. Holiness, justice, and mercy are sweetly blended. Sin is punished and the sinner saved. Pardon is free and unbounded, and yet sin discountenanced; nay, effectually destroyed, expires on the cross. Every view the believer takes of his bleeding Saviour, sin receives a wound. He looks upon him whom he has pierced and mourns. He suffers real agony, in that his sins were the occasion of his bitter death; his sins, the nails and spear

that pierced his sacred body, and opened those wounds which streamed salvation to the children of men. Thus is the believer crucified with Christ; and the death of sin in him, resembles a crucifixion. It was a painful, shameful, lingering, and accursed death; and so is the death of sin.

It is painful. The first entrance upon a religious course is difficult; and the more so, where sin has long had the dominion. Conversion is a straight gate through which we must pass, and holiness a narrow way, in which we must walk to eternal life. The sinner's return to God is likened by our Saviour to a second birth, and, among other reasons, because it is painful. The Christian life is compared to a race, to a fight, and such things in which vigorous exertions are required. There are many lusts dear as a right eye and a right hand which must be plucked out and cut off. *If any man will come after me, says Christ, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.* We must be denied to ourselves and to the world; difficulties are to be surmounted, temptations resisted, injuries forgiven, and reproaches endured. This is a painful work, often like to be overcome, and still renewing the combat. The Apostle, groaning under the weight of corruption, cried, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!*

Again, It is shameful. When iniquities prevail, the believer is covered with shame and confusion of face. This may rise to such a degree,

that he will be tempted to cease from seeking God. After a base and ungrateful conduct, he is afraid to appear in the divine presence; when he does, he *abhors himself and repents in dust and ashes*. The Psalmist, convinced of his error, made this acknowledgment—*So foolish was I and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee*. When the Saviour, after an unkind and untender walk, condescends to give us tokens of his love, and shew us, as he did unbelieving Thomas, his hands and his side, how is sin crucified with shame!

Again, The death of sin is very lingering. It is dying from the moment Christ is formed in the soul, till glory commences. To what end are the means of grace? To what end the numerous afflictions and temptations which befall the Christian, as he passes through life, but to destroy sin? And yet it still lives. It withdraws but to return; it sleeps but to awake again. Like a monster of many heads, though deprived of one, it has another; nay, one shoots out from the place another was lopped off.

Moreover, the death of the cross was an accursed death; inflicted on none but those guilty of the blackest crimes; such as were accursed of men, and held to be accursed of God too. Sin is that which has introduced death into the world and all our wo; is that abominable thing which the Lord hates; and, therefore, is the object of the greatest hatred with the believer. He seeks the destruction of it without mercy.

From these considerations we may see the propriety and force of this expression, *crucified with Christ*, and all of the like kind in scripture.

In the *last* place, There is implied a self-denied temper towards this present world. Though this may be included in the former particulars, yet it may be considered as something distinct, and is of importance in the present subject. *God forbid*, says the Apostle, *that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.* We cannot argue from hence, that we should cast off all care and concern about the world; nor that every degree of desire after, and delight in the things of the world is sinful; nor yet that we are to withdraw ourselves from the company and conversation of the men of the world: but that, from a sense of the vanity and emptiness of the world, our hopes and expectations of happiness ought not to be placed upon it, and that we ought to cheerfully part with every earthly thing, and go to death for Christ, if he calls us to it. Hear his own words: *He, that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me: and he, that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me. And he, that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he, that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.* He hath likewise, in this respect, left us an example that we should follow his steps. He was denied to the riches and honors of this world;

and for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame.

In the early days of the church, the profession of the Religion of Jesus exposed persons to the hazard of their lives and estates, and particularly the publishers of the Gospel could expect nothing else but a constant scene of difficulties and persecution. The Apostle has recorded many trials and distresses which he encountered ; and, it is said, that he suffered a violent death at last : so that there is a peculiar emphasis in his saying, that he was crucified with Christ. Every believer, indeed, ought to be a martyr in his temper, and hang so loose to this world and its enjoyments ; nay, to life itself, that he may readily part with all to win Christ.

These things are implied in the crucifixion of the believer. I proceed now,

II. To consider his life. *Christ liveth in him ; and the life which he now lives in the flesh, is by the faith of the Son of God.*

This is the divine or spiritual life, which he lives in consequence of sin being mortified, and the heart renewed. As he dies to sin, so he rises to holiness. So we are taught in these words—*That ye put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts ; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind ; and that ye put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness.* Here is the corrupt nature, called the old man, which is put off, or

crucified with Christ; and the spiritual life called the new man, because a new principle is infused; and this new man is the image of God, consisting in righteousness and true holiness. It is the conformity of our natures to the holy nature of God, and the conformity of our lives to the will of God.

The manner in which Christ lives in the believer, is by his holy spirit, who begins and carries on the divine life. We cannot make ourselves alive to God. That Almighty power which called, *Lazarus come forth*, must call us from the death of sin. That divine spirit, who quickened the dead body of the Saviour, when it lay in the tomb, must quicken our souls to a life of grace.—Having begun the work, he carries it on to perfection; and, for this purpose, he dwells and lives in believers; incites holy desires; directs the meditations of the heart; enables them to overcome and subdue their lusts; strengthens them under afflictions; and quickens them in the way of duty. Christ thus living in them, they are actuated by the same temper, and seek the same things. They imitate his example, and endeavor to resemble him, as far as their nature and circumstances will admit.

The great instrument of this spiritual life is faith. By this they are united to the Son of God; depend upon his merits for pardon, and derive influences for sanctification. It is called *the faith of the Son of God*, because he is the great object of it, and because it is of his bestowing. Perhaps there

is something in this phrase more peculiar to the time in which the apostle lived. The faith of the Son of God ; that is, a firm belief that Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified on Calvary, was the true and expected Messiah ; that he was no impostor, but really the Son of God ; that he rose again and ascended up into Heaven ; and that there is forgiveness of sins through his blood. These were the great truths upon which the apostle insisted in his discourses, and proposed for the belief of his hearers. When he preached at Athens, we find that some said, *He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange Gods ; because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection.* To have a proper notion how the doctrine of a crucified Saviour appeared at its first publication, we must imagine ourselves in their place, with all their prejudices in favor of a false religion. Among us we are early initiated in the Christian system, and taught from childhood, that Jesus is the Son of God, the true and only Saviour ; and, therefore, we are in danger of contenting ourselves with a belief *merely speculative.* There was not so much danger at the first publication of the gospel ; because it can hardly be admitted, that any would embrace a religion so contrary to human wisdom—attended with such ignominy and reproach—and, withal, exposing its friends to so much hazard and difficulty, unless they felt the power of it, and were sincere in their profession. What multitudes profess it now, whose lives loudly testify against them ! If they believe him to be

the Son of God, where is the efficacy of his death upon them? Where that transformation into the divine image, which always accompanies a view of divine glory, shining in the sufferings of this wonderful person?

Faith in Christ, as being the Son of God, is that by which every believer lives. Allow me, in a few particulars, to point out its influence.

First, Faith is that act of the soul, which receives and rests upon the righteousness of Christ for pardon and acceptance with God. The believer, convinced of his guilt, unworthiness, and utter inability, accepts the free offer of salvation, made in the gospel, as his only ground of hope. This exercise he has occasion often to repeat; not that his justification before God is incomplete, or that he needs to be often justified; but that a manifestation of his interest in the fulness of Christ, is necessary to his encouragement and comfort.

Secondly, By faith, influences are derived, for the mortification of sin and the promotion of holiness. *He that abideth in me, saith Christ, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me, ye can do nothing.* The substance of these things having been already said, all that may be necessary to add is, that although the righteousness of Christ be the meritorious cause of justification, and the spirit of Christ the efficacious cause of sanctification, yet faith is that which interests us in these blessings, and is the mean of their conveyance.

Once more, Faith influences the believer to live with regard to another world. It is described in the epistle to the Hebrews, to be, *the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*. It is a confident expectation of the things which God hath promised. It realizes the invisible glories of a future state, and causes us to believe them as strongly as what we see with the bodily eyes. The men of the world live by sense. External objects engage the whole of their attention and affections. The things of another world are future and invisible; and, therefore, they do not strike and affect them. It is faith which makes them present and visible.

The believer seeks *a better country, that is an heavenly*. He knows that if the *earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, he has a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*.—What though difficulties beset him on every side? It is the promise of a gracious God, that *all things shall work together for his good*. The present afflictions are light and momentary, compared to an *exceeding and eternal weight of glory*. What though he is now immured in frail flesh and blood? Before long this *mortal shall put on immortality*, and he shall be made inconceivably happy in the pure mansions of heavenly glory. He may be stripped of every earthly comfort, but there is a joy which no man can take from him. Amidst the vain and shifting scenes of life, he has an immoveable rock to lean upon; *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to*

day, and for ever. Persecutors may kill the body, but the soul is incapable of injury. This heavenly spark shall survive the rage of men, and the malice of devils; ascend to the God of all consolation; be re-united to the body, fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ, and be ever with him.

Faith presenting these things, and affording a sure expectation of them, influences the Christian to live above this world; and to raise his views *to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for him.*

Let us now turn our attention to some improvement of this subject.

First, Learn, my brethren, that the Religion of Jesus, leads to strict holiness of heart and life. If any tell you, that the doctrine of salvation, through the imputed righteousness of Christ, encourages sin, believe them not; for scripture and experience contradict it. Who live the best?—Those who contend for free grace, or those who rest upon their works? It too often happens, that those who boast of their works, have the least to show; and there is reason to believe, that they have never, sufficiently, seen the depravity of their own hearts, and the spirituality and extent of the divine law.

While we are justified freely through the redemption that is in Christ, including both his active and passive obedience, there is the powerful

operation of grace to form the heart. Shall it be said, if Christ obeyed the preceptive part of the law in our room, what obedience is left for us? This very objection, in substance, has been answered long ago, by an inspired pen. *Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid: how shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?* A dependance upon the active obedience of Christ, for a title to eternal life, and obedience in our own persons are not inconsistent either in sentiment or practice. *For he that is dead, is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.* It is impossible that believers should live in sin; because it is weakened on their first union with Christ, and afterwards gradually destroyed. Grace is communicated for this purpose, and their obligations to obedience are infinite. The love of Christ constrains them. It certainly affords a most encouraging reflection, that in the Lord, is not only righteousness but strength. This is a source of joy and comfort. This quickens and animates in the ways of holiness.

Secondly, This subject ought to be faithfully improved for the trial of ourselves. As far as we hear with application, so far we hear properly. When we hear the state of a believer described, ought we not to ask ourselves, have we experienced any thing like it? Or, is it new, strange, and unintelligible to us?—These things concern us all, and require our attention now, as much as when they were first written; for it ever will remain

true, that the believer is crucified with Christ; that Christ lives in him; and that he lives by faith, in the manner which has been explained. Know ye, then, what these mean? Have you reason to believe that you are interested in the merits of Christ? Is the power of sin broken in your souls? Do you desire the death of it, root and branch? Do you know what it is to live by faith? Have you ever had such an affecting view of the Son of God suffering in the room of sinners, that your hearts were melted to genuine sorrow for sin, and you made willing to surrender yourselves without reserve to him? And have you been frequently used to such exercises?

Perhaps, some are saying, "We have never been able to answer these questions satisfactorily to ourselves. At times, we have had ground of hope, but presently we were in darkness again. We find the principle of sin so strong within us, that we fear it has never been crucified. Evil thoughts, in multitudes, break in upon us; our affections are so earthly; we feel such coldness and wandering in duty; nay, sometimes sin appears to have the entire sway; and therefore, we are ready to conclude, that we are not the children of God." If you are sensible of these things; if you strive against them; and if you spread them as matter of complaint before God, they do not make against you. It is not expected that sin should be fully dead. Live and stir it will; else there would be no occasion of a warfare. If there were no pain

and struggle, and groaning, where would be the propriety of calling it a crucifixion? The question is, Do you truly hate all sin, and desire deliverance from it more than from any thing besides? Is the way of salvation precious to you on this very account, because it has provided for the death of sin? Have you often an affecting sense of the holy nature of God, and your great disconformity to him? Can you adopt the language of the Psalmist, *I have seen an end of all perfection; but thy commandment is exceeding broad*? The more you have of this exercise, the more it evinces the truth of your Religion. It is a bad sign, when we find, in ourselves, no cause of complaint.

Some, it may be, have blasphemous thoughts suggested to their minds; are tempted to doubt the very existence of a God, and the reality of all Religion. Neither is this an evidence of the want of grace; but that Satan desires to *sift them as wheat*. A person is not accountable for these thoughts, unless they are harbored and encouraged in his breast.

Examine, then, and try yourselves.—Beware of presumption on the one hand, and of tempting God on the other, by despising the day of small things. If you desire, above all, the favor of God; if you would not willingly indulge yourselves in any known sin; if you are endeavoring to have your hearts right with God, and are sincerely engaged in the way of duty: though iniquities pre-

vail against you, and though you walk in darkness and have no light, yet there is reason to expect that God will, in due time, lift up the light of his countenance upon you, and put gladness in your hearts. *Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait I say on the Lord.*

But do not some of you, my hearers, know, upon reflection, that you are strangers to the exercises which have been described? *The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* Crucified and yet live! Not live, but Christ lives in them! Live a natural life, and yet by faith, a spiritual one! On earth, and yet the affections and conversation in Heaven! What paradoxes are these! How mysterious and difficult a thing to be a Christian!—O bestir yourselves and set about the great work. Dream not of happiness while you are secure and unconcerned. While sin reigns in you, and while you neglect the means of grace, on what foundation can you hope for eternal life? By nature, you are opposed to good, and wholly inclined to evil; and unless changed by grace, you can never inherit the kingdom of God. You must be crucified to your own righteousness, to your lusts, and to the world, if ever you arrive there. It is no matter what any man professes, that is, it will not avail for his salvation, unless it influence the practice; unless the Son of God cover the soul with his perfect righteousness, and impress on it the divine

image. To this I would bring you, my hearers, and unless you are brought to this, though your souls were worth ten thousand worlds, they must fall under the justice of the great and terrible God.

Suffer the word of exhortation, to turn and live. Those sins you so dearly love will be your ruin. Be persuaded to part with them. Your carnal joys and pleasures will lead you down to the region of sorrow. Be entreated to dismiss them. You walk on a dreadful slippery precipice, and beneath you are everlasting burnings. Proceed not a step further. While there is hope, turn. Betake you to the duties of Religion. Call upon the Lord, that you perish not. Lay hold on the righteousness of Christ. He is able and willing to save you. You ought not to hesitate a moment, when your all is at stake. Receive an offered Saviour, and you shall be happy in soul and body for ever. Neglect him, and you must be eternally wretched. There is salvation in no other; and there is a complete one in him. There is the pardon of sin, by his blood, and the death of sin by his spirit. There is peace of conscience, guidance through life, comfort in trouble, joy more than can be expressed, with every necessary grace; and a happiness after death, rising to the very height of your wishes and lasting as God himself. Why then should you continue in the love and practice of sin? Why in the neglect of known duty? Why should Religion be deferred for a single day or hour? Have not some of you deferred it so often already, as to con-

vince you that this is the most gross delusion? Think not of a time to come. We trust in vain to futurity. Before the setting sun, your eyes and mine may be closed in the sleep of death. *Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.* This day, and not the next; this hour, and not the next; this moment, and not the next. *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest.*

To conclude, those of you, my brethren, whose consciences testify, that you are not strangers to these spiritual exercises, strive to grow more and more in conformity to God. This is the best evidence of your sincerity. You have not *already attained, neither are already perfect.*—Learn that your only help is laid on the righteousness and strength of your exalted Redeemer. Live by faith in him. *Of his fulness receive, and grace for grace.* Be not discouraged under any difficulties; *being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ: Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation.*

